

University of Montana

## ScholarWorks at University of Montana

---

The Writing Center: Reports

The Writing Center

---

2011

### The Writing Center Annual Report: 2010-2011

Kelly Webster

*University of Montana - Missoula*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://scholarworks.umt.edu/writingcenter\\_pubs](https://scholarworks.umt.edu/writingcenter_pubs)

**Let us know how access to this document benefits you.**

---

#### Recommended Citation

Webster, Kelly, "The Writing Center Annual Report: 2010-2011" (2011). *The Writing Center: Reports*. 2.  
[https://scholarworks.umt.edu/writingcenter\\_pubs/2](https://scholarworks.umt.edu/writingcenter_pubs/2)

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

# The University of Montana Writing Center Annual Report Overview of Activities and Data

**AY 2010-2011**

---

## INTRODUCTION

During the 2010-2011 academic year, The Writing Center, an Office for Student Success department, answered President Engstrom's call for a "spirit of discourse" on the University of Montana campus. Writing Center staff engaged students in intellectual conversations, challenging students to develop as writers and thinkers who contribute to local and global conversations. Toward this end, The Writing Center (TWC) sustained its one-to-one tutoring services and implemented new initiatives aimed at improving student writing across the curriculum. These 2010-2011 academic year activities responded to and engendered student and faculty demand for TWC's services as evidenced by TWC's facilitation of 3,852 tutoring sessions with students who were writing in response to writing assignments from over 50 academic areas. TWC's total 2010-2011 academic year contacts with students reached well over 9,362 instructional contacts. Appendix A includes samples of faculty and student testimonials regarding their Writing Center experiences during the 2010-2011 academic year.

### Continued Services

Persistent faculty and student desire for effective writing tutoring and instruction compelled Writing Center staff to find innovative ways to keep apace the growing demand for traditional Writing Center services. Continuing to work one-to-one with undergraduate and graduate student writers, TWC remained flexible enough to meet students' needs for well-informed readers and for writing instruction throughout their academic tenures. In addition to facilitating one-to-one tutoring of individual student writers, Writing Center staff continued to offer large-class writing instruction through semester-long, for-credit courses and through discipline- and assignment-specific writing workshops. Collaborating with on-campus programs to deliver this discipline- and assignment-specific writing instruction, Writing Center staff facilitated 114 in-class workshops in response to requests from academic departments in the Colleges and from academic units such as American Indian Student Services, Foreign and International Student and Scholar Services, the Mansfield Library, and TRiO Student Support Services. These collaborative efforts to deliver writing instruction in departments and over a student's academic career enact the University's commitment to embedding writing across the curriculum.

### New Initiatives

While sustaining its traditional services, TWC also implemented new initiatives during the 2010-2011 academic year. Outlined in detail below, these new services include:

- Faculty and Staff Consultations – Writing Center staff began offering writing consultations for UM faculty and staff;
- Media Outreach – TWC launched a new Writing Center website and collaborated with The Peer Connection Network to produce a video on how to get started on a paper;

- Responding to Student Writing Workshops – Writing Center staff collaborated with the Composition Program to deliver workshops to faculty and graduate student teaching assistants on how to respond to student writing;
- Sidecar Project – Writing Center tutors facilitated mandatory small-group tutoring sessions in the context of writing intensive courses;
- UMOonline Collaboration – TWC embedded an online tutor in the Exploration of Online Learning (C&I 195) online course;
- Writing in the Disciplines Project – Writing Center staff worked with academic units to create discipline-specific writing resources for student writers.

## THE WRITING CENTER MISSION

As a University hub for campus conversations about writing, TWC helps undergraduate and graduate students in all disciplines become more independent, versatile, and effective writers, readers, and thinkers. We provide a comfortable environment where professional tutors engage students in supportive conversations about writing. Using a variety of strategies to honor a diversity of writers and writing, our tutors help writers at any point during their writing processes and with any writing task. Focused on the development of the writer, tutors help students to recognize their power as communicators and to practice strategies appropriate to various writing contexts. In each instance, the student writer retains responsibility for the written work and for all changes made to the work.

TWC treats writing both as a mode of communication and as a way to learn, and encourages all members of the University community to think more explicitly about their writing processes and the decisions they make as they write.

## SUMMARY OF WRITING CENTER PROGRAMMING

Guided by its mission and acting as a gathering ground for campus activities that support writing instruction, TWC provides services for students, faculty, and the wider campus community. These services include the following programming:

### For Students

#### *Academic Courses*

- For-credit courses (face-to-face and online, including Writing- and Ethics-designated courses)

#### *Tutoring*

- Face-to-face and online writing tutoring (available on a by-appointment and drop-in basis)
- Guidance interpreting writing assignments
- Reader feedback on any writing task, including research proposals and papers, response papers, reports, literature reviews, speeches, scholarship applications, graduate school applications, thesis projects, etc.
- Help developing strategies for revision at any stage of a writing process
- Assistance building strategies for timed-writing situations

### *UDWPA Resources*

- Help registering and preparing for the UDWPA exam

### *Writing Workshops and Resources*

- Workshops on specific types of writing and on the various parts of a writing process
- Resources on writing in specific disciplines

### For Faculty

#### *General and Discipline-specific Writing Workshops*

- In-class workshops tailored to courses, assignments, and discipline-specific conventions

#### *One-to-one Writing and Teaching Consultations*

- Help with faculty writing projects
- Feedback and guidance on writing assignment design and response
- Ideas for incorporating writing – both graded and non-graded – into courses

#### *Professional Development Workshops*

- Faculty workshops on using writing to enhance student learning in any course

#### *Sidecar Project*

- Small-group writing tutoring integrated into writing intensive courses

### For Campus and Community

#### *Collaboration with and Support for Affiliate Groups*

- Early Childhood Education, MSU Nursing, Writing Coaches of Missoula

#### *Collaboration with and Support for Campus Groups*

- American Indian Student Services, Athletics, Disability Student Services, Foreign and International Student and Scholar Services, Freshmen Interest Groups, Internship Services, NCUR and UMCUR, Undergraduate Advising Center, Upward Bound, XLS

#### *One-to-one Writing Consultations*

- Help with staff writing projects

#### *TRiO Writing Mentorship Program*

- In-class workshops, writing assignment design, writing diagnostics, one-to-one tutoring for all TRiO students, writing focus project facilitation

#### *UDWPA Administration*

- Management of all aspects of the UDWPA exam, including exam design, scheduling, and scoring

## STUDENT TUTORING

At the heart of a one-to-one tutoring session is spontaneous, collaborative dialogue. Because dialogue is at the heart of social learning behaviors and because tutoring is an enactment of the social nature of learning, the tutorial setting in TWC is centered on evolving one-to-one conversation. Through dialogue, the tutor guides the student to develop strategic knowledge of how to compose a piece of writing within the constraints of a particular writing occasion and within the parameters of the student's own contributions to the conversation. This "tutorial talk" affords the student a unique and non-evaluative space in which to explore ideas and rehearse strategies that he/she can then apply in other rhetorical situations. In effect, tutoring in TWC promotes the development of student writers across their academic tenures, ultimately helping to bolster retention rates at the University.

Since autumn 2002, students have learned the value of a tutoring session at TWC. Seeking opportunities for discussion with other writers and readers, a growing number of students have used TWC since the 2002-2003 academic year, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1.  
Number of tutoring sessions by year.

Academic Year	Number of Tutoring Sessions
2002-2003	1,599
2003-2004	2,468
2004-2005	2,088
2005-2006	2,601
2006-2007	3,347
2007-2008	2,750
2008-2009	3,622
2009-2010	4,053
2010-2011	3,852

Tutoring sessions last 30-60 minutes and take the form of a structured conversation between tutor and student on the strengths and weaknesses of the student's thinking, planning, and writing in the context of a specific assignment. The majority of all tutoring sessions focus on planning or revising papers for classes in academic disciplines and for admissions applications for varied programs. The multidisciplinary nature of these sessions make TWC a critical site for the improvement of student writers across the curriculum. With the exception of peer tutors who staff some Mansfield Library drop-in tutoring hours, tutors are professionals, most of whom have an advanced degree and prior teaching experience when hired. Each is trained and evaluated throughout each academic year of his/her employment. By offering face-to-face writing tutoring on three campuses and in two locations on the Mountain campus alone, and by offering online writing tutoring to distance education students, TWC reaches a broad audience of students and faculty. TWC's hours of operation in its varied locations are presented in Table 2.

Table 2.  
The Writing Center's hours of operation in each tutoring location.

Type of Tutoring	When	Where
30 minute appointments	Mon. – Fri. 9:30 am-1 pm Mon. – Fri. 2 pm-5 pm	Liberal Arts 144
30 minute UDWPA preparation appointments	Mon. – Fri. 9:30 am-1 pm Mon. – Fri. 2 pm-5 pm Two weeks prior to each exam	Liberal Arts 144
60 minute <u>ESL only</u> appointments	Mon., Tues, Wed., & Thurs. 6 pm-9 pm	Liberal Arts 144
Drop-in consultations	Mon. – Thurs. 1 pm-4 pm Sundays 6 pm-9 pm	Mansfield Library

Drop-in consultations	Mon. & Thurs. 10 am-1 pm	COT East (ASC)
Drop-in consultations	Thursdays 11:30am-1:30 pm	COT West
Online (Synchronous)	Varied from week to week	Online

Mountain Campus Tutoring: LA 144 and Mansfield Library

TWC was open for 16 weeks of tutoring during each of the autumn and spring semesters and for limited tutoring hours during the summer and winter sessions. During the autumn and spring semesters, TWC opened for an average of 69 hours per week on the Mountain campus in its LA 144 and Mansfield Library locations. TWC opened for an additional eight hours per week in other locations. During the weeks leading up to a UDWPA exam, supplementary tutoring hours accommodated student demand for help in preparing for the writing assessment. In addition to general tutoring open to all students, TWC opened for 12 hours of evening tutoring for non-native speakers of English exclusively. These students—most of whom were international students—were also welcome to make appointments during daytime hours.

While serving a majority of student visitors in its LA 144 location, TWC also continued its collaborative relationship with the Mansfield Library. Hoping to provide a shared framework for potential student-centered projects, library faculty and the Writing Center Director co-authored an autumn 2009 proposal for collaboration, which forms the basis for more recent Writing Center and Mansfield Library joint ventures. Beginning in the fall of 2009, Writing Center tutors moved to the main floor of the Mansfield Library in order to participate in the Learning Commons space and in order to offer drop-in, point-of-need tutoring. Drop-in tutoring provided on a first-come, first-served basis proved successful in that it allowed a population of students who might not otherwise have used TWC’s tutoring services to receive writing tutoring. However, the time-intensive and attention-demanding nature of assessing a piece of writing and instructing a writer necessitates the preservation of a primarily by-appointment service. Still, offering some drop-in tutoring hours has allowed TWC to better meet the needs of individual student writers who might not schedule an appointment ahead of time. Based on usage statistics, TWC continues to adjust its Mansfield Library drop-in tutoring days and hours.

College of Technology Tutoring: East and West Campuses

TWC offered six hours of tutoring per week on a drop-in basis in the College of Technology’s Academic Support Center. In response to requests from technical program faculty, TWC also offered two hours of tutoring per week on the College of Technology’s West Campus. West Campus students used the Writing Center tutors for a variety of writing projects, a direct result of support from Welding, Carpentry, Building Maintenance, and Diesel Technology faculty who encouraged their students to take advantage of the West Campus tutoring hours. However, West Campus students did not take full advantage of the available tutoring hours, suggesting a need for more effective marketing. TWC will work with Dean Fugleberg to better market the West Campus tutoring. Funding for West campus tutoring hours was secured through a Perkins Grant intended to fund student support services for those students enrolled in technical programs. In addition to visiting the College of Technology campus tutors, two-year campus students were able to make appointments for tutoring on the Mountain campus.

### Online Tutoring

In response to the University's growing online course enrollment numbers and inspired by a commitment to providing quality and equitable student support services for online students, TWC continued to offer synchronous online tutoring for students enrolled in online courses during the 2010-2011 academic year and currently is offering online tutoring during the full ten-week summer session. Though use of the online tutoring services continues to be light, the number of students taking advantage of the service continues to grow among both undergraduate and graduate distance learners. Students are becoming more comfortable with the online tutoring environment as evidenced by those students who return for online tutoring help after a first appointment. A Montana University System grant and UOnline fund TWC's online tutoring.

Though institutions across the country have responded to a growth in the online learner population with varied iterations of online writing centers, delivery often has been limited to an asynchronous format, a delivery method that threatens to compromise one tutorial element that is at the heart of a writing center's identity: spontaneous, collaborative dialogue. It is this social, dialogic nature of the tutoring session that UOnline and TWC have worked to preserve in the design of a synchronous online tutoring experience. By using an appointment-based system that invites students into a tutor's Elluminate vRoom, TWC engages online students in real-time conversations about their writing, helping them to become more effective and versatile writers. TWC and UOnline will continue to assess the success and usability of this new form of tutorial delivery.

### Embedded Online Tutoring: Exploration of Online Learning (C&I 195)

In an effort to foster student awareness and use of TWC's online tutoring service, TWC began partnering with UOnline's new Exploration of Online Learning course (C&I 195). Intended to support retention by familiarizing students with online learning resources and promoting effective online learning behaviors, this course is an ideal site for exposing students to online writing tutoring. This collaboration, which embeds an online writing tutor into the course, was piloted in autumn 2010 during two eight-week sections of the course. The collaboration continued during spring 2011 and currently is taking place in a summer 2011 section of C&I 195.

### UDWPA Tutoring

In addition to coaching students as they work on writing assignments for academic courses and applications, TWC helps students prepare to take or retake the UDWPA. Tutors do not teach the UDWPA texts but rather show students how to read a text actively, how to interpret a timed-writing assessment prompt, and how to approach a timed-writing occasion. Tutors present students with an opportunity to engage in conversation about how to best prepare prior to each exam, supplying students with reading questions, practice essay questions, and feedback when appropriate. The tutors also are trained in explaining the UDWPA scoring rubric and are available after an exam to interpret the results of the exam for each student who requests this service. Tutoring for the UDWPA is generally limited to appointments in LA144, with additional UDWPA tutoring sessions offered during the two weeks prior to each exam.

### Tutoring Appointment Scheduling

Web-based scheduling of student appointments allows scheduling at multiple locations and allows students conveniently to make, cancel, or change their appointments from any computer with an Internet connection. Students must register with the on-line system before making

appointments, an extra step that may be an impediment to some students using the TWC's services. However, students also may make appointments by visiting TWC in person or by calling and speaking with a tutor. A receptionist in LA 144 who makes appointments and assists with registration would greatly benefit students in that this individual would be able to answer student inquiries regarding the making of appointments; however, limited funding precludes the hiring of a receptionist.

### Tutoring Numbers

The number and variety of students who use Writing Center tutoring indicate sustained need and demand for writing tutoring across campus. The history of student tutoring session totals and approximate hours of operation at TWC during autumn 2002 – spring 2011 are shown in Table 3. This table exhibits the steady growth in student use of TWC. During each semester of the 2010-2011 academic year, TWC had close to 2,000 visits with students working on writing assignments from 55 academic areas. User statistics according to student type and class are summarized in Table 4. Notable is the growing number of graduate students who are taking advantage of TWC's services. Additional user statistics by major, class for which the student is writing, and issues addressed during tutoring sessions are available upon request.



Table 3.  
History of student tutoring session totals and hours of operation, autumn 2002 – spring 2011.\*

Semester	A '03	S '04	A '04	S '05	A '05	S '06	A '06	S '07	A '07	S '08	A '08	S '09	A '09	S '10	A '10	S '11
<b>Total Tutoring Sessions</b>	1,131	1,337	989	1,099	1,200	1,401	1,671	1,676	1,442	1,308	1,805	1,817	2,028	2,025	1,865	1,987
<b>Open Hours per Week by Location</b>	All Locations	45	51	45	50	45	62	68	77	81	75	85	84	84	75	79
	UM Mountain (LA 144)	39	45	39	44	39	53	59	35	35	39	39	39	39	44	51
	UM Mountain (Library)	6	6	6	6	6	9	9	36	42	30	30	30	30	23	20
	COT Main								6	4	6	6	6	6	6	6
	COT West											3		4	2	2
	Study Jam												7	5	5	

\* Autumn numbers include the previous summer's visits. Spring numbers include the previous winter's visits.

Table 4.  
2010-2011 User Statistics\*

Total Tutoring Sessions: **3,852**

<b>TWC Autumn 2010 User Statistics</b>		
	<b>Total Tutoring Sessions</b>	<b>1,865</b>
<b>Location</b>	COT East	72
	COT West	6
	LA 144	1,312
	Library	445
	Online	28
	Undesignated	2
<b>Student Type</b>	COT	122
	International/ESL	358
	TRiO*	330
	UDWPA	219
	WRIT	280
	* Self identified as TRiO; actual number is higher.	
<b>Student Year</b>	Freshman	464
	Sophomore	293
	Junior	261
	Senior	524
	Grad	208
	Other/Undesignated	115

<b>TWC Spring 2011 User Statistics</b>		
	<b>Total Tutoring Sessions</b>	<b>1,987</b>
<b>Location</b>	COT East	82
	COT West	21
	LA 144	1,412
	Library	371
	Online	21
	Undesignated	80
<b>Student Type</b>	COT	157
	International/ESL	366
	TRiO*	276
	UDWPA	244
	WRIT	295
	* Self identified as TRiO; actual number is higher.	
<b>Student Year</b>	Freshman	395
	Sophomore	337
	Junior	345
	Senior	566
	Grad	183
	Other/Undesignated	161

\* User statistics by major, class for which the student is writing, and issues addressed during tutoring sessions are available upon request.

## SIDECAR PROJECT

The Sidecar Project, a new Writing Center initiative, provides small-group writing tutoring in the context of writing intensive courses across the curriculum. Writing tutors embedded into these courses offer tutoring tailored to the course objectives and assignments. Partnering with the Davidson Honors College and collaborating with faculty member Erin Brown, TWC piloted the Sidecar Project in a spring 2011 section of WRIT 101. Encouraged by the success of this pilot, TWC hopes to secure funding to expand Sidecar Project collaborations to other writing intensive courses across the curriculum. Toward this end and during the 2011 summer session, TWC currently is running its second Sidecar Project collaboration with the Sociology Department's Classical Theory course (SOCI 455) taught by Dr. Daisy Rooks. Based on assessment results

from the initial pilot and from the 2011 summer collaboration, TWC plans to design and implement future Sidecar Project collaborations across disciplines.

The inspiration for TWC's Sidecar Project comes from a similar small-group tutoring model at Washington State University. Focused on providing students with supplemental writing instruction that aligns with the partnering course's outcomes, TWC's Sidecar Project helps students become more effective writers and more critical readers *in the context of* a specific course and its writing assignments.

### Goals

The following goals guided TWC's Sidecar Project pilot design:

- Reinforce the philosophy/pedagogy that informs the course curriculum;
- Encourage student writers to make strategic decisions as they compose and to interrogate these decisions;
- Facilitate student understanding of the nature and value of substantial revision;
- Demonstrate to students the value of collaboration;
- Provide opportunities for students to develop procedural knowledge of the kinds of collaborative learning behaviors characteristic of strong writers.

As TWC expands the Sidecar Project to include other disciplines and courses, TWC expects these goals to change and emergent goals to arise. See Appendix B for a complete description of the Sidecar Project and for a summary of the pilot results.

### TRiO SSS COLLABORATION: THE WRITING MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

TWC continued its collaboration with TRiO Student Support Services through the Writing Mentorship Program. This Writing Center program helps TRiO students prepare to meet the University's writing proficiency requirements and to become more successful writers in their academic courses. In an effort to improve the Writing Mentorship Program, Writing Center and TRiO staff revised the writing portion of the C&I 160 curriculum in spring 2010, focusing on building student awareness of their own writing processes and of TWC as a service available throughout their academic careers. For a description of this curriculum, see Appendix C. Working closely with the C&I 160 course instructors, TWC's Associate Directors facilitated in-class workshops, met one-to-one with each student to discuss drafts of a writing assignment, and advised each student regarding the necessary steps to meet the University's writing competencies and General Education Writing Requirements. Comments from TRiO staff and students regarding the revised Writing Mentorship Program continue to be extremely positive, reiterating the program's positive impact on students' academic writing abilities (see Appendix A). Data suggest that this program has also influenced TRiO students' successful completion of the UDWPA requirement.

TRiO student use of TWC is difficult to track with precision since not all TRiO students who make appointments at TWC identify themselves as participating in TRiO. However, data show that the 2010-2011 academic year saw at least 606 TRiO student consultations with a writing tutor in TWC.

## WORKSHOPS

### In-class Customized Workshops

The Writing Center Director and Associate Directors led 114 in-class workshops and orientations customized to meet the instructional goals of the instructors who requested them. These workshops were designed for disciplines as diverse as Anthropology, Biology, Economics, Forestry, Linguistics, Literature, Microbiology, Pharmacy, Social Work, and Sociology, among others. Staff also designed and delivered workshops for academic units such as American Indian Student Services, Athletics, Foreign and International Student and Scholar Services, TRiO Student Support Services, and Upward Bound. The workshops range from a 20-minute overview of TWC's services, to multi-hour workshops that teach students how to better address the writing expectations and conventions of a specific course or discipline. These workshops enact the philosophy that students develop as writers across their academic tenures and in every discipline. In effect, discipline-specific workshops help to ensure that writing instruction is integrated across the curriculum and that support for student writing instruction is the shared responsibility of all departments. Steady growth in the number of workshops offered each semester is demonstrated in Table 5. See Appendix D for a complete list of in-class presentations and the courses in which they were delivered during the 2010-2011 academic year.

### Faculty and Graduate Student Teaching Assistant Workshops

TWC also continued to facilitate faculty workshops on writing-related instruction. During the 2011 spring semester, the Writing Center Director and Associate Director co-presented two new workshops on providing effective feedback in response to student writing. Attendance was high with 26 faculty members and 23 graduate student teaching assistants from across disciplines participating. These workshops led to follow-up Writing Center consultations with individual faculty members who sought guidance in designing writing assignments and evaluating student writing.

### UDWPA Workshops

Writing Center staff continued to offer a preparatory one-hour workshop for the UDWPA twice prior to each of the six exams offered during the academic year (Table 5). In addition, TWC offered a UDWPA workshop specifically for School of Education students. The UDWPA workshop presents exam preparation strategies and information on structuring essays of the type expected for the UDWPA. Workshops are most beneficial for students who have not previously taken the exam; students who have failed the exam are encouraged to schedule an individual appointment with a Writing Center tutor.

Table 5.  
Workshops offered, autumn 2002-spring 2011.

Semester	A '03	S '04	A '04	S '05	A '05	S '06	A '06	S '07	A '07	S '08	A '08	S '09	A '09	S '10	A '10	S '11
In-class workshops	31	27	31	14	27	21	36	18	27	30	42	34	55	46	63	51
In-class workshop attendees			785	391	652	605	782	567	870	733	912	851	1,332	1,045	1,447	1,326
UDWPA workshops	14	9	9	13	8	12	8	8	4	6	4	6	6	6	6	6
UDWPA workshop attendees	311	213	127	265	244	213	186	NA	140*	210*	140*	210*	210*	210*	210*	210*

\* Approximations

## WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES PROJECT

TWC's new Writing in the Disciplines Project enacts the philosophy that the campus community has a shared responsibility for supporting students' development as writers. In an effort to foster this shared responsibility, TWC selected two academic departments—English and Sociology—and collaborated with faculty in these departments to create discipline-specific writing resources aimed at making public the writing conventions unique to each discipline. Appendix E provides an example of the Sociology resource created through this project.

The Writing in the Disciplines Project resulted not only in discipline-specific resources available to students on TWC's website but also in professional development opportunities for TWC tutors. Faculty from English and Sociology attended Writing Center tutor meetings to discuss with tutors writing in their respective disciplines. TWC plans to collaborate with two new academic discipline each semester to build a bank of discipline-specific resources and to foster relationships with academic departments.

## FACULTY AND STAFF CONSULTATIONS

New during the 2010-2011 academic year, the Director and Associate Directors offered writing consultations for faculty and staff. Faculty and staff took advantage of this new service as they worked on a variety of writing projects, which included grant proposals, an article manuscript, a book manuscript, and a dissertation. TWC will continue promoting faculty and staff use of experienced Writing Center readers.

Writing Center staff also continued to facilitate one-to-one consultations with faculty members in order to support effective teaching. These consultations focused on assignment design, methods for responding to student writing, and ideas for using writing in large classes as a means to promote thinking and learning. In some cases, a consultation with a faculty member led to consultations with other faculty members in the department and to Writing Center facilitated in-class workshops.

For a complete list of faculty and staff consultations on their own writing and teaching, see Appendix F. Table 6 summarizes the number of faculty and staff consultations facilitated during the 2010-2011 academic year.

Table 6.  
Faculty and Staff Writing and Teaching Consultations

Semester	Autumn '10	Autumn '11
Consultations on Writing	9	13
Participants	38	14
Consultations on Teaching	17	6
Participants	56	57

## ACADEMIC COURSES

### Critical Writing II (UNC 270)

TWC offered four sections of Critical Writing II (UNC 270), an approved General Education Writing Course. Class size is capped at 24 for face-to-face sections and at 20 for online sections, allowing for intense individual instruction and extensive feedback on numerous pieces of writing as students move through a recursive revision process. The course teaches students to analyze their academic writing tasks, read critically, navigate disciplinary conventions, and write in an orderly, well-developed, and clear fashion.

Associate Director Jake Hansen taught two face-to-face sections of UNC 270 while an adjunct taught two online sections. The online delivery format preserves the community building so critical to any classroom environment and works to ensure that the course continues to be grounded in the published course learner outcomes that were updated in the autumn of 2009.

Despite consistent student enrollment in the course, beginning autumn 2011, UNC 270 no longer will be offered. This course deletion is part of a broad effort to find academic homes for every course and to eliminate courses that duplicate material taught in other courses.

### Research Portfolio Seminar (HC 320E)

In collaboration with the Davidson Honors College, TWC offers one section each semester of Research Portfolio Seminar (HC 320E). During the 2009-2010 academic year, Associate Director Gretchen McCaffrey revised the course curriculum, which now fulfills the Ethics and Human Values General Education Requirement. This revision allows for a joint focus on students' research projects and on the ethical concerns in research. The purpose of the material on ethical traditions is to "teach students how to approach the ethical decisions they will make as researchers." Assisting undergraduate students with their independent research projects, which are directed by their research advisors, the course emphasizes writing strategies, including extensive revision and disciplinary conventions. Class size is capped at ten students, and participants are often, but not limited to, students completing their Honors Research Project.

### Peer Writing Tutor Preparation (HC 295)

While spring semester 2009 saw a new course offering through TWC and in collaboration with the Davidson Honors College—Peer Writing Tutor Preparation (HC 295)—the course was not offered during the 2010-2011 academic year due to limited funding available to hire additional peer tutors. This seminar offers students the opportunity to move from the traditional role as student to the more dynamic role as peer writing tutor. Throughout the semester, students not only learn how to facilitate others' growth as writers but also become more effective writers themselves as they explore the value of collaborative learning, the effectiveness of one-to-one tutoring, and the theories and pedagogies of writing and peer tutoring. Through a combination of readings, writings, discussion, and experiential practice in the art of student-to-student tutoring and in the art of providing written feedback to writers, students develop confidence and experience in helping their peers to develop as writers. Students who successfully completed the spring 2009 course were invited to apply to become a peer writing tutor for the 2009-2010 academic year. These peer tutors continued tutoring through the 2010-2011 academic year.

## MEDIA OUTREACH

### TWC Website: Griz Online Writing Lab (GROWL)

Associate Director Jake Hansen designed and launched a new Writing Center website that more effectively serves as a one-stop location advertising TWC's services, providing an entry point for appointment scheduling and archiving writing-related resources for students and faculty. The launching of the new Griz Online Writing Lab—affectionately named GROWL—allows TWC to build a virtual hub for campus conversations related to writing. In addition to providing a professional and user-friendly public face for TWC, the new website offers resources for writers at any level and for teachers interested in integrating writing into any class. TWC website also provides routinely updated announcements.

### TWC Video: "How Pizza and Burritos Can Help You Start Your Paper"

Spring 2011 saw TWC's first video production as a result of a new partnership between TWC and the Undergraduate Advising Center, both departments housed in the Office for Student Success. Titled "How Pizza and Burritos Can Help You Start Your Paper" and designed to help students attend to the thinking that needs to happen as they interpret their writing assignments and begin to generate ideas for a paper, the video provides strategies for successfully starting a

paper and establishes TWC as a resource. Alex Hoelscher, The Peer Connection Network Lead Producer and Senior Media Arts major, provided his leadership and expertise in producing an engaging and educational video featuring faculty member Dr. Daisy Rooks. The video is available for viewing on TWC website.

### UDWPA Website

In response to the new UDWPA website, TWC received feedback indicating that the website more efficiently and clearly communicates UDWPA-related information to students, faculty, and staff. Associate Director Jake Hansen designed the independent UDWPA website, allowing for a more distinct separation of TWC's role in helping students develop as writers and in administering the UDWPA. This significant change served two critical purposes: to preclude conflation of TWC and the UDWPA and to provide a more professional and user-friendly forum for communicating UDWPA information to the University community. This site went live at the beginning of spring 2010, and feedback from advisors and students has been positive. Users can now more easily navigate information outlining 1) the purpose of the exam, 2) recent announcements regarding current academic year exams, 3) how to register for the exam, and 4) how to prepare for the exam. Writing Center staff will continue to update and revise this new website based on campus feedback.

### Online Tutoring and Teaching

An online tutoring pilot funded by a Montana University System grant began spring semester 2009, and online tutoring continued during the 2010-2011 academic year. Designed to allow for synchronous tutoring sessions via live audio, TWC's online writing tutoring environment preserves that which is most valuable in face-to-face tutoring: spontaneous, collaborative dialogue that requires the engagement of the student writer. Of those academic institutions offering some form of online writing tutoring, over 90% do so in an asynchronous format, a fact that may compromise the ethos of writing center work. This statistic suggests that TWC's synchronous online tutoring model is a rare attempt among research institutions. In partnership with UMOonline, TWC plans to continue to assess this new form of tutorial delivery, making changes as necessary.

In an effort to foster student awareness and use of TWC's online tutoring service, TWC also began to partner with UMOonline's new Exploration of Online Learning course (C&I 195). Intended to support retention by familiarizing students with online learning resources and promoting effective online learning behaviors, this course is an ideal site for students to learn about and use online writing tutoring. TWC piloted this collaboration, which embeds a writing tutor into the online course, in autumn 2010 during two eight-week sections of the course and continued the collaboration during the 2011 spring semester. TWC currently is working with the C&I 195 instructor to embed an online tutor in the 2011 summer session section. UMOonline and TWC plan to expand this collaboration to other sections of C&I 195.

TWC also continued to offer an online section of Critical Writing II (UNC 270) during both the autumn and spring semesters. Enrollment in both sections reached the course cap, allowing for a productive community of writers.



## ADMINISTRATION OF THE UDWPA

TWC administers all aspects of the UDWPA with the assistance of the Registrar’s Office. The exam is offered six times each academic year. To avoid the higher costs of administering the exam in the GBB computer labs, as many sections as possible this academic year were held in the LA and UC computer labs. Student performance on the UDWPA exam by semester is summarized in Table 7.

Table 7.  
Summary of student performance on the UDWPA exam by semester, spring 2003– spring 2011.

Semester	S '03	A '03	S '04	A '04	S '05	A '05	S '06	A '06	S '07	A '07	S '08	A '08	S '09	A '09	S '10	A '10	S* '11
UDWPA attempts	697	1,665	537	985	1,654	922	1,649	887	1463	764	1,338	731	1,288	781	1,495	936	1,381
UDWPA Passes	474	1,076	285	550	904	611	1,052	602	943	596	1,166	592	1,050	649	1,168	715	1,055
UDWPA Fails	223	589	252	435	750	311	597	285	520	168	172	139	238	132	327	221	326
% passing	68.0	64.6	53.0	55.8	54.6	66.2	63.7	67.8	64	78.0	87.1	80.9	81.5	83.1	78.1	76.4	76.4

\*Does not include June 2011 UDWPA test results.

During spring 2010 and spring 2011, the ASCRC Writing Committee devoted its attention to the UDWPA test vehicle. As an ex-officio member of this committee, the Writing Center Director contributed to these discussions and to the drafting of a formal report in spring 2010 (“The ASCRC Writing Committee Report on Writing Assessment Practice at The University of Montana”). This report outlines 1) a brief history of the UDWPA, 2) research-based beliefs about writing and writing assessment, 3) the current status of the UDWPA as measured against these beliefs, and 4) potential alternatives to the current UDWPA test vehicle. ASCRC responded to this report by requesting that the Writing Committee draft a formal recommendation informed by the 2010 report’s findings. This spring 2011 report (“The ASCRC Writing Committee Recommendation on Writing Assessment Practice at The University of Montana”) made two recommendations: 1) discontinue large-scale individual writing assessment in the form of the UDWPA exam and 2) implement program-level writing assessment. The spring 2011 recommendation report is included in Appendix G.

## FUNDING

The 2010-2011 academic year posed continued financial challenges to TWC in light of increased student demand for one-to-one tutoring sessions and increased faculty demand for one-to-one consultations and in-class workshops. These challenges are not unique to TWC as they are part of the larger fiscal landscape at the University. To meet increased demand and to offset the cost of sustaining tutoring services, the Writing Center Director and Associate Directors tutored a significant number of hours, absorbing into their salaries a large portion of tutoring costs. While

this impacted their ability to work on and expand other important Writing Center projects such as various writing across the curriculum initiatives, the increase in student demand necessitated this move.

Despite a challenging budget landscape, TWC facilitated thousands of tutoring sessions with students during the 2010-2011 academic year. This was facilitated, in part, by a one-time-only contribution from the Office of the Provost and additional one-time sources of funding secured by the Director. The Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education awarded TWC and UOnline a shared grant to continue offering online writing tutoring. Additionally, TWC earned a small return from UOnline for the teaching of two online sections of Critical Writing II. TRiO Student Support Services provided funding for some TRiO student tutoring. The Davidson Honors College also contributed instructional support funding to TWC in return for the teaching of the Research Portfolio Seminar. Perkins money funded all tutoring on the College of Technology's West campus.

While these additional funding sources were essential to TWC's ability to meet student demand for its services and while the Writing Center Director plans to continue seeking out such partnerships and funding sources, a more sustainable investment is necessary. TWC's tutoring hours currently are at capacity while demand continues to grow. One-time, ad hoc investments will neither ensure that the programs and initiatives added remain viable nor that the number of tutoring hours available to students during the 2010-2011 academic year become regularly offered Writing Center hours. With additional resources, TWC would be able to increase the number of tutoring appointments available for students and would be able to expand its writing across the curriculum initiatives, specifically TWC's discipline-specific writing workshops, the Sidecar Project, and the Writing in the Disciplines Project. TWC's valuable role in supporting students' development as writers and in bolstering retention rates at the University requires a sustainable investment.

## INSTRUCTIONAL CONTACTS WITH STUDENTS

The following numbers of instructional contacts with students do not include semester-length courses taught, phone, email, referral or special UDWPA test contacts. The numbers therefore indicate TWC's *minimum* number of instructional contacts with students during the 2010-2011 academic year.

Autumn 2009: 4,458

Spring 2010: 4,904

**Total 2010-2011 academic year instructional contacts with students: 9,362**

---

Report prepared and respectfully submitted by Kelly Webster, Director of The Writing Center.

## APPENDIX A

### Faculty and Student Feedback on Writing Center Services

---

#### *Examples of Faculty and Staff Feedback*

“I’m confident I can speak for [English faculty] in saying how grateful we are for the work you and your staff are doing – not just for our department but for the entire campus.”

Eric Reimer, English

“Thank you so much for conducting a wonderful session on meaningful feedback for the Faculty Development Office series. I thought you all did a great job of offering concrete advice and broadly applicable strategies.”

Amy Kinch, Faculty Development Office

“I appreciate the time you devoted to designing and delivering a workshop that will benefit my students. Faculty and students are lucky to have the support of the Writing Center.”

Randy Wood, Social Work

“Jacob Hansen was a terrific help to our graduate students this semester...I really appreciate his time in helping me come up with a useful set of writing workshops for our graduate students. It is very comforting to know we have such expertise so readily accessible.”

Steve Yoshimura, Communications

“Thank you so much for presenting information to our students on great essay writing. We, as a faculty, and they, as applicants, really appreciate the valuable service you provided!”

Lucy Hart Paulson, Communicative Sciences and Disorders

“I finished grading all papers for both ANTH 310 and 415...many [students] had better paper organization and...original ideas. I think that the Writing Center staff really helped them to develop their topics. Thank you very much for your help and for the Writing Center’s efforts!”

Noriko Seguchi, Anthropology

“When I work with the UM writing center staff, I become better at developing clear expectations and assessments for my students’ writing. Working with The Writing Center is also hugely beneficial for my students. In individual tutoring sessions and in-class writing workshops, they are exposed to a variety of methods for becoming more effective writers.”

Daisy Rooks, Sociology

“Amanda Taylor was very effusive about [her Writing Center tutor] at the end of her MA thesis defense this morning. She passed with flying colors, and her committee remarked about how fun and exciting it was to read her thesis, and how beautifully written it was. I attribute much of her now found clarity to her work with [her tutor].”

Daisy Rooks, Sociology

“My students get so much out of guest speakers and tutelage from The Writing Center...it really helps them to learn to write outside of the box for their creative proposals. The Writing Center is an essential part of my curriculum.”

Gita Saedi Kiely, Journalism

“A TRiO student, just yesterday, was touting the Writing Center. He said it has been instrumental in his persistence and success. He is grateful for the resource, and constantly promotes it to his friends.”

Heather Hibbard, TRiO SSS

“Thanks for your exuberant connection with our program and our students. The success of the link between the Writing Center and TRiO has been rewarding for students and for me.”

Janet Zupan, TRiO SSS

“Thank you so much for facilitating the UDWPA workshop for Student Athletes. It was very helpful, and we know they will be much more successful on the upcoming assessments. We also appreciate your willingness to stay late for the workshop!”

Darr Tucknott, Athletics

---

### *Examples of General Student Feedback*

“Thank you so much for all of your great help with my Psychology papers. Not only do I produce better papers but also I learn from your tutors. The service you provide to the students of UM is incredibly valuable!”

Treva Bittinger, student

“I always felt extremely motivated to go write after an appointment with a Writing Center tutor.”

Haley Kramer, student

“[The tutor] asked us to really critically challenge our own ideas. This, in turn, made my paper stronger. I had to step back and try to read it from another person’s perspective.”

Anonymous, Sidecar student

“I really liked how much [the tutor] looked into each paper and gave feedback on every level – sentence structure, organization, and overall focus. I liked being able to run ideas past people who knew my paper.”

Lauren Cornelisse, Sidecar student

“Each time that I went to the Writing Center I always found the tutors to be very helpful. Having someone else, especially an experienced writer, look over your paper is so great. They are able to see problems that you missed entirely and help you come up with ways to make your writing clearer and stronger. I would definitely recommend the Writing Center to anyone who wants help with a paper, whether they are just starting it or putting on the final touches.”

Benjamin Cernick, student

“I have recently taken advantage of the services offered by Kelly Webster and her team and have found these individuals to be approachable...and to possess a valuable wealth of information as I work on my papers for Nursing. I have no idea what kind of meaningful recognition these individuals typically receive, but I feel confident they probably deserve more!”  
Bodee Alt, student

---

*Examples of TRiO Student Feedback*

“My meeting with [the tutor] went very well...We discussed my fear of writing and [the tutor] made me feel more confident in my ability to write. I really enjoyed the [TRiO/Writing Center writing activity] because it helped to encourage me and make me feel like I can succeed in college.”  
Jodi Kinney, TRiO student

“I have found the writing center to be a wonderful asset on campus...The writing center has challenged me to think further about the development and structure of my writing assignments.”  
Robin Holcomb, TRiO student

“Through the writing center, I have come to enjoy writing more and feel more confident in my ability to write.”  
Landon Seipert, TRiO student

“I was very nervous as I entered the Writing Center. I have a bit of anxiety when it comes to letting people read my work. [The tutor] was very nice and gave some great insight into slowing down my process and fine tuning my thesis.”  
Richard March, TRiO student

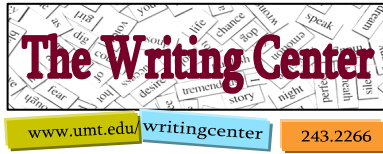
“[The tutor] helped me figure out what I’m struggling with the most. He helped me get a clear understanding of what future approaches I should use when I have writing assignments.”  
Angelica Quintero, TRiO student

“My meeting with [the tutor] really helped me build confidence in my ability to write.”  
Haley Running Crane, TRiO student

“The [TRiO/Writing Center writing activity] influenced how I will prepare for writing assignments in the future.”  
Josh Saltmer, TRiO student

“The tutor gave me some suggestions on how to improve the flow and content of my writing and how to make it stronger in general. Completing this writing activity has helped me realize that writing can actually be fun. I just need more practice with it. I will definitely start utilizing the Writing Center for all of my upcoming papers.”  
Jake Higgins, TRiO student

## APPENDIX B



### The Writing Center's Sidecar Project: 2011 Pilot and Future Plans

---

#### *Overview*

The Writing Center's Sidecar Project provides small-group writing tutoring in the context of writing intensive courses across the curriculum. Writing tutors embedded into these courses offer tutoring tailored to the course objectives and assignments. Partnering with the Davidson Honors College and collaborating with faculty member Erin Brown, The Writing Center (TWC) piloted the Sidecar Project in a spring 2011 section of WRIT 101.

Encouraged by the success of this pilot, TWC hopes to secure funding to expand Sidecar Project collaborations to other writing intensive courses across the curriculum. Toward this end and during the 2011 summer session, TWC will run its second Sidecar Project collaboration with the Sociology Department's Classical Theory course (SOCI 455) taught by Dr. Daisy Rooks. Based on assessment results from the initial pilot and from the 2011 summer Sidecar Project collaboration, TWC plans to design and implement future Sidecar Project collaborations across disciplines.

#### *Spring 2011 Pilot Goals and Design*

The inspiration for TWC's Sidecar Project comes from a similar small-group tutoring model at Washington State University. Focused on providing students with supplemental writing instruction that aligns with the partnering course's outcomes, TWC's Sidecar Project helps students become more effective writers and more critical readers *in the context of* a specific course and its writing assignments.

#### *Goals*

The following goals guided TWC's pilot design:

- Reinforce the philosophy/pedagogy that informs the course curriculum (in this case, WRIT 101);
- Encourage student writers to make and interrogate their strategic decisions as they compose;
- Facilitate student understanding of the nature and value of substantial revision;
- Demonstrate to students the value of collaboration;
- Provide opportunities for students to develop procedural knowledge of the kinds of collaborative learning behaviors characteristic of strong writers.

As TWC expands the Sidecar Project to include other disciplines and courses, TWC expects these goals to change and emergent goals to arise.

#### *Description*

These goals reflect TWC's mission: to provide students – through collaborative dialogue – with opportunities to rehearse composing and revision strategies used by effective writers. Because

dialogue is at the heart of social learning behaviors and because tutoring is an enactment of the social nature of learning, the 2011 Sidecar Project pilot centered on collaborative conversation among peer writers and professional tutors. Through dialogue, the Sidecar tutor facilitated small-group tutoring sessions that aimed to help students develop strategic knowledge of how to read and compose a piece of writing within the constraints of a particular writing assignment and course. This “tutorial talk” afforded students a unique and non-evaluative space in which to explore ideas and rehearse strategies that they could enact in their writing for the course. In effect, TWC’s Sidecar Project pilot ultimately aimed to promote the development of student writers and to positively influence their ability to write in other University contexts

The 2011 spring Sidecar Project pilot placed writing tutors in the Davidson Honors College section of WRIT 101. As a writing intensive course with required formal writing assignments and limited enrollment, this course allowed for a manageable pilot environment. After the selected writing tutors worked with the faculty member to understand the course expectations and to schedule the Sidecar Project meetings, students were divided into five Sidecar groups of four. Each group was assigned a writing tutor who met with the same group throughout the semester. The WRIT 101 instructor made participation in a Sidecar group a course requirement, a fact which became critical to the success of the groups.

Student drafts of each of the four major writing projects served as focal points for the Sidecar group meetings. Prior to each small-group meeting, students emailed their drafts to all members of the group and were expected to read and provide informal feedback on each draft. During each Sidecar meeting, the tutor led a discussion focused on each student’s draft, inviting students to join him/her in providing detailed feedback that would aid each writer in effective revision. Toward this end, the tutor modeled effective feedback while students practiced strategies for revision.

Oral and written feedback on student writing was grounded in both the instructor’s evaluative criteria for each assignment and in a hierarchy of feedback criteria which prioritized global issues (assignment requirements and main point/thesis) over local issues (organization and editing). This provided a structured protocol for feedback. By asking students to prioritize and structure their feedback, tutors helped students to assess their own and others’ writing based on a prioritized set of concerns:<sup>1</sup>

- Assignment – The writing demonstrates an understanding of the expectations and requirements of the assignment.
- Focus – The writing consistently serves a main point or arguable thesis.
- Organization – The writing has sections that function as a beginning, middle, and end. These sections build on previous information and continually return to the main points of the paper.
- Support – The writing contains acceptable evidence that supports the main point and any argumentative claims.
- Proofreading – The writing is “polished” and free of surface-level errors.

---

<sup>1</sup>This list of prioritized concerns is adapted from a Washington State University handout on providing feedback in small-group tutoring scenarios.

## *Student and Faculty Perspectives*

### Student Survey

An anonymous survey of pilot participants revealed that students found the Sidecar sessions valuable in helping them to both revise their papers and make better decisions as writers. Of all students who participated in the pilot:

- **93%** strongly agreed or agreed that Sidecar sessions were helpful as they wrote their papers.
- **100%** strongly agreed or agreed that Sidecar sessions helped them better understand the expectations of the instructor and assignment.
- **100%** made changes in their papers as a result of the feedback they received during Sidecar sessions.
- **100%** made major revisions (overhaul of ideas, started over, re-visioned the essay) and/or mid-level revisions (organization, further development of existing points).
- **93%** strongly agreed or agreed that the opportunity to give feedback and receive feedback from peers was helpful.

When asked what they found most valuable about their Sidecar sessions, students identified key benefits:

“[The tutor] asked us to really critically challenge our own ideas. This, in turn, made my paper stronger. I had to step back and try to read it from another person’s perspective.”

“The tutor and students helped me to look at my topics in ways I hadn’t thought of before.”

“It was really helpful working in a small group with a Writing Center instructor to focus solely on my paper.”

“Discussing ideas and brainstorming with our sidecar group was extremely helpful, and I always had a lot of good revisions ideas after our discussions.”

“I really liked how much [the tutor] looked into each paper and gave feedback on every level – sentence structure, organization, and overall focus. I liked being able to run ideas past people who knew my paper.”

“It really helped me improve my papers.”

“I found if I had sidecar before I wrote my essay, the essay was easier to write.”

“Finding problems with the thesis or with the support.”

### Faculty Feedback

The Davidson Honors College WRIT 101 instructor, Erin Brown, found the Sidecar sessions helpful to her students as they composed and revised their papers and as they worked to understand the evaluative criteria for each assignment. She reported that students “appeared to benefit from the focus on clarifying topics” and that students “voiced their happiness with the focus on organization.” Because the Sidecar Project collaboration reinforced the participating instructor’s pedagogy, Sidecar sessions effectively clarified and provided strategies for fulfilling the instructor’s expectations for each formal writing assignment.



### ***Future Sidecar Projects***

While TWC's Sidecar Project pilot proved successful, it also revealed the need to reshape and expand future Sidecar collaborations. Based on feedback from the students and tutors who participated in the pilot, TWC will implement the following strategies, as resources allow:

- Collaboration with participating faculty member:
  - Work more closely with the faculty member to clarify the tutors', students', and faculty member's responsibilities in making the Sidecar Project successful;
  - Stress to students that Sidecar sessions are a mandatory component of the course.
- Growth:
  - Expand to new disciplines;
  - Expand to approved Writing and Upper-division Writing Courses;
  - Seek funding.
- Logistics:
  - Require that students in each group bring written feedback in response to their peers' writing;
  - Meet more often during the semester and for longer periods of time;
  - Limit each Sidecar group to four students;
  - Schedule Sidecar sessions at an earlier stage in students' writing process;
  - Create a more manageable method for scheduling Sidecar meetings.
- Tutoring Strategies:
  - Refine strategies for teaching students to provide constructive feedback;
  - Develop a bank of tutoring strategies specific to small-group learning environments;
  - Refine tutoring strategies that are responsive to the idea development stage in the writing process.

During the 2011 summer session, TWC will implement some of these Sidecar Project refinements in its summer Sidecar Project collaboration with the Sociology Department's Classical Theory course (SO CI 455). Dr. Daisy Rooks has agreed to work with TWC in designing this Sidecar Project collaboration.

TWC's ability to offer Sidecar Project collaborations during the 2011-2012 academic year is contingent upon adequate funding.

## APPENDIX C

### The Writing Center/TRiO Writing Mentorship Program Revisions

---

#### Program Objectives

- Provide a writing diagnostic as an entry to discuss writing with students on a one-to-one basis in The Writing Center;
- Provide one-to-one feedback on the writing diagnostic, discussing the student's approach to the writing task, indicating writing strengths and weaknesses, and framing effective writing as a process of revision;
- Introduce students to academic writing and to the composing process The Writing Center endorses;
- Offer course counseling;
- Provide writing support in the form of on-going tutoring, encouraging students to use The Writing Center as a resource throughout their academic careers;
- Meet and consult with TRiO staff as needed for planning, adjustments to the program, or any other matter that will help TRiO students develop into proficient writers.

#### Logistics

- 1) Provide students with a writing assignment that includes choice and evaluative criteria: offer two choices in the context of a writing assignment, making it clear that students must choose and respond to one of the choices while considering the assignment criteria;
- 2) Allow students one week to compose a typed essay in response to the chosen prompt. During this week, C & I 160 faculty will encourage students to begin early, to brainstorm, to draft, and to compose over time;
- 3) Allocate one hour of class time during this week to allow students to work on their drafts;
- 4) Collect drafts from students and distribute to Gretchen and Jake for reading. No score will be given;
- 5) Visit C & I 160 sections to discuss academic writing, the power of approaching writing as a process of revision, and general observations of the students' drafts;
- 6) Provide one-to-one feedback on students' drafts and course counseling in The Writing Center (using clipboard sign ups);
- 7) Invite students to revise their drafts based on feedback in The Writing Center.

#### Rationale

If a primary goal of the Writing Mentorship Program is to help students develop into proficient writers in an academic environment, The Writing Center's first introduction to them will be more effective if it is not in the context of a timed and scored writing assessment. TWC is in the business of helping students see writing as a complex and uneven process that requires revision over time, a view of writing that will serve students as they approach other writing tasks across their academic courses. The diagnostic we use should embody this, and students should come to view The Writing Center as a part of this prolonged process, not as the site for timed writing

instruction only, nor as the site for high-stakes evaluation. If we want students to develop the skills necessary to demonstrate their writing proficiency as college students, we need first to help them understand that the “magic” in effective writing is revision. If we want students to perceive The Writing Center tutors as allies, we need to avoid any potential suggestions that tutors formally evaluate student writing beyond assessing strengths and weaknesses in order to aid in a revision process and in meeting the expectations of various writing tasks, including timed assessments.

Additionally, a timed writing diagnostic is not an accurate representation of a student’s ability. While no single writing sample can give a comprehensive view of a student’s ability as a writer, inviting a student to write in response to a prompt over the course of one week can at least offer some insight into a student’s writing process without the constraints and anxieties imposed by a timed and scored assessment. Allocating a week for the writing of the diagnostic allows the writing tutor to discuss with the student how he/she approached the writing task over time.

Finally, student writing in response to the Writing Mentorship Program diagnostic should not be scored for two reasons: writing tutors should not provide formalized evaluations of student writing, whether in the form of grades or numbers based on a holistic rubric; and the numerical score does not serve any of the stated objectives of the Program. These objectives are better served by a writing assignment with specific expectations, expectations that the writing tutor can then refer to as he/she works with the student during a tutoring session. C & I 160 faculty report that the numerical score often looms larger than the feedback received in a one-to-one session with a writing tutor and that the score often prompts a negative response from students. Some students who receive a low score see it as confirmation that they are weak writers, and some who receive a mid-range or high score see it as justification that no further work on their writing is necessary. In both cases, the score becomes the focus, not the valuable feedback offered by the writing tutor, feedback that the C & I 160 instructors identify as the “most valuable part of the process.”

## APPENDIX D

**Autumn 2010 Class Orientations, Presentations, and Workshops**

Date/Time	Course	Professor/Instructor	Content	Location	Coverage	Students
June 23 10:00 AM	Upward Bound	Angelina Levandowski <a href="mailto:Angelina.levandowski@mso.umt">Angelina.levandowski@mso.umt</a>	WRC Orientation	Mtn. Campus	Jake	2
June 24 9:00 AM	Upward Bound	Angelina Levandowski <a href="mailto:Angelina.levandowski@mso.umt">Angelina.levandowski@mso.umt</a>	College Level Writing	Mtn. Campus	Jake	8
July 7 10:00 AM	PSYCH Soc Psych	Megan Gill <a href="mailto:mtgill7@gmail.com">mtgill7@gmail.com</a>	Writing Process and Assignment Feedback	CHEM	Jake	10
July 30 9:00 AM	COT Adjunct tech training	Robert Squires <a href="mailto:Robert.squires@umontana.edu">Robert.squires@umontana.edu</a>	Online Tutoring	COT	Jake	25
Aug. 23 1:15 PM	FISS	Effie Koehn <a href="mailto:Effie.koehn@umontana.edu">Effie.koehn@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation to American Academic Writing	UC Ballroom	Kelly	50
Aug. 23 2:15 PM	FISS	Effie Koehn <a href="mailto:Effie.koehn@umontana.edu">Effie.koehn@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation to American Academic Writing	UC Ballroom	Kelly	50
Aug. 25 9:00 AM	WRIT TA Training	Kate Ryan <a href="mailto:Kathleen.ryan@umontana.edu">Kathleen.ryan@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation to Writing Center Tutoring Exercise	LA 235	Kelly	25
Aug. 25 10:30 AM	WRIT Adjunct	Mark Medvetz <a href="mailto:Mark.medvetz@umontana.edu">Mark.medvetz@umontana.edu</a>	Adjunct Training	COT East	Kelly	15
Sept 1 9:40 AM	WRIT 101	Laurel Nakanishi	Orientation	LA 244	Jake	24
Sept 1 10:10 AM	WRIT 101	Liz Boheim	Orientation	LA 102	Jake	24
Sept 2 11:20 AM	WRIT 222	Cass Hemphill <a href="mailto:Cassandra.hemphill@umontana.edu">Cassandra.hemphill@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	FOR 305	Jake	36
Sept. 7 12:40 PM	CS 315 E	Alden Wright <a href="mailto:Alden.wright@umontana.edu">Alden.wright@umontana.edu</a>	Argumentative Writing	SS 362	Kelly	30
Sept 8 9:10 AM	PSYX 400	Lynn Koester <a href="mailto:Lynn.koester@umontana.edu">Lynn.koester@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	SS344	Jake	30

Sept. 8 12:10 PM	WRIT 101	Jennifer Harris <a href="mailto:Jennifer.harris@umconnect.umt.edu">Jennifer.harris@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 202	Kelly	24
Sept 8 12:15 PM	EDU	Jayna Lutz	SoEd Application Essay	EDU341	Jake	9
Sept 9 10:40 AM	BADM	Caroline Simms	Orientation/WPA	GBB 225	Jake	32
Sept 9 11:10 AM	BADM	Caroline Simms	Orientation/WPA	GBB 225	Jake	32
Sept 9 5:30 PM	EDU	Jayna Lutz	SoEd Application Essay	EDU 341	Jake	15
Sept. 10 11:30 AM	FIG	Robyn Hegland <a href="mailto:robyn.hegland@umconnect.umt.edu">robyn.hegland@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Orientation	GBB L09	Kelly	15
Sept. 15 9:10 AM	WRIT 101	Lauren Koshere <a href="mailto:Lauren.koshere@umconnect.umt.edu">Lauren.koshere@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 338	Kelly	24
Sept. 15 10:00 AM	UAC Advisors	Beth Howard <a href="mailto:Beth.howard@umontana.edu">Beth.howard@umontana.edu</a>	Facts for Advisors	EL 272	Kelly	8
Sept. 17 3:30 PM	FIG – Climate Change	Micheal Dorshorst <a href="mailto:Micheal.dorshorst@umconnect.umt.edu">Micheal.dorshorst@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 249	Gretchen	20
Sept. 20th 2:15 PM	WRIT 101	Nancy Moore 513-4619654	Orientation and Personal Academic Essay	LA 202	Jake	24
Sept. 21 2:10 PM	WRIT 101	Beth Baker <a href="mailto:elizabeth.baker@umconnect.umt.edu">elizabeth.baker@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 102	Jake	24
Sept. 21 8:10 AM	WRIT 101	Grace Brogan <a href="mailto:Grace.brogan@umconnect.umt.edu">Grace.brogan@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Orientation and freewriting	LA 102	Kelly	24
Sept. 21 11:10 AM	ART 203	Valerie Hedquist <a href="mailto:Valerie.hedquist@umontana.edu">Valerie.hedquist@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation UDWPA Preparation	SS 356	Kelly	60
Sept 22 6:30 PM	JOUR	Gita Saedi-Kiely <a href="mailto:westofkin@me.com">westofkin@me.com</a>	Response to Previous Writings	DAH	Jake	27
Sept. 26-30 7:00 PM	Enhancing Online Learning	Marlene Zentz <a href="mailto:Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu">Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu</a>	Class Discussion on online tutoring and academic writing (first 8-week course)	Online	Brooklyn	10

Sept. 27 12:10 PM	DHC FIG	Kelsey Olson <a href="mailto:Kelsey_olson@umconnect.umt.edu">Kelsey_olson@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Orientation	DHC 117	Jake	12
Sept. 28 11:30 AM	Plains HS	Deborah Morey <a href="mailto:moreydeb@hotmail.com">moreydeb@hotmail.com</a>	Orientation	Mansfield Library	Jake	38
Sept. 29 12:10 PM	HC 120	Jeff Garrison <a href="mailto:jgg@komazawa-u.ac.jp">jgg@komazawa-u.ac.jp</a>	Orientation Citation	DHC 117	Kelly	20
Sept 29 2:10	ECON	Jeff Bookwalter <a href="mailto:Jeff.bookwalter@mso.umt.edu">Jeff.bookwalter@mso.umt.edu</a>	Recursive Writing/Research	SS	Jake	25
Sept. 29 3:10 PM	HC 120	Laure Pengelly Drake <a href="mailto:Laure.drake@umontana.edu">Laure.drake@umontana.edu</a>	Introduction to Honors Orientation & Academic Writing	DHC 117	Kelly	20
Sept. 30 12:40 PM	SOC 562	Kathy Kuipers <a href="mailto:Kathy.kuipers@umontana.edu">Kathy.kuipers@umontana.edu</a>	Considering Sources Writing a Literature Review	SS 258	Kelly	10
Oct. 4 10:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM	Jake Gretchen	25
Oct. 4 7:00 PM	Athletics	Darr Tucknott <a href="mailto:Darr.tucknott@umontana.edu">Darr.tucknott@umontana.edu</a>	WPA Preparation	EL 272	Kelly	30
Oct. 5 9:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM	Jake Gretchen	25
Oct. 5 10:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM	Jake Gretchen	25
Oct. 5 11:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM	Jake Gretchen	25
Oct. 6 7:30 PM	Enhancing Online Learning	Marlene Zentz <a href="mailto:Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu">Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu</a>	Live Class Chat and Demonstration	Online	Brooklyn Jake	10
Oct 8 9:10 AM	FIG	Shannon Janssen	Orientation and Peer Review Workshop	EL 272	Kelly	20
Oct. 3:10 PM	DHC – PLS	James McKusick <a href="mailto:James.mckusick@umontana.edu">James.mckusick@umontana.edu</a>	Presidential Leadership Seminar Orientation & Academic Writing	DHC 117	Kelly	24
Oct. 13 11:10 AM	SOC	Daisy Rooks <a href="mailto:Daisy.rooks@umontana.edu">Daisy.rooks@umontana.edu</a>	Recursive Writing Processes	NAC	Jake	25
Oct 14 12:40 PM	WRIT 101	Kirsi Marcus <a href="mailto:kirsimarcus@gmail.com">kirsimarcus@gmail.com</a>	Orientation	LA 304	Jake	24

Oct. 15 11:10 AM	FIG – ENGL	Lindsey Appell <a href="mailto:Lindsey.appell@umconnect.umt.edu">Lindsey.appell@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Orientation Bruffee Discussion	LA 249	Kelly	11
Oct. 15 3:30 PM	SOC Grad Wrkshp	Kathy Kuipers & Daisy Rooks <a href="mailto:Kathy.kuipers@umontana.edu">Kathy.kuipers@umontana.edu</a>	MA Thesis and The Writing Center	SS 330	Kelly	15
Oct. 15 4:30 PM	UN Council	Effie Koehn <a href="mailto:EKoehn@mso.umt.edu">EKoehn@mso.umt.edu</a>	Orientation	EL 226	Kelly	30
Oct. 18 10:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM	Jake Gretchen	25
Oct 18 2:10 PM	C&I 200	Phillip Wittkiend	Orientation and the WPA	EDU 314	Jake	25
Oct. 19 9:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM	Jake Gretchen	25
Oct. 19 10:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM	Jake Gretchen	25
Oct. 19 11:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM	Jake Gretchen	25
Oct 20 9:10 AM	C&I 200	Phillip Wittkiend	Orientation and the WPA	EDU 215	Jake	25
Oct 20 2:10 PM	ECON	Jeff Bookwalter <a href="mailto:Jeff.bookwalter@mso.umt.edu">Jeff.bookwalter@mso.umt.edu</a>	Respond to Proposals	SS	Jake	25
Oct. 20 4:10 PM	NAS FIG	Jodi X6305/552-3141	Orientation Academic Writing	NAC 202	Kelly	15
Oct 21 8:10 AM	C&I 200	Phillip Wittkiend	Orientation and the WPA	EDU 314	Jake	15
Oct. 25 3:10 PM	HC 120	Jim McKusick <a href="mailto:James.mckusick@umontana.edu">James.mckusick@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation Revising Thoreau Essays	DHC 119	Kelly	20
Oct. 27 9:10 AM	HC 120	Andrea Vernon <a href="mailto:Andrea.vernon@umontana.edu">Andrea.vernon@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation & Academic Writing	DHC 117	Kelly	6
Oct. 28 5:10 PM	FIG – DHC	Kathy Steinhoff <a href="mailto:Kathleen.steinhoff@umconnect">Kathleen.steinhoff@umconnect</a>	Orientation	LA 249	Kelly	20
Nov. 5 1:10 PM	NAS	Salena Hill <a href="mailto:Salena.hill@umontana.edu">Salena.hill@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	NAC 202	Gretchen	22

Nov. 10 11:10 AM	SOC	Daisy Rooks <a href="mailto:Daisy.rooks@umontana.edu">Daisy.rooks@umontana.edu</a>	Writing With Exigency	NAC	Jake	25
Nov. 10 7:30 PM	C & I 195	Marlene Zentz <a href="mailto:Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu">Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu</a>	Live Chat and Discussion via Elluminate	Online	Jake Brooklyn	22
Nov. 16 3:40 PM	C & I 160	Merrilyn Lundal X4680	Orientation	LA 342	Kelly	25
Nov. 29 10:00 AM	SOC	Daisy Rooks <a href="mailto:Daisy.rooks@umontana.edu">Daisy.rooks@umontana.edu</a>	Consultant check- in/troubleshooting	NAC	Jake	4
Nov. 30 2:00 PM	CSD	Lucy Hart-Paulson	CSD Application Essay	Curry	Jake	17
Dec. 7 5:00 PM	Pharmacy		Pharmacy Application Workshop	SKAGGS	Gretchen	30

**Spring 2011 Class Orientations, Presentations, and Workshops**

Date/Time	Course	Professor/Instructor	Content	Location	Coverage	Students
Jan. 26 8:10 AM	WRIT 101	Joel Beatty <a href="mailto:Joel.beatty@umontana.edu">Joel.beatty@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 102	Gretchen	24
Jan. 26 12:10 PM	WRIT 101	Tom Seiler <a href="mailto:Thomas.seiler@umontana.edu">Thomas.seiler@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 104	Kelly	24
Jan. 26 11:10 AM	WRIT 101	Laurel Nakanishi <a href="mailto:Laurel.nakanishi@umontana.edu">Laurel.nakanishi@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	SS 254	Kelly	24
Jan. 27 11:10 AM	WRIT 101	Jayne Feary <a href="mailto:jfeary@jaymefeary.com">jfeary@jaymefeary.com</a>	Orientation	LA 102	Kelly	24
Jan. 27 2:00 PM	ECNS 560	Helen Naughton <a href="mailto:Helen.naughton@umontana.edu">Helen.naughton@umontana.edu</a>	Major Research Project	LA 401	Kelly	15
Jan. 28 12:10 PM	WRIT 101	Jeff Whitney <a href="mailto:Jeffrey.whitney@umontana.edu">Jeffrey.whitney@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	ED 312	Kelly	24

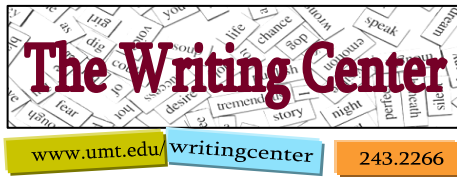


Jan. 28 2:10 PM	WRIT 101	Michelle Brown <a href="mailto:Michelle.brown@umontana.edu">Michelle.brown@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 102	Kelly	24
Jan. 28 10:00 AM	RECM 110S	Bill Borrie <a href="mailto:Bill.borrie@umontana.edu">Bill.borrie@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation and Time Analysis Assignment	FOR 301	Kelly	60
Jan. 31 9:10 AM	WRIT 101	Lauren Koshere <a href="mailto:Lauren.koshere@umontana.edu">Lauren.koshere@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 307	Kelly	24
Jan. 31 9:10 AM	WRIT 101	Nic Redig <a href="mailto:Nicholas.redig@umontana.edu">Nicholas.redig@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 306	Jake	24
Jan. 31 1:10 PM	WRIT 101	John Jepsen <a href="mailto:John.jepsen@umontana.edu">John.jepsen@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 102	Kelly	24
Feb. 1 8:10 AM	WRIT 101	Grace Brogan <a href="mailto:Grace.brogan@umontana.edu">Grace.brogan@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 102	Jake	24
Feb. 1 2:10 AM	WRIT 101	Becky Margolis <a href="mailto:beckymarr@gmail.com">beckymarr@gmail.com</a>	Orientation	LA 303	Jake	24
Feb. 2 10:10 AM	WRIT 101	Jennifer Harris <a href="mailto:Jennifer.harris@umontana.edu">Jennifer.harris@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LIB 283	Jake	24
Feb. 2 5:30 PM	SoEd	Jayna Lutz <a href="mailto:Jayna.lutz@mso.umt.edu">Jayna.lutz@mso.umt.edu</a>	SoEd Application Essay	EDU	Jake	4
Feb. 3 12:00 PM	SoEd	Jayna Lutz <a href="mailto:Jayna.lutz@mso.umt.edu">Jayna.lutz@mso.umt.edu</a>	SoEd Application Essay	EDU	Jake	6
Feb. 3 2:00 PM	PSY 400	Tom Seekins <a href="mailto:Tom.seekins@umontana.edu">Tom.seekins@umontana.edu</a>	Research Project – developing a topic and a thesis	CLAP 131	Kelly	40
Feb 7 10:10 AM	WRIT 101	Nancy Moore <a href="mailto:Nancy.moore@umontana.edu">Nancy.moore@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 338	Jake	24
Feb 7 11:10 AM	WRIT 101	Lise Lalonde	Orientation	LA 102	Jake	24
Feb. 7 12:10 PM	WRIT 101	Emma Torsz <a href="mailto:Emma.torsz@gmail.com">Emma.torsz@gmail.com</a>	Orientation	LA 249	Kelly	24
Feb 8 2:10 PM	WRIT 101	Beth Baker <a href="mailto:Elizabeth.baker@umontana.edu">Elizabeth.baker@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 102	Jake	24
Feb 8 2:10 PM	ANTH 415	Noriko Seguchi	Research paper	SS 254	Gretchen	22

Feb 9 10:10	ENLT 101	Jocelyn Siler <a href="mailto:jfsiler@umontana.com">jfsiler@umontana.com</a>	Orientation	LA 207	Jake	25
Feb 10 9:40 AM	GPHY 433	Jeffrey Gritzner <a href="mailto:Jeffery.gritzner@umontana.edu">Jeffery.gritzner@umontana.edu</a>	Cultural Geography Term Paper Writing	Old Journ 217	Kelly	25
Feb 10 11:10 AM	WRIT 101	Melissa Mylchreest <a href="mailto:mel.mylchreest@gmail.com">mel.mylchreest@gmail.com</a>	Orientation	LA244	Kelly	24
Feb. 10 10:35 AM	MGT 444	Caroline Simms <a href="mailto:Caroline.simms@business.umt.edu">Caroline.simms@business.umt.edu</a>	Orientation and WPA	GBB 226	Jake	30
Feb. 10 11:10 AM	MGT 444	Caroline Simms <a href="mailto:Caroline.simms@business.umt.edu">Caroline.simms@business.umt.edu</a>	Orientation and WPA	GBB 226	Jake	30
Feb 10 12:40 PM	WRIT 101	Kirsi Marcus <a href="mailto:kirsimarcus@gmail.com">kirsimarcus@gmail.com</a>	Orientation	LA 102	Jake	24
Feb 10 11:10 PM	ANTH 310	Noriko Seguchi	Research paper	SS 344	Gretchen	37
Feb. 11 11:10 AM	MICB 404	Eugene Kroll <a href="mailto:Jenya.kroll@gmail.com">Jenya.kroll@gmail.com</a>	Reading and Writing a Scientific Review	FOR 305	Kelly	12
Feb. 14 12:10 PM	WRIT 101	Mackenzi Cole <a href="mailto:mackenziecole@gmail.com">mackenziecole@gmail.com</a>	Orientation	LA 303	Jake	24
Feb. 15 3:40 PM	WRIT 101	Caroline Simms	Orientation	FA	Jake	24
Feb 17 12:40 PM	WRIT 101	Emily Jones <a href="mailto:Emjay7588@gmail.com">Emjay7588@gmail.com</a>	Orientation	LA 303	Jake	24
Feb 22 11:10 AM	ART 203	Valerie Hedquist <a href="mailto:Valerie.hedquist@umontana.edu">Valerie.hedquist@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation WPA workshop	SS 356	Kelly	60
Feb 22 3:40 PM	WRIT 101	Caroline Simms	Orientation	SS 344	Kelly	24
Feb. 24 9:40 AM	WRIT101	Kerry Bamazek <a href="mailto:Kerry.bamazek@umontana.edu">Kerry.bamazek@umontana.edu</a>	Orientation	LA 303	Jake	23
Feb. 24 10:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM 102	Jake Gretchen	30
Feb. 24 11:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	CHEM 102	Jake Gretchen	30

Feb 28 3:40 PM	COMM grad seminar	Steve Yoshimura <a href="mailto:Stephen.yoshimura@umontana.edu">Stephen.yoshimura@umontana.edu</a>	The Writing Process	SS	Jake	20
Feb. 28 10:00 AM	C&I 160	Janet Zupan and Tammy Freidmund	Academic Writing	FOR 206	Jake Gretchen	30
Mar 2 7:00 PM	Athletes	Zellmer-Cuaresma, Jennifer	WPA Workshop	EL 271	Kelly	24
Mar 3 12:40 PM	SOC 441	Kathy Kuipers <a href="mailto:Kathy.kuipers@umontana.edu">Kathy.kuipers@umontana.edu</a>	Writing a Literature Review	SS 330	Kelly	20
Mar 11 12:00 PM	AISS Soup	Salisha	Orientation to OSS support services	NAC	Jake/ Kelly	25
March 22 4:00 PM	UMCUR	Lauren Caldwell	Preparing and presenting posters	UC Theatre	Gretchen	50
March 23 4:00 PM	UMCUR	Lauren Caldwell	Preparing and presenting posters	UC Theatre	Gretchen	70
Mar 29 11:10 AM	SOC 455	Celia Winkler <a href="mailto:Celia.winkler@umontana.edu">Celia.winkler@umontana.edu</a>	Analytical, thesis-driven writing	FA 302	Jake	15
Mar 30 12:10 PM	SW 395	Randy Wood <a href="mailto:Randy.wood@umontana.edu">Randy.wood@umontana.edu</a>	Paraphrasing, Summarizing, Quoting, Citing in APA style	FA 211	Kelly	25
Mar 31 6:10 PM	FIG Leaders	Steve Edwards <a href="mailto:Stephan.edwards@umontana.edu">Stephan.edwards@umontana.edu</a>	Working with student writers	Library Buckhous	Kelly	30
Apr 11 3:40 PM	COMM grad seminar	Steve Yoshimura <a href="mailto:Stephen.yoshimura@umontana.edu">Stephen.yoshimura@umontana.edu</a>	Writing Workshop	SS	Jake	20
Apr 13 3:10 PM	GPHY 112	Brandon Krumwiede <a href="mailto:bk137285@umconnect.umt.edu">bk137285@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Writing in Geography	Old Journ 218	Kelly	20

## APPENDIX E



## Writing in Sociology

## General Advice and Key Characteristics

### Taking a Sociological Perspective

Like other social scientists, sociologists carefully observe human behavior and ask questions about what forces drive certain patterns in this behavior—they seek to understand human interaction in the context of society. In doing so, sociologists look not only at the behavior of individuals and groups but also at the structural systems that influence behavior. **Writing in sociology demands that you take a sociological perspective that views human behavior as “mediated, shaped, channeled, and influenced by social relationships and social systems.”**<sup>2</sup>

### Argument and Thesis

Most papers in sociology require that you use the sociological perspective defined above to form an argument whose thesis is supported by acceptable evidence. In a sociological argument, you must:

- be clear in stating your thesis.
- form explanations and draw conclusions that are grounded in appropriate evidence (see below). Depending on the type of writing assignment, sometimes this evidence is textual and sometimes this evidence is empirical (observed and collected).

### Analysis and Evaluation

Many writing assignments in sociology courses ask you to move beyond summary of texts or data. This means that in defending your thesis, you will be asked to *analyze* and *evaluate* texts or data. For example, you might be asked to critically evaluate a book, article, or set of texts to demonstrate a defensible idea, or you might be asked to analyze data you have collected to demonstrate a defensible conclusion.

### Evidence

As an empirical field, sociology accepts documented and carefully collected evidence. Whether you are making a critical argument about a text or set of texts, a theoretical argument, or a data-oriented argument, you must substantiate your argument with evidence that reflects observable examples of patterns in social behavior. *For each claim you make, ask yourself, “how do I know this?”*

<sup>2</sup> Johnson, William A.; Richard P. Rettig; Gregory M. Scott; and Stephen M. Garrison. 2006. *The Sociology Student Writer’s Manual*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

In sociology, accepted evidence generally falls into two categories. Even if you are writing a paper whose argument is based on reading of secondary texts, you should be aware of these types of data:

- Quantitative data measure subjects' or objects' behaviors or characteristics that differ in quantity. Quantitative data are expressed numerically and often are based on experiments, content analysis of written documents, surveys, and statistics. For example, you might look at how many couples in a particular group decide not to have children, how many employees in a particular organization use food stamps, or how many people in a particular group commit crimes.
- Qualitative data focus on variables that differ in quality rather than kind. Qualitative data—often based on observation, interviews, and texts—express qualities of behavior and can be used to understand patterns descriptive of a behavior. For example you may look at gender experience, at employees' attitudes toward their pay, or at gang members' perceptions of gang membership.

Generally, personal opinion or personal anecdotes are not appropriate evidence in a sociological argument; emphasize the research you or others have done, not your own experiences. This varies by assignment, so be sure to check with your professor to learn whether personal experiences count as evidence. Take care to distinguish between your opinion and evidence that is grounded in what a text actually says or in what the data actually tell you. Be rigorous in making this distinction.

### Documentation

Writers in sociology use the American Sociological Association (ASA) format for citation. Developed by professionals in the field, this documentation style allows writers to document consistently those aspects of source materials that most matter to the discipline. For example, ASA style places importance on authorship and on time and its passage. Because ASA format for citation is a complex and strict citation system, refer to a style guide such as the *American Sociological Association Style Guide* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.).

Using proper ASA style for citation allows you to:

- join a community of writers and readers who share certain values and a common citation system.
- build your credibility as a writer and researcher.
- provide readers access to your sources.
- make clear where your ideas end and another's begin. Whether you are quoting, summarizing, or paraphrasing in your own words, you *must* cite your sources. Even if you do not intend to plagiarize, if you do not properly cite your sources, you have plagiarized.

## Common Writing Tasks

### Critical Review of a Book, an Article, or the Literature

Whether you are reviewing a book, a selected article, or relevant literature on a particular topic, your task is not only to summarize but also to *evaluate* in order to identify the strengths and limitations of book, article, or set of texts. This evaluation will be based on criteria that grow out of the field of sociology and its recognition of the relationship between human behavior and social systems, not on criteria based in personal opinion or value judgments. In the case of a book review or article critique, you must identify the text's thesis, the methods used, the evidence/data presented, and any contributions to the field. Further, you must evaluate how convincingly the book or article accomplishes its purpose. In the case of a review of literature—an assignment that requires you to look at the relationships among texts—you must not only identify, summarize, and compare literature relevant to the topic under consideration, but also synthesize this literature in order to make a point about the current state of knowledge.

### Social Research Paper

#### *Identifying a question or problem*

A key step in writing a social research paper is identifying a question or problem worth investigating, a step that requires a lot of reading and note taking. You cannot identify methods or data appropriate for answering the question/solving the problem if you do not have a clear understanding of the problem in the first place. For example, through careful reading, you might formulate a question that asks about the relationship between stereotypes and how individuals identify themselves or about the relationship between homelessness and child rearing philosophies. Invest time in formulating a strong research question or problem.

#### *Research based on readings*

Some social research papers may invite you to familiarize yourself with the literature and to perform an analysis of this literature in order to argue for a particular perspective on a social issue. For example, a professor may ask you to present one potential solution to the problem of homelessness. A criminology professor may invite you to investigate and analyze current law with regard to a specific issue. These papers require careful reading and use of textual evidence from acceptable sources.

#### *Research based on readings and collected data*

Other research papers may invite you to apply sociological research methods to answer a particular question/test a hypothesis. These assignments may involve collecting and analyzing data. For example, a professor may invite you to pick a topic related to inequality and social justice, to define a problem/question related to that issue, to formulate a hypothesis, to test this hypothesis, and to report and discuss your findings. These research papers reflect the scientific method, which involves developing and testing a hypothesis in order to explain reality. The practice of scientific inquiry usually involves taking a number of steps, many of which require doing some informal writing before you put together your research paper:<sup>3</sup>

1. Define a problem and formulate a research question.
2. Conduct a literature review to determine what is known about the research problem.

---

<sup>3</sup> List adapted from the *The Sociology Student Writer's Manual*.

3. Formulate a meaningful hypothesis.
4. Identify dependent, independent, and intervening variables.
5. Formulate a research design.
6. Conduct the study.
7. Analyze and interpret the results.

These thinking and analyzing steps eventually will be reflected in the main parts of a data-oriented sociological research paper: Title page, Abstract, Introduction, Literature review, Methodology, Results, Discussion, and References.

### Application or Testing of a Theory

Some sociology writing assignments ask you to apply a theory (sometimes called an argument or perspective) to a particular case. For example, you may be asked to apply Karl Marx's theory of class conflict. Before you successfully can *apply a theory* to a case study, it is imperative that you have a good understanding of the theory, under what conditions it originally was constructed (e.g., is it only supposed to apply to economic transactions?), and what it attempts to explain. Once you have a good understanding of the theory, you can apply the theory to a specific case study that focuses on a particular unit of analysis (i.e. social group). When applying a theory to a particular example, keep in mind that you must analyze the example as it compares to the theory. That is, what does the theory help you to understand about the example? What does the theory fail to help you understand (where is it not a good fit)?

The *testing a theory* paper is similar to the applying a theory paper except that your purpose in testing a theory is to determine the veracity and usefulness of the theory. Do particular case studies confirm, disconfirm, or partially confirm the theory? You are therefore taking an evaluative approach in both types of papers: application papers evaluate a case study through the lens of a particular theory; testing papers evaluate a theory by trying it out on case studies to determine whether or not the theory's hypothesis holds.

### **Some Tips**

#### Questions to Ask of Your Draft

As you write and receive feedback on your papers, consider asking the following questions (not all questions are applicable to all types of assignments):

- Does my paper present an argument in which I support a certain perspective, claim, or conclusion? Do I make my thesis clear?
- Does my paper demonstrate that I did the necessary reading?
- How do I know my claims are true? Do I use evidence that is grounded in the reading or collected data rather than in personal experience?
- Does my essay have a meaningful organization that purposefully moves a reader from one idea to the next rather than from one example or piece of evidence to the next?
- Do I waste space on excessive summary of sources? Do I make purposeful choices about when to summarize, paraphrase, and quote primary and secondary sources?
- Do I distinguish my ideas from those of the authors/theories/articles I discuss? Do I make it clear where other's ideas end and where my ideas begin?

- Do I use proper ASA format for my paper and in documenting sources?
- If I am writing a data-oriented research paper, does my paper follow the accepted format for a sociological research paper: Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results, Discussion, References?
- Do I use subject headers in longer papers to help my reader organize the argument?

### **Common Pitfalls to Avoid**

When writing a paper for a sociology course, take care to avoid the following common pitfalls:

- *Flawed arguments* – Avoid three common flawed sociological arguments: arguing only from the perspective of the individual while ignoring social conditions, attributing patterns in behavior to “human nature,” and explaining behavior as caused by “society” in general without looking at the societal processes at work.
- *Excessive summarizing/lack of analysis* – Your task is to move beyond mere summary to help a reader understand your evaluation and analysis of the texts or data.
- *Lack of an adequately complex thesis* – A good thesis moves your reader beyond a simple observation. It asserts an arguable perspective that requires some work on your part to demonstrate its validity.
- *Lack of adequate support* – A well-crafted thesis requires substantiation in the form of acceptable evidence. Often, if your thesis doesn’t make a complex, arguable claim, the act of substantiation becomes difficult. Take care to develop a thesis that will require purposeful use of evidence.
- *Plagiarism* – Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s work or ideas, in any form, without proper acknowledgement. Whether you are quoting, summarize, or paraphrasing in your own words, you *must* cite your sources. Even if you do not intend to plagiarize, if you do not properly cite your sources, you have plagiarized.
- *Use of unreliable electronic sources* – Take care to rigorously evaluate your sources, particularly ones from the Internet. Ask who authored the information, who published or sponsored the information, how well the information reflects the author’s knowledge of the field, and whether the information is accurate and timely.
- *Use of personal opinion or anecdotes* – Personal opinions or anecdotes generally do not qualify as rigorous and appropriate sociological evidence in support of a claim. Your opinion does not qualify as data.
- *Improper use of a theory* – If you are applying or testing a particular theory, be sure you have a good understanding of this theory.
- *Excessive quoting* – When quoting a source in order to provide evidence, use only the relevant part of the quotation. When you establish a claim/assertion and provide textual support, be sure to explain the relationship between the quotation and the assertion. Your reader can’t read your mind.
- *Shifting verb tense* – Take care to shift verb tense only when necessary. Science’s strong sense of timing requires that you accurately reflect that research was performed in that past and that certain knowledge is current.
- *Passive voice* – Use active voice as often as possible. Active voice generally is more concise and lively than passive voice.
- *Reference to the author by his/her first name* – It is customary and respectful to refer to the author using his/her last name.



## APPENDIX F

**Autumn 2010 Faculty and Staff Consultations**

**T = Consultation on Teaching Strategies**  
**W = Consultation on Own Writing**

Date/Time	Dept.	Faculty/Staff Member	Content (Teaching or Writing?)	Location	Coverage	Participants
May 26 4:00 PM	C & I 195	Marlene Zentz <a href="mailto:Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu">Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu</a>	Consultation on Assignment Design and Embedding Writing Tutor (T)	LA 144	Kelly Brooklyn	1
July 1 2:00 PM	PSYCH Soc Psych	Megan Gill <a href="mailto:mtgill7@gmail.com">mtgill7@gmail.com</a>	Assignment Consultation (T)	CHEM 123	Jake	1
July 30 9:00 AM	COT Adjunct tech training	Robert Squires <a href="mailto:Robert.squires@umontana.edu">Robert.squires@umontana.edu</a>	Online Tutoring (T)	COT	Jake	25
Aug. 19 3:30 PM	Fresh Sem SOC	Daisy Rooks <a href="mailto:Daisy.rooks@umontana.edu">Daisy.rooks@umontana.edu</a>	Writing Assignment Feedback (T)	EL	Kelly	1
Aug. 26 11:10	JOUR	Gita Saedi-Kiely <a href="mailto:westofkin@me.com">westofkin@me.com</a>	Assignment Consult (T)	UC	Jake	1
Sept. 2 2:00 PM	FIG	Shannon Jannsen <a href="mailto:Shannon.jannsen@mso.umt.edu">Shannon.jannsen@mso.umt.edu</a>	Assignment Design Consult (T)	EL 269	Kelly	1
Sept. 15 1:00 PM	SOC 562	Kathy Kuipers <a href="mailto:Kathy.kuipers@umontana.edu">Kathy.kuipers@umontana.edu</a>	Assignment Consultation (T)	SS	Kelly	1
Oct. 13 10:00 AM	Staff Senate	Tammy Yedinak <a href="mailto:Tamara.yedinak@mso.umt.edu">Tamara.yedinak@mso.umt.edu</a>	Staff and the Writing Center (W)	GBB 382	Kelly	30
Oct. 26 8:30 AM	C & I 195	Marlene Zentz <a href="mailto:Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu">Marlene.zentz@umontana.edu</a>	Embedding Writing Tutor in C & I 195 (T)	LA 144	Jake Brooklyn	2
Oct. 27 1:00 PM	PSYCH	Nabil Haddad <a href="mailto:Nabil.haddad@umontana.edu">Nabil.haddad@umontana.edu</a>	Writing In Psychology planning meeting (T)	SB 143	Kelly	1
Nov. 1 9:00 AM	SOC	Kathy Kuipers and Daisy Rooks	Writing in Sociology planning meeting (T)	FFT	Kelly	2

Nov. 2 3:00 PM	TRiO	Violet Hopkins	Upward Bound Application – supplemental questions (W)	EL 282	Kelly	1
Nov. 3 2:15 PM	Pharmacy	Lori Morin	Revision of Pharmacy application essay questions (T)	Skaggs 335	Gretchen	1
Nov. 5 9:30 AM	MGMT	Suzanne Tilleman	Journal article manuscript draft (W)	LA 144	Gretchen	1
Nov. 9 3:00 PM	WRIT FOR	Carol Woodruff <a href="mailto:Carol.woodruff@umontana.edu">Carol.woodruff@umontana.edu</a>	UDWPA in-class workshop planning (T)	UC	Kelly	1
Nov. 10 12:30 PM	ENGL	Eric Reimer	Writing in Literature planning meeting (T)	FFT	Kelly	1
Nov. 12 10 AM	MGMT	Suzanne Tilleman	Journal article manuscript draft (W)	LA 144	Gretchen	1
Nov. 17 10:00 AM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.l.smith@mso.umt.edu">Tonya.l.smith@mso.umt.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	EL 282	Kelly	1
Nov. 17 1:30 PM	HHP	Gene Burns <a href="mailto:Gene.burns@mso.utm.edu">Gene.burns@mso.utm.edu</a>	Writing in HHP planning meeting (T)	UC	Kelly	1
Nov. 17 3:30 PM	WRIT	Lauren Koshere <a href="mailto:lauren.koshere@umconnect.umt.edu">lauren.koshere@umconnect.umt.edu</a>	Facilitating one-to-one student conferences in WRIT 101 (T)	EL 282	Kelly	1
Nov. 18 9:00 AM	MGMT	Suzanne Tilleman	Journal article manuscript draft (W)	LA 144	Gretchen	1
Dec. 8 2:30 PM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.l.smith@mso.umt.edu">Tonya.l.smith@mso.umt.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	LA 144	Kelly	1
Dec. 9 9:00 AM	Advising	Beth Howard <a href="mailto:Beth.howard@umontana.edu">Beth.howard@umontana.edu</a>	Advising Conversation (T)	EL 272	Kelly	15
Dec. 14 2:00 PM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.l.smith@mso.umt.edu">Tonya.l.smith@mso.umt.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	LA 144	Kelly	1
Dec. 20 11:00 AM	IYFD	Nancy Seldin 239-6546	Assessing Graduate Student Writing (T)	EL 281	Kelly	1
Dec. 20 12:30 PM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.l.smith@mso.umt.edu">Tonya.l.smith@mso.umt.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	EL 281	Kelly	1

**Spring 2011 Faculty and Staff Consultations**

**T = Consultation on Teaching Strategies**  
**W = Consultation on Own Writing**

Date/Time	Dept.	Faculty/Staff Member	Content (Teaching or Writing?)	Location	Coverage	Participants
Jan. 5 1:00 PM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.smith@umontana.edu">Tonya.smith@umontana.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	EL 281	Kelly	1
Jan. 6 9:00 AM	Career Services	Career Services Counselors	Coordination on working with students' cover letters and resumes (T)	Career Services	Kelly	4
Jan. 7 10:00 AM	TRIO	Tammy and Janet	C+I 160 Writing Consults (T)	FFT	Kelly/Gretchen/Jake	2
Jan. 11 10:00 AM	MGMT	Suzanne Tilleman Emily Plant	Grant proposal draft (W)	GBB 369	Gretchen	2
Jan. 25 9:30 AM	MICB	Eugene Kroll <a href="mailto:evgueny.kroll@umontana.edu">evgueny.kroll@umontana.edu</a>	Microbiology 404 (T)	EL 281	Kelly	1
Feb. 5 3:30 PM	Varied	Varied Departments' TAs	Responding to Student Writing Workshop (T)	EL 272	Kelly/Jake	26
Feb. 7 10:00 AM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.smith@umontana.edu">Tonya.smith@umontana.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	EL 281	Kelly	1
Feb. 9 11:30 AM	Varied	Varied Departments' Faculty	Responding to Student Writing Workshop (T)	EL 272	Kelly/Jake	23
Feb. 14 11:10 AM	SOC	Celia Winkler	Assignment Design for Senior Classical Theory (T)	SS323	Kelly	1
Mar. 4 11:30 AM	Occupational Health & Safety	Mike Panisko <a href="mailto:Mike.panisko@umontana.edu">Mike.panisko@umontana.edu</a>	Safety Smart Grant Application #1 (W)	Public Safety Office	Kelly	1
Mar. 8 3:00 PM	Occupational Health & Safety	Mike Panisko <a href="mailto:Mike.panisko@umontana.edu">Mike.panisko@umontana.edu</a>	Safety Smart Grant Application #1 & 2 (W)	Public Safety Office	Kelly	1

Mar. 15 10:00 AM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.smith@umontana.edu">Tonya.smith@umontana.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	LA 144	Kelly	1
Apr. 7 10:00 AM	Occupational Health & Safety	Mike Panisko <a href="mailto:Mike.panisko@umontana.edu">Mike.panisko@umontana.edu</a>	Safety Smart Grant Application #2 (W)	Public Safety Office	Kelly	1
Apr. 8 11:30 AM	Occupational Health & Safety	Mike Panisko <a href="mailto:Mike.panisko@umontana.edu">Mike.panisko@umontana.edu</a>	Safety Smart Grant Application #3 (W)	Public Safety Office	Kelly	1
Apr. 13 10:00 AM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.smith@umontana.edu">Tonya.smith@umontana.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	LA 144	Kelly	1
Apr. 15 4:15 PM	IT Systems	Janet Sedgley <a href="mailto:Janet.sedgley@umontant.edu">Janet.sedgley@umontant.edu</a>	Dissertation Proposal (W)	EL 281	Kelly	1
Apr. 27 10:30 AM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.smith@umontana.edu">Tonya.smith@umontana.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	LA 144	Kelly	1
Apr. 29 2:00 PM	IT Systems	Janet Sedgley <a href="mailto:Janet.sedgley@umontant.edu">Janet.sedgley@umontant.edu</a>	Dissertation Proposal (W)	EL 281	Kelly	1
May 3 12:00 PM	UC	Tonya Smith <a href="mailto:Tonya.smith@umontana.edu">Tonya.smith@umontana.edu</a>	Writing project on history of Student Union (W)	EL 281	Kelly	1

## APPENDIX G

### **ASCRC Writing Committee Recommendation on Writing Assessment Practice at The University of Montana**

Based on the findings of the Spring 2010 ASCRC Writing Committee Report on Writing Assessment Practice at UM, and at the request of ASCRC to make a specific recommendation based on our study, the Writing Committee (WC) offers the following recommendation regarding the Upper-Division Writing Proficiency Assessment (UDWPA) at The University of Montana. The WC recommends discontinuing the UDWPA and implementing writing program assessment in its place. Program assessment is a contextualized form of assessment that can be scaled and shaped locally to address questions and issues that matter to faculty. This recommendation endorses a proven method for studying writing instruction at UM and for effectively devising ways to address it through student learning opportunities.

#### **Rationale for Discontinuing Large-Scale Individual Writing Assessment**

The UDWPA is classified as large-scale individual student assessment. A student's individual performance on a test is used to make a high-stakes decision about his or her academic progress. We recommend discontinuing this kind of writing assessment altogether because it lacks validity and efficacy as an assessment tool. The use of UDWPA test scores to make decisions about a student's progress is not grounded in a current, sound theoretical foundation regarding the teaching and learning of writing. More specifically, the UDWPA **does not**

- Help students to produce rhetorically effective writing.
- Accurately reflect a student's overall writing ability.
- Improve teaching or learning. It focuses on gating students not guiding student learning.
- Align with writing course outcomes at UM (including WRIT 095, WRIT 101, Approved Writing Courses or the Upper-Division Writing Requirement in the Major).
- Align with our accrediting body's focus on using assessment to evaluate and improve the quality and effectiveness of our programs (see <http://www.umt.edu/provost/policy/assess/default.aspx>).

In addition, large-scale individual student assessments that might more accurately reflect the complexity of writing and the conceptual framework that informs UM's writing course outcomes, such as portfolio assessment, are quite simply cost prohibitive.

#### **Program Assessment**

We offer a brief definition and description of program assessment to introduce this method of assessment to members of ASCRC and the wider campus community. The overall aim of program assessment in the context of writing instruction at UM is to improve the quality of student writing by improving the writing program (*note*: We define writing program here as the writing-related instruction that the WC oversees. The WC is charged with designing and assessing the Approved Writing Courses and the Upper-Division Writing Requirement in the Major, and with supporting the Writing Center.).

#### *Definition*

Program assessment is “the **systematic and ongoing** method of **gathering, analyzing and using information** from various sources about a program and measuring program outcomes in order to **improve student learning**” (*UFC Academic Program Assessment Handbook 3*). In short, program assessment allows for the gathering of available, relevant information in response to locally constructed questions about student writing or writing instruction that will influence decisions about how programs and student learning can be improved.

The characteristics of program assessment valued by the WC include the following:

- Because program assessment is formative, it focuses on studying (aspects of) programs to improve and modify them accordingly. Focused on answering specific questions, program assessment results in qualitative and/or quantitative data to shape appropriate next steps.
- Because program assessment is contextualized, it can be scaled and shaped locally to address questions and issues faculty care about. This allows for assessment practices that are responsive to the values and expectations defined not only by the institution but also by varied academic departments.
- Because program assessment focuses on studying the efficacy of learning outcomes, it aligns with the current writing course guidelines for Approved Writing Courses and the Upper-Division Writing Requirement in the Major.

Program assessment is a recursive process:

- Articulate a program’s mission and goals,
- Define relevant student outcomes and select outcome(s) for study,
- Develop assessment methods that address the outcome(s),
- Gather and analyze data (qualitative or quantitative),
- Document the results,
- Use the results to improve student learning by strengthening the program.

### **Writing Program Assessment at UM**

As a contextualized form of assessment that can be scaled and shaped locally to address questions and issues faculty value, program assessment at UM could take several forms. This flexibility means that faculty would articulate their writing related values and expectations in particular contexts and would shape questions that could be answered through the systematic collection of quantifiable data. In all of these contexts, program assessment practices would be ongoing opportunities to promote faculty engagement in conversations about writing instruction.

Starting with an inventory of what assessment-related information and processes already are in place, writing program assessment at UM would take advantage of existing tools and processes. For example, UM’s laudable writing curricula that require students to write throughout their academic tenures are currently positioned for program assessment. The Approved Writing Courses and the Upper-Division Requirement in the Major now utilize sets of carefully defined learning outcomes. In addition, WRIT 095, WRIT 101, and WRIT 201 (under the guidance of

the Basic Writing Director and the Director of Composition and with the support of their respective departments) also utilize carefully defined learning outcomes and are likewise poised to embark on program assessment projects. Conducting program assessments of outcomes-based writing courses across campus could provide the basis for better understanding the varied ways in which teaching supports student writing and of the extent to which students are meeting these outcomes as demonstrated in their written work. Assessment methods may include:

- Studying culminating assignments in capstone courses,
- Conducting content analysis of student writing, such as final research papers or reflective essays, to assess student writing samples,
- Analyzing curriculum, including reviewing course syllabi, textbooks, and writing assignments, to assess the effectiveness of instructional materials,
- Organizing focus groups of department faculty and/or students to collect data about the beliefs, attitudes and experiences of those in the group to gather ideas and insights about student writing and writing instruction,
- Collecting institutional data on writing courses or using other university assessments, like NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement), to consider writing data.

Such program assessments would allow us to articulate and reinforce discipline-specific expectations and would enable us to learn about our students' patterns of writing strengths and weaknesses, identifying them using collected evidence rather than relying on anecdotes. Ultimately, this gathered information would shape future steps to support instructional development and student learning.

### **Additional Options for Improving the Quality of Student Writing through Writing Instruction at UM**

Formative program assessment at UM would allow us to better understand how we can improve the quality of student writing through instruction. Program assessment's primary value, then, would be in its ability to gather and analyze data in order to make decisions about appropriate strategies for improving student writing. For example, the WC imagines a number of options that might grow out of program assessment:

1. Create a 100 or 200-level writing course as a second general education writing requirement to replace the current Approved Writing Course. Such a writing course could give students an opportunity to learn strategies for writing in the disciplines (broadly conceived as social sciences, humanities, technical writing) by reading in the genres. In addition, such a course would serve as a bridge between WRIT 101 College Writing I and the Upper-Division Writing Requirement in the Major.
2. Create more rigorous writing requirements for the Approved Writing Course and Upper-Division Writing Requirement in the Major.
3. Require students to take more than one Approved Writing Course or Upper-Division Writing Requirement in the Major.
4. Offer additional writing related workshops and resources tailored to faculty teaching goals and student learning needs.
5. Create a Center for Writing Excellence to support faculty and students in writing instruction and learning to write in different contexts at UM.