Writing Across the Curriculum 2009 Summary


For the academic year 2008-09, 1,716 students visited WAC. This includes 1,242 individual tutoring sessions (these numbers do not include summer 2009). The WAC classroom was utilized by 134 classes (at 19 students a class that would be 2,546 students).

Based on our spring 2009 user satisfaction survey, approximately 95% of the respondents replied that they would recommend the Writing Center to other students; 79% felt the tutoring was excellent or very good; 89% felt they gained information that they can use when working on future assignments.

Also, WAC presented workshops, created specialized writing guides, and worked with professors on writing assignments or by providing teaching assistants from Communications, Business, English, History, Music Industry, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Religion, Sociology, and Theatre Arts.

2. Faculty/Staff Highlights

Robert Bell, Director:
a) presented a paper, “The Militarized Woman in the Graphic Novel and Film: Gender Representation in the Iraqi War,” at the annual Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), March 2009
b) co-authored, with Dale Hrebik, the paper, “Drilling for Meaning: There Will be Blood from Oil,” presented at the American Literature Association, May 2009
b) attended the Institute for First-Year Seminar Leadership, April 2009
c) presented a two day faculty workshop “Improving Student Writing,” February 2009
d) attended the “Faculty Academy 2009,” for professor in the First-Year Seminar program
e) taught in Loyola’s Paris Summer Abroad Program, May-June 2009

Nancy Rowe, Assistant Director
a) participated in the CCCC’s special session on writing centers.
b) collaborated with Karoline Schleh, Diboll Gallery Director, to utilize the Writing Center as an alternative gallery space for Loyola art students
c) taught creative writing for the Loyola Writing Institute’s 2009 Summer Workshop for Young Writers

Mary Waguespack, Faculty Writing Consultant
a) provided individual tutoring to students with special concerns, including ESL students and graduate students.
b) created new WAC Writing Guides on source use, documentation styles, and business writing


This year WAC made a renewed effort to work with more faculty who utilize writing in their classes and to encourage more faculty to utilize writing as a mode of learning. To this end, Bell
presented a workshop to new faculty entitled “Designing Effective Writing Assignments,” as well as a two day workshop for all faculty entitled “Improving Student Writing.” Also, WAC staff worked with professors and classes from Communications, Business, English, History, Music Industry, Physics, Political Science, Psychology, Religion, Sociology, and Theatre Arts.

WAC also collaborated with the Diboll Gallery to turn WAC into an alternative gallery space for Loyola students.

For the first time, our tutor training program utilized collaborative wikis. Students created wikis focused on issues of grammar and style.


Once again, the biggest issue facing WAC was the ability to hire and retain qualified tutors (Often financial aid is revoked for work-study students due to income fluctuations. Thus, we lose trained tutors who want to continue working at WAC). Historically, WAC is overly dependent upon work-study for tutors; we are unable to recruit the best students for the job. In order to make up for the lack of work-study tutors, we cut our successful teaching assistant program, which pairs experienced writing tutors with professors who emphasize writing in their classes.

Again due to our shortage of work-study students, WAC functioned with only 19 tutors, down from 23 in the previous year. This shortage led to a reduced number of hours the Writing Center was open and to the removal of tutors from the library during the fall 08 semester.

5. Planned New Initiatives in 2009-2010

WAC is working with the Office of Service Learning to incorporate a service learning component for our tutors. We plan on piloting the program this coming academic year and would like to make it a permanent part our program.

WAC will revamp our website and creating more original content for our online writing lab (OWL).

WAC will create a student tutor mentoring program in the fall.

WAC will be creating a series of writing workshops for incoming business students for the fall of 2009.

6. Challenges Anticipated in 2009-2010

With the renewed emphasis on writing and writing intensive courses in the discussions of the revised common curriculum and the first-year seminars, WAC anticipates an increase in demand for tutoring. Hiring new tutors from the work-study pool will continue to be our biggest challenge. Often incoming first-year students do not possess the writing abilities necessary for the position. Also, as financial aid changes for the students, we lose trained tutors who want to
continue working in the Writing Center. Our inability to compete with the private sector in terms of compensation makes it more difficult to recruit and retain student assistants who can find higher paying jobs outside of the university.

7. Support Needed in 2009-2010

Because of the challenges seen above, WAC would like to see our student assistant monies increased to the pre-Katrina level of $20,000. Since the budget cuts that occurred after the storm, our student assistant budget has not been fully restored. With the additional funding, WAC can hire qualified tutors who will be able to begin tutoring sooner in the school year, which positively impacts student success and retention.