



Annual Report 2016-2017

Written and Compiled by
Michelle Hager, Director

Statistical Data Compiled by
Pat Walls, Office Coordinator

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Introduction

Writing Center Mission

The San José State University Writing Center opened in 2007 and is a unit of the College of Humanities and Arts. We offer a variety of resources to help students become better writers, and all our services are funded by student fees.

Our mission is to enhance the writing skills of SJSU students, so they can communicate clearly in any setting (informal, academic, or professional). We accomplish this goal through creating original writing resources, offering workshops, and conducting one-on-one tutoring sessions.

We are committed to treating students, their questions, and their assignments with respect. We recognize that every student is unique and that every assignment is different. Writing Specialists will make their best attempt to work with students to improve their writing.

Writing Center Expectations and Procedures

To support our mission, we created a comprehensive list of expectations and procedures. These policies help us create the most productive learning environment possible, so we can better assist our tutees. The following information is posted both on our website and in the Writing Center.

Our Expectations

Please review the following expectations, all of which support our mission and further your continued learning. We reserve the right to end or cancel your appointment if these expectations are not met.

1. **Eligibility:** You must be currently registered and enrolled at SJSU to use Writing Center services.
2. **Preparedness:** You must be prepared for tutoring by bringing specific writing-related questions as well as all necessary materials, including a hard copy of the paper, prompts, outlines, or research. If you have already worked on an essay with a tutor, bring a new copy of your revised draft to your next session, demonstrating that you have attempted to apply what you have learned. You must bring printouts of all materials—tutors will not work off electronic devices. If you do not have a printout of your materials ready in time for your tutoring session, you may lose your appointment.
3. **Distraction-Free Environment:** The Writing Center is a distraction-free environment. Cell phones are prohibited. Food and drink are not permitted (except bottled water). Please do not bring any guests with you to your appointment (including children). Writing Specialists will not work off laptops or tablets. During your session, be engaged in the process and be respectful of your peers and all Writing Center employees.

4. Lateness: As a part of our distraction-free environment, the Writing Center does not tolerate lateness. If you are more than five minutes late for a tutoring session, your appointment will be given to the next person on the waiting list, and you will be marked as a no-show for that appointment. If you arrive late for a workshop, you will not be admitted into the workshop.
5. Frequency of Appointments: You can schedule one 30-minute tutoring appointment per day, with a maximum of two appointments made in advance per week. Hour-long appointments are available only in special circumstances. If you cannot make your scheduled appointment, you must cancel before the appointment is scheduled to begin. If you miss two appointments without cancelling in advance, you will be blocked from the online scheduling system. You will then be limited to waitlist-only appointments for the rest of the semester. Writing Specialists are sometimes available on a first-come, first-served basis if you are on the waitlist. However, waitlist appointments cannot be made in advance and may not always be available, especially during peak hours.

Our Procedures

1. The Writing Center is not an editing or proofreading service. Writing Specialists will not write your papers for you or perform line-by-line editing. You cannot leave a paper to be corrected by a tutor. You must be present and prepared to learn.
2. Writing Specialists will not discuss a grade you have received or anticipate a grade you may receive. Professors assign grades—not Writing Specialists. Writing Specialists also will not offer commentary on a professor's written feedback.
3. Writing Specialists have the right to refuse to work on a paper that is due the same day or multiple papers during one tutoring session. The goal of the Writing Center is to help you learn writing skills. It will be difficult for you to learn concepts and make meaningful revisions to your work when you are rushing to do more or to meet an imminent deadline. Writing is a *process*!
4. The Writing Center services are supplemental to in-class instruction. We will still adhere to our mission even if you are visiting the Writing Center for the sole purpose of receiving extra credit or fulfilling a class assignment. Writing Specialists will not act as peer reviewers to make up work that you missed in class.
5. Group essays, projects, or assignments will be handled at the discretion of the Writing Specialist.
6. Please visit the Accessible Education Center (AEC) if you need accommodations.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students who use the Writing Center will

- improve their written communication skills in university classes and in the professional world.
- understand that writing is a complex process.
- engage in critical thinking.
- critique drafts of their writing assignments.
- understand grammatical concepts.
- develop ideas to support a focused thesis statement.
- cite sources appropriately (both in-text and in end citations).
- understand rhetorical strategies.
- gain confidence in their writing abilities.
- create outlines to organize complex ideas.
- develop and maintain a writing style that is appropriate to academic audiences.
- write clearly and concisely.

Writing Center Personnel

**Michelle Hager, Director**

- Conducted multiple workshops for the Writing Center each semester, including “Essay Prompts and Time Management,” “Muscle Verbs for Good Writing,” and “Common Grammar and Punctuation Errors.”
- Maintained the Writing Center website and social media pages.
- Taught First-Year Writing courses in the Department of English and Comparative Literature.
- Served on the SJSU Writing Requirements Committee and the English Department Composition Committee.
- Served as the writing program representative on the new Graduate Non-Resident Task Force.
- Co-coordinated the Writing Fellows program with the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) director.
- Served as a grader for the Writing Skills Test (WST).
- Presented “Let’s Talk About Ideas: How Students in First Year Writing Courses Use Writing Fellows” at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in Portland, OR.
- Co-established and co-led the Special Interest Group (SIG) for Writing Fellows at the CCCC.
- Worked on multiple research projects with the SJSU WAC director and writing center directors from other universities.
- Planned and hosted the first Bay Area Writing Center Colloquium.
- Served on the Local Arrangements Committee for the CCCC Summer Conference (CCCC@SJSU).
- Completed the WAC workshop “Working with Multilingual Writers.”
- Completed private editing projects, including a manuscript for the Provost.
- Belonged to the National Council for Teachers of English and the International Writing Centers Association.

**Pat Walls, Office Coordinator**

- Scheduled all Writing Center workshops and tutoring schedules each term.
- Engaged with thousands of students, faculty, and staff to communicate the Writing Center mission and services clearly.
- Completed Master’s thesis and degree in History.
- Presented ““Let’s Compare Data: How Students in First-Year Writing Courses Engage with Writing Center Tutors” at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in Portland, OR.
- Co-established and co-led the Special Interest Group (SIG) for Writing Fellows at the CCCC.
- Presented data about Writing Center services at monthly staff meetings.
- Upgraded to new dad.



Shannon Bane, Faculty-in-Residence

- Created and conducted multiple workshops for the Writing Center each semester, including “Writing a Killer Introduction” and “Presenting Evidence in Tables and Figures.”
- Researched best practices about teaching writing in STEM disciplines.
- Conducted a survey about writing in STEM 100W courses at SJSU.
- Produced an end-of-year report about teaching writing in STEM.
- Taught Environmental Studies 100W and Environmental Studies 01 (Intro to Environmental Issues) at SJSU.
- Taught one section and lab (ENVS 21) at Santa Clara University in fall 2016.
- Completed the WAC workshop about using technology in writing courses.



Maria Judnick, Faculty-in-Residence





- Created and conducted multiple workshops for the Writing Center each semester, including “Writing for Your Audience,” “Finding a Voice,” and “Writing a Job Query Letter.”
- Maintained, edited, and wrote entries for the Writing Center blog, “The Writing Attitude.”
- Led all Writing Specialists and Assistant Writing Specialists through the process of creating an original writing resource each semester.
- Led the WAC workshop about eResources for writing teachers.
- Served as a grader for the Writing Skills Test (WST).
- Lectured as a guest speaker about Sherlock Holmes and adaptation in the new SJSU Detective Fiction (ENGL 21) course.
- Served as the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute Coordinator: “The California Immigrant Experience in Literature and Theatre.”
- Taught Engineering Communications, Critical Thinking and Writing 1, and Critical Thinking and Writing 2 at Santa Clara University.
- Worked as a reader and interviewer for Peninsula College Fund Scholarship recipients at Overfelt High School.
- Judged the Santa Clara University freshman writing contest.
- Served as the Santa Clara University Faculty Sustainability Liaison.
- Spoke at three Santa Clara University events and attended two workshops on digital humanities work.
- Read as part of the “Lit Crawl” for the Los Gatos Listowel Festival.
- Worked as a freelancer for the Santa Clara University Arts and Humanities website and arts reporter for the *Santa Clara Weekly* newspaper.
- Continued to work on a novel in weekly workshops with the writer Deborah Davis.




**Tim Alexander, Writing Specialist**




- MA student in Spanish with a concentration in Linguistics.
- Graduated in spring 2017.
- Earned a 3.93 GPA.
- Started working at the Writing Center during the spring 2016 semester.
- Created the following writing resources: “MLA Formatting Guidelines” handout update to reflect changes in the new edition of the MLA Handbook, “Four Score and Seven Years Ago...I Started My Thesis” blog entry, and “Stepping out of the Academic and into the Professional” blog entry.
- Conducted “Trimming the Fat: Writing Concisely and Avoiding Wordiness,” “Body Paragraphs,” and “Muscle Verbs for Good Writing” workshops for the Writing Center.
- Earned the Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society Award.
- Was awarded the Graduate Equity Fellowship.
- Interned in two positions for non-profit organizations (in Communications and in Translation/Writing).
- Worked the Writing Center table at Frosh Orientation sessions.
- Was a member of Círculo Hispánico in the Spanish Language and Literature Department.
- Presented at the Foreign Language Association of Northern California conference.




**Ariel Andrew, Writing Specialist**


- MFA student in Creative Writing.
- Will graduate in 2018.
- Earned a 4.0 GPA.
- Started working at the Writing Center during the fall 2016 semester.
- Created two entries for the Writing Center blog: “You and What Audience?” and “Citation in the Writing Process.”
- Conducted “Body Paragraphs” and “Revising for Clarity: Subjects and Their Verbs” workshops for the Writing Center.
- Was a Graduate Student Assistant in the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies.
- Worked as a K-12 Writing Program Instructor for a private tutoring center.
- Worked the Writing Center table at Admitted Spartans Day.
- Was accepted to present at the CCCC Summer Regional Conference (CCCC@SJSU).

	<p>Brooke Blankenship, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA student in English with a minor in Linguistics. • Graduated in spring 2017. • Earned a 3.93 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center in the fall 2015 semester. • Created an activity about testing for different parts of speech. • Conducted “Revising for Clarity: Subjects and Their Verbs” and “Common Grammar and Punctuation Errors” workshops for the Writing Center. • Worked the Writing Center table at Frosh Orientation sessions. • Worked as a TA for dance classes on campus.
	<p>Jack Brady, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA student in Animation/Illustration. • Will graduate in 2018. • Started working at the Writing Center in the fall 2016 semester. • Wrote two “Quick Tip” blog posts for the Writing Center about showing versus telling and written exam prep time. • Created two posters for the Writing Center about the writing process and reverse outlining. • Revamped the main Writing Center flier. • Conducted “Essay Prompts and Time Management” workshop for the Writing Center. • Belonged to the Shrunktheadman Club: Blue Sky and Laika Presentations. • Participated in Gallery Watch and 14F film showings.
	<p>Luke Coulter, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA student in English Education. • Will graduate in 2018. • Earned a 3.88 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center in the spring 2017 semester. • Created a “Meme of the Week” in May 2017 for the Writing Center blog. • Was awarded the Dr. Josephine Chandler Scholarship.
	<p>Jenn Hambly, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA student in Linguistics and TESOL. • Will graduate in 2019. • Earned a 4.0 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center in the spring 2017 semester. • Created a “Meme of the Week” in May 2017 for the Writing Center blog.

	<p>Sheldon Hentschke, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA student in English. • Graduated Summa Cum Laude in spring 2017. • Earned a 3.99 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center in the fall 2015 semester. • Created a Writing Center handout on the topic of paraphrasing. • Conducted the “Body Paragraphs” workshop for the Writing Center. • Earned the designation of President’s Scholar. • Worked the Writing Center table at Frosh Orientation sessions. • Studied abroad in Dublin, Ireland during the fall 2016 semester.
	<p>Akhil Kumar, Assistant Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BS student in Accounting with a minor in Computer Science. • Will graduate in 2019. • Earned a 3.59 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center in the fall 2016 semester. • Wrote a post for the Writing Center blog. • Worked as a tutor through the Writing Center partnership with the MST Department. • Belonged to the Financial Management Association.
	<p>Nicky Lai, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BS student in Kinesiology with a concentration in Inclusive Physical Activity in Communities. • Will graduate in 2018. • Started working at the Writing Center in the fall 2014 semester. • Revised the “Basic APA Style” Writing Center workshop. • Created “Navigating the APA Manual” and “Literature Review” handouts, was a guest blogger for the “Meme of the Week” in the Writing Center blog, and made a game about verb tenses to use in the tutoring lab. • Conducted the “Basic APA Style” workshop for the Writing Center and for Ed.D students. • Earned the designation of President’s Scholar. • Worked the Writing Center table at Admitted Spartans Day and Peer Educator Hangout. • Presented “The Startup Company: Re-visioning and Marketing the Writing Center to Engage and Enthrall Stakeholders” at the Northern California Writing Centers Association conference. • Learned American Sign Language.

	<p>Sammy Lai, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA student in Communicative Disorders and Sciences. • Graduated in spring 2017. • Earned a 3.96 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center in the fall 2014 semester. • Created a subject-verb agreement flashcard game for the tutoring lab and a handout (at the request of SJSU eCampus) “Do’s and Don’ts of Online Posts.” • Conducted the “Basic APA Style” workshop for the Writing Center. • Earned the distinction of President’s Scholar. • Conducted house calls for the Writing Center and worked a tabling event for high school students. • Presented “New Media and Old Techniques” at the Northern California Writing Centers Association conference. • Belonged to the National Student Speech Language Hearing Association.
	<p>Jasmine Mally, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA student in TESOL. • Graduated in spring 2017. • Earned a 3.96 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center during the fall 2016 semester. • Created two original writing resources: “Quick Tip” blog post, “You Can Write the Body of Your Essay First,” and instructional video, “APA: Citing Figures.” • Conducted the “Selecting and Integrating Source Materials” workshop for the Writing Center. • Worked as a Volunteer Partners in Reading (PAR) tutor. • Presented at LLDSA Linguistics and TESOL Symposium at SJSU in November 2016. • Presented at the SF State MA TESOL Graduate Student Conference in May 2017.
	<p>Ines Marjanovic, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA student in English. • Graduated in spring 2017. • Was accepted into the MA Communication Studies program at SJSU (to begin in fall 2017). • Earned a 3.9 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center in the fall 2016 semester.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrote a series of posts for the Writing Center blog about the “So What?” question and wrote a second series on “Breaking out of the High School Essay.” • Conducted “Paraphrasing” and “Trimming the Fat” workshops for the Writing Center. • Worked the Writing Center table at the Graduate Student Orientation Resource Fair in January 2017.
	<p>Vanessa Mendoza-Palencia, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA student in English with a concentration in Professional and Technical Writing. • Graduated in fall 2016. • Earned a 3.8 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center during the spring 2016 semester. • Wrote a series of entries for the Writing Center blog about business writing. • Created posters about the PIE technique and English articles for the Writing Center tutoring lab. • Conducted the “Body Paragraphs” workshop for the Writing Center. • Earned the distinction of being on the Dean’s List. • Worked as a tutor for student athletes through the Writing Center partnership with Student Athletic Success Services. • Worked the Writing Center table for various orientation events.
	<p>Holly Michaelson, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BS student in Nutrition and Food Science with a concentration in Dietetics. • Will graduate in 2018. • Started working at the Writing Center during the fall 2016 semester. • Created the “Do I Use a Comma?” reference chart. • Earned scholarships through SJSU and the EOP program. • Worked as an online tutor through the Writing Center partnership with the iSchool. • Served as an Officer for the Nutrition and Food Science Club (Professional Development Coordinator). • Worked as a Yoga Instructor at the SJSU Sports Club.
	<p>Saya Morita, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MA student in TESOL and international student from Japan. • Graduated in spring 2017. • Earned a 3.8 GPA. • Started working at the Writing Center during the fall 2016 semester.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created a video (at the request of SJSU eCampus), “How to Write Online Feedback.” • Conducted the “Transitions for Coherence” workshop. • Worked as a GA in a Design 100W course and as a TA at Evergreen Valley College. • Worked the Writing Center table at tabling events. • Scheduled to present a research project about Writing Center client reports at the CCCC Summer Regional Conference (CCCC@SJSU). • Was a member of the LLDSA (Linguistics and Language Development Student Association). • Attended the CATESOL 2016 and TESOL 2017 conferences.
	<p>Daniel Tafoya, Writing Specialist</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BA student in English with a concentration in Professional and Technical Writing. • Will graduate in spring 2018. • Started working at the Writing Center during the spring 2017 semester. • Wrote a post about writer’s anxiety for the Writing Center blog.

One-on-One Tutoring

Client Use of the Writing Center

During the reporting period of June 1, 2016 to May 31, 2017 (summer, fall, and spring semesters) the Writing Center served a student population of over 30,000 students. Writing Specialists met one-on-one with **1,288** individual students who made a total of **3,252** appointments. Writing Center appointments are usually 30 minutes in length, although graduate students working on their theses and students registered with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) can request 60-minute appointments.

Appointments at the Writing Center

Students use the WOnline scheduling system to register and schedule appointments in advance. Students self-report data when registering. When scheduling, they identify the area(s) of writing they want to work on and the type of paper they will bring. These pieces of information allow Writing Specialists to prepare for tutoring sessions.

Students can modify or cancel their appointments any time prior to the start of the session. The Writing Center no-show policy is in place to maximize the availability of appointments. Students who have not scheduled an appointment ahead of time and hope to get an appointment are placed on a first-come, first-served wait list. If a student fails to arrive for his or her scheduled appointment on time, a waitlisted student gets that appointment.

Tutoring Session Evaluations

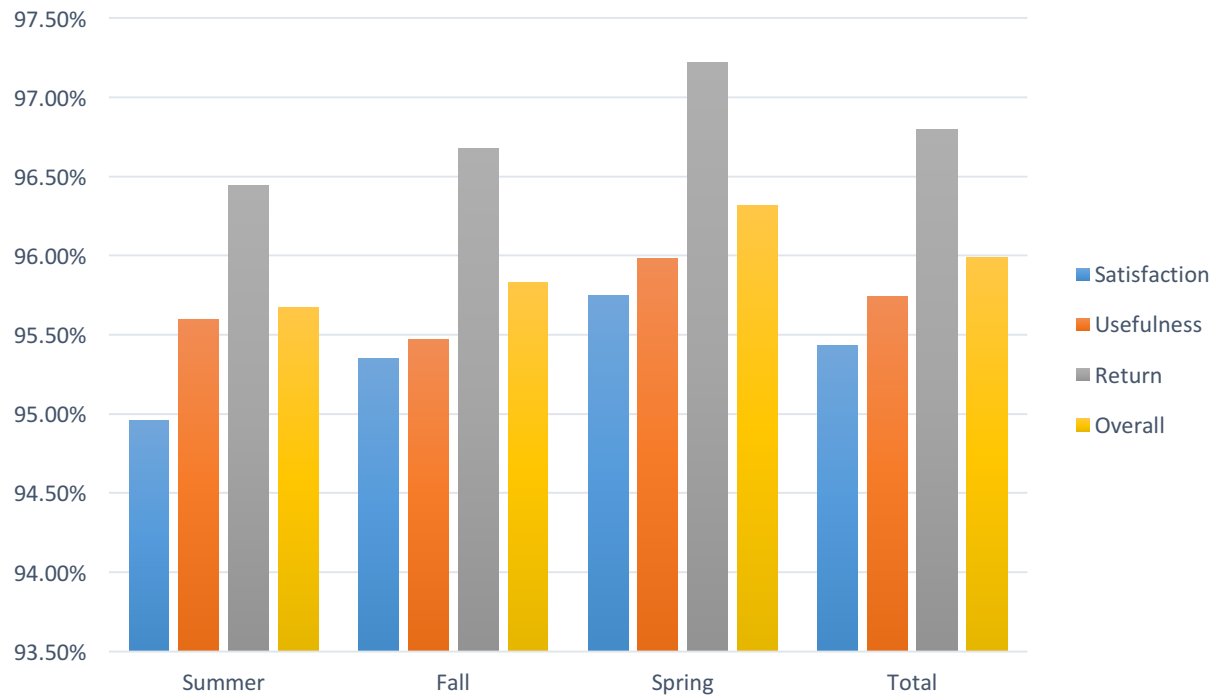
At the end of each tutoring session at the Writing Center, tutees are asked to complete a four-question survey evaluating their experience. The first three questions cover the client's **satisfaction** with the tutoring session, the **usefulness** of the session, and the student's intent to **return and/or recommend** the Writing Center. Each response is recorded numerically on a 1 to 5 scale, with 5 being the best possible response. The fourth question asks for any additional, qualitative feedback the student would like to share.

Clients complete this survey on the computer in our lobby. Since we moved to electronic evaluations, qualitative feedback has tripled, and errors in understanding the numeric scale have significantly lowered.

Tutors are given printouts of their raw scores and averages each month, which are also kept on file. This allows the Writing Center Director to monitor student feedback and note possible areas for additional tutor training, which helps us offer the highest possible level of service.

During the 2016-2017 reporting period, **2,917** evaluations were submitted. The satisfaction rating average was **95.43%**; the usefulness rating average was **95.74%**; and the return/recommend rating average was **96.80%**, with an overall average rating of **95.99%**.

Tutoring Evaluation Ratings



Statistical Overview

Writing Center One-on-One Tutoring History			
Reporting Period	Clients	Appointments	Average Appts per Client
2016-2017	1,288	3,252	2.52
2015-2016	1,499	4,002	2.67
2014-2015	1,262	3,599	2.85
2013-2014	1,498	4,249	2.84
2012-2013	1,203	4,026	3.35
2011-2012	1,210	4,215	3.48
2010-2011	1,141	4,670	4.09
2009-2010	985	4,071	4.13
2008-2009	1,403	2,834	2.02
2007-2008	1,590	5,306	3.34
February 2007-July 2007	673	1,641	2.44
Total	13,752	41,865	3.04

Tutoring Utilization			
Semester	Used Hours	Available Hours	Utilization
Summer	333.50	614.50	54.27%
Fall	1461.50	1567.50	93.24%
Spring	1376.50	1571.00	87.62%
Total	3171.50	3753.00	84.51%

Used hours include time the Writing Specialists spent on tutoring students, creating writing resources, and facilitating workshops and house calls.

Clients with Repeat Appointments

During the reporting period, students averaged **2.52** appointments per client. This average is reflected in charts throughout this report wherever the number of appointments and number of clients are being compared. In the reporting period, **726** of the **1,288** clients had one tutoring session, equaling **56.37%** of all clients. Some of these students may have attended workshops during the year or utilized tutoring in previous years.

Semester	Single-Visit Clients	Total Clients	% of Total Clients
Summer	38	86	44.19%
Fall	346	697	49.64%
Spring	342	653	52.37%
Total	726	1288	56.37%

The other 43.63% of clients may have had multiple tutoring sessions in one semester or in several semesters.

In summer, two students had one or more tutoring appointments per week, with one student having 14 appointments and another having 26 appointments. In fall, eight students had one or more tutoring appointments per week, with one student having 21 appointments throughout the semester and another having 26 appointments. In spring, eight students had one or more tutoring appointments per week, with one student having 23 appointments throughout the semester and another having 32 appointments. For the yearlong reporting period, two students had 34 appointments; one had 40 appointments, and another had 41 appointments.

The chart below indicates the number of appointments clients had per semester and during the annual reporting period. The percentages are the percent of clients compared to total clients for the period.

The annual column is not cumulative across each row; rather, it is cumulative of actual clients' appointments. For example, a student had two appointments in summer, 10 appointments in fall, and 7 appointments in spring, totaling 19 appointments. She is represented in the "2-5 Appts" column for summer, the "6-10 Appts" column for fall, the "6-10 Appts" column for spring, and the "16-20 Appts" column for the annual total.

Repeat Clients by Semester								
# Appts	Summer	% Summer	Fall	% Fall	Spring	% Spring	Total	% Total
1	46	53.49%	398	57.10%	403	61.72%	726	56.37%
2-5	34	39.53%	237	34.00%	201	30.78%	445	34.55%
6-10	4	4.65%	48	6.89%	35	5.36%	76	5.90%
11-15	1	1.16%	10	1.43%	8	1.23%	20	1.55%
16-20	0	0.00%	2	0.29%	4	0.61%	11	0.85%
21-30	1	1.16%	2	0.29%	1	0.15%	5	0.39%
31+	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.15%	5	0.39%
Total	86		697		653		1288	

Waitlist Utilization

The Writing Center schedule opens seven days in advance; every night at 10:00 PM a new day becomes available on the schedule. During the regular academic year, the schedule fills quickly. However, while it fills quickly, students cancel often.

Of the 3,252 appointments, **95** clients had **187** appointments (5.75% of all appointments) using the waitlist, while numerous appointments were also made the same day. Of these 95 clients, 21 clients only visited the Writing Center this one time and are counted as single-visit clients. One client used the waitlist 23 times and another 13 times. Many students end up on the waitlist because they missed their scheduled tutoring appointment, so they get an appointment through the waitlist at a later time on the same day.

Waitlist	# Appts	Total Appts	% of Total
Summer	30	209	14.35%
Fall	81	1603	5.05%
Spring	76	1440	5.28%
Total	187	3252	5.75%

Tutoring Appointments by Type, Stage, and Focus

During this reporting period, we categorized appointments by type. For the purpose of analysis, we split appointments into eight categories: first year writing courses, other lower-division courses, 100A courses, 100W courses, other upper-division courses, graduate courses, test preparation, and professional development. We discovered that we see the most students from 100W classes. (Specific percentages are shown on the next page.)

The Professional Development category includes all non-coursework tutoring for résumés, cover letters, and statements of purpose for jobs, internships, scholarships, and graduate school. Students who brought résumés as coursework for 100W courses (for example) are counted in the 100W category.

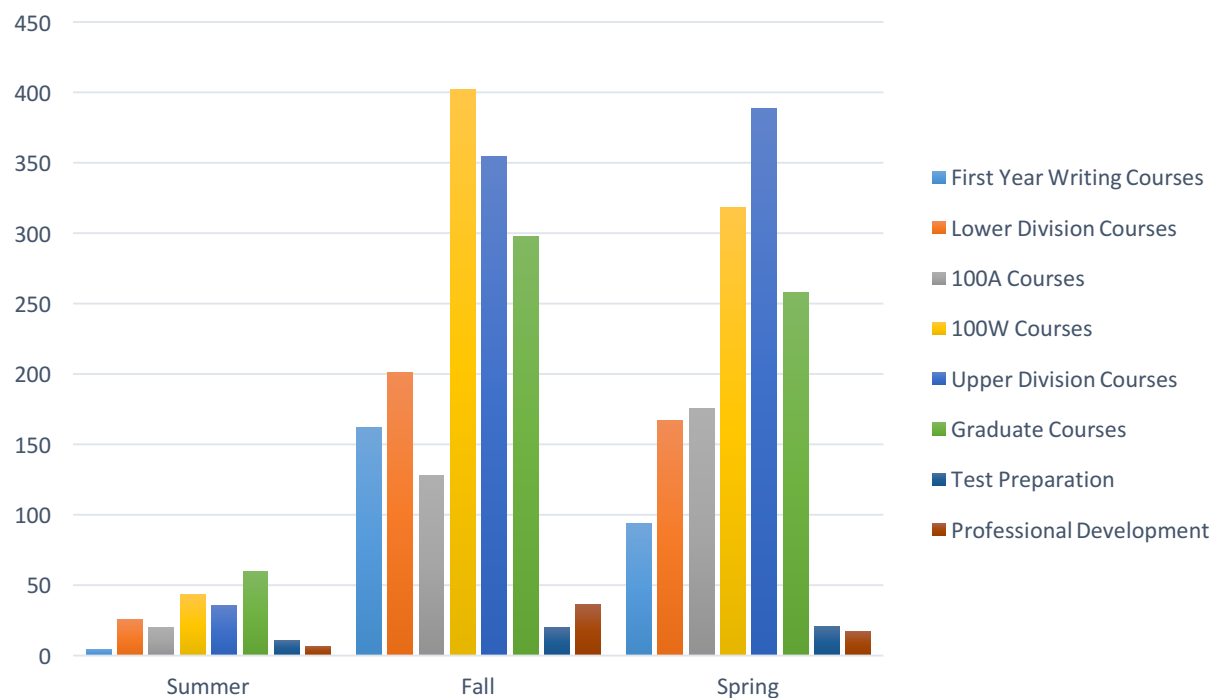
Students often come to the Writing Center for Writing Skills Test (WST) preparation, and those appointments are included in the Test Preparation category. Students who came in to prepare for standardized tests for graduate school (e.g., GMAT or CBEST) are also included in this category.

We continued to track when students come in during the writing process (planning/pre-writing, rough draft, final draft) and what area of writing they want to work on (grammar, formatting, content/organization). In the next reporting period, we will be changing the stages of the writing process to planning/pre-writing, drafting, revising/polishing, and other. We will also be changing the focus to content, organization, grammar, and formatting.

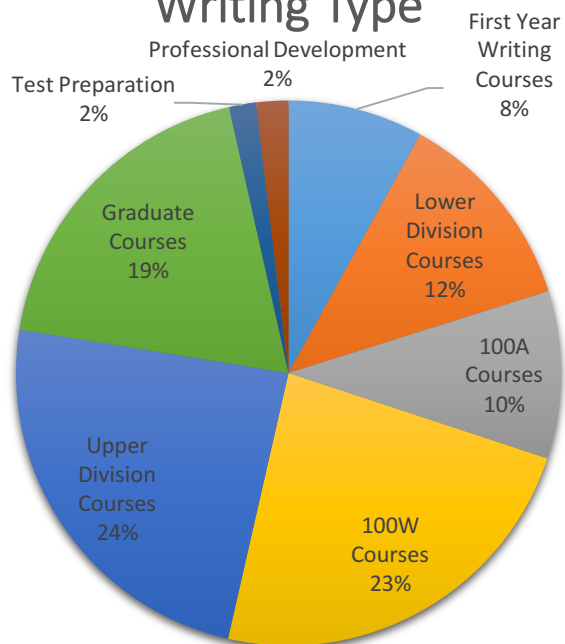
	Appointments				
Type	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
First Year Writing Courses	5	162	94	261	8.03%
Lower-Division Courses	26	201	167	394	12.12%
100A Courses	20	128	175	323	9.93%
100W Courses	44	402	318	764	23.49%
Upper-Division Courses	36	355	389	780	23.99%
Graduate Courses	60	298	258	616	18.94%
Test Preparation	11	20	21	52	1.60%
Professional Development	7	37	18	62	1.91%
Grand Total	209	1603	1440	3252	

	Clients					
Type	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
First Year Writing Courses	4	71	55	117	9.08%	2.23
Lower-Division Courses	10	94	84	164	12.73%	2.40
100A Courses	9	38	49	82	6.37%	3.94
100W Courses	21	202	181	384	29.81%	1.99
Upper-Division Courses	19	169	170	308	23.91%	2.53
Graduate Courses	18	103	98	196	15.22%	3.14
Test Preparation	3	6	4	10	0.78%	5.20
Professional Development	2	14	12	27	2.10%	2.30
Grand Total	86	697	653	1288		2.52

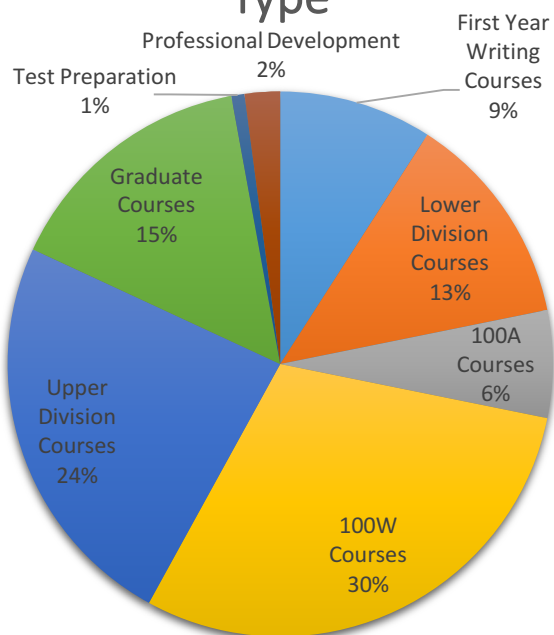
Appointments by Writing Type

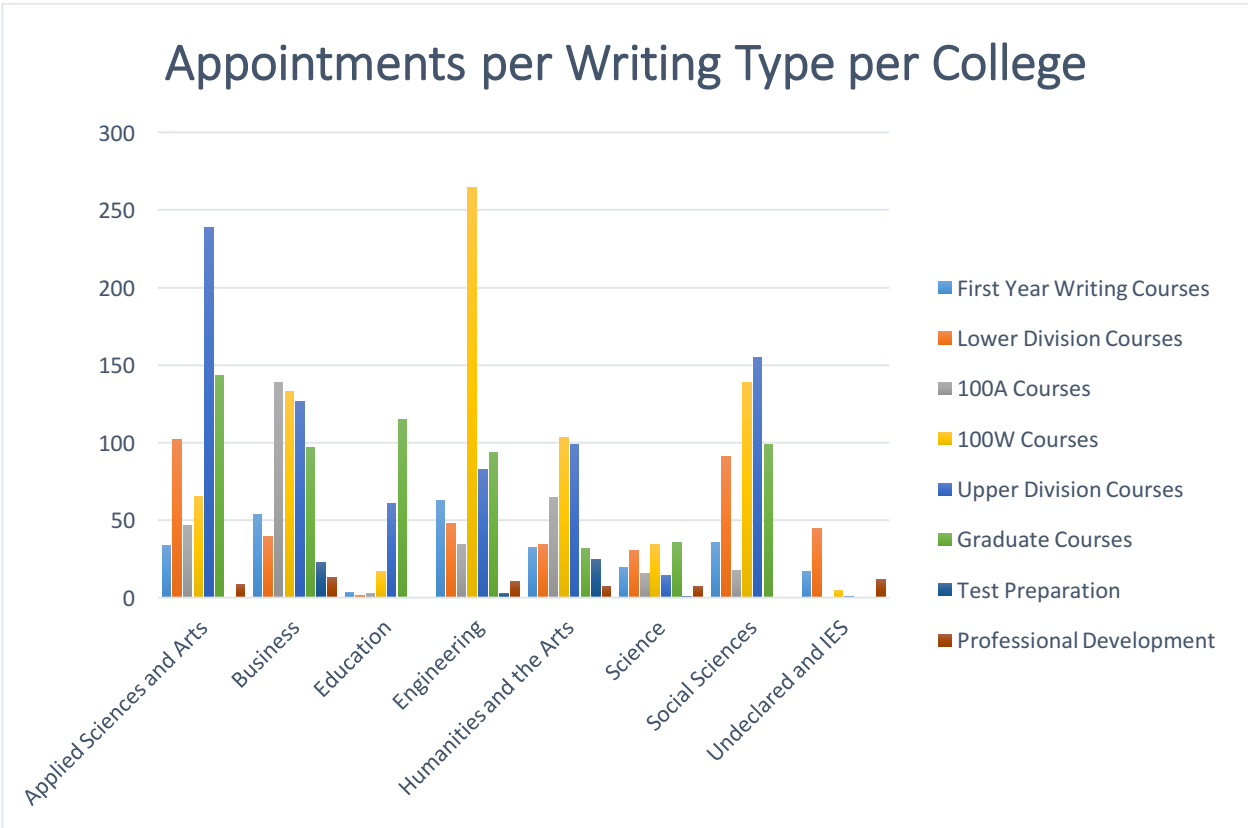
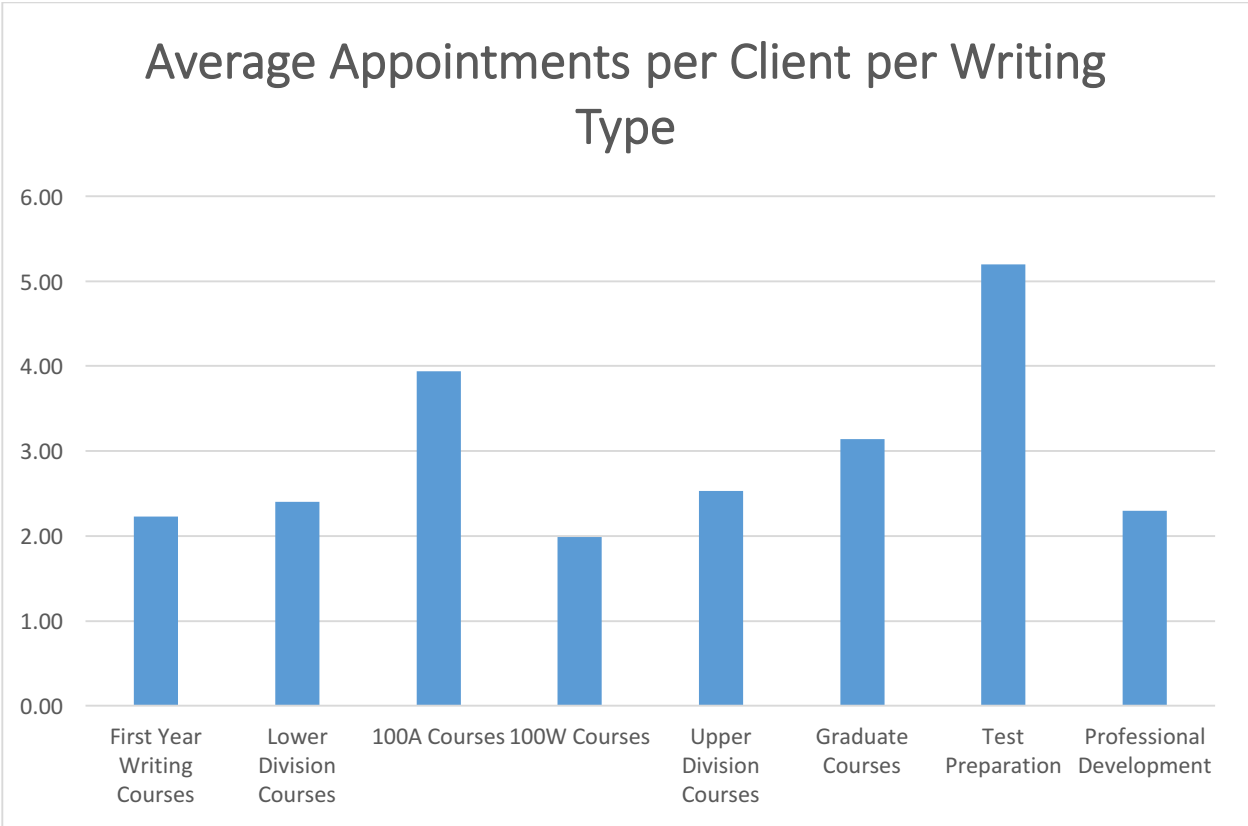


Appointments by Writing Type

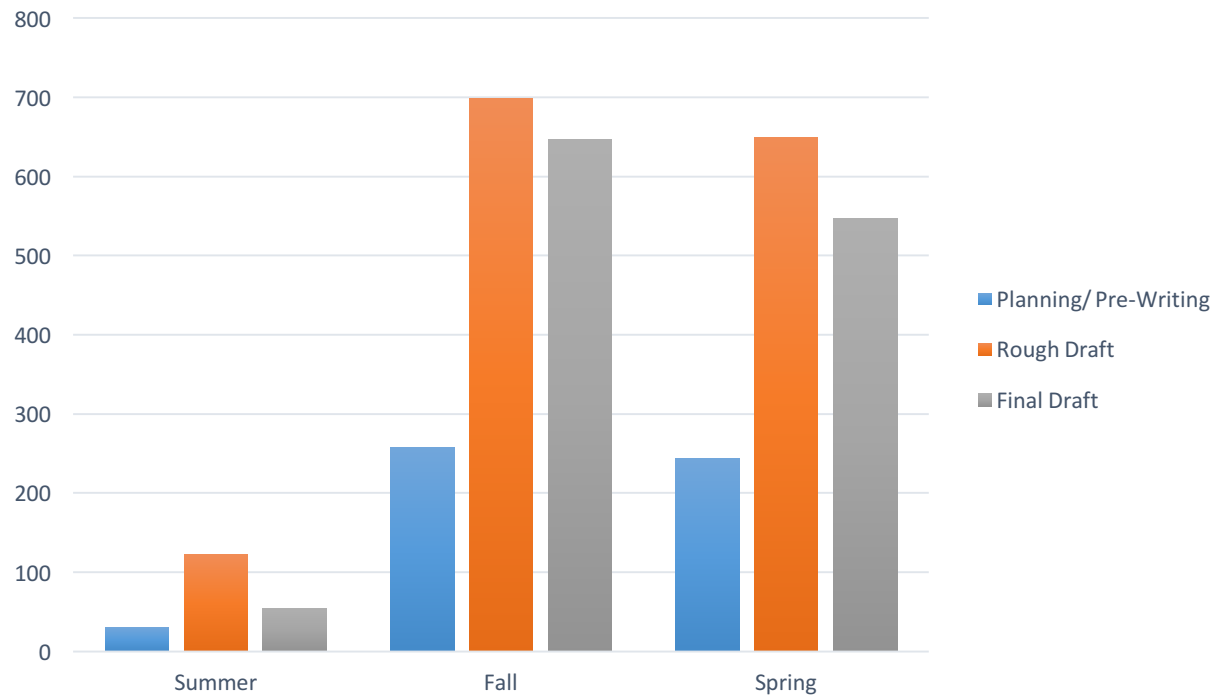


Clients by Writing Type

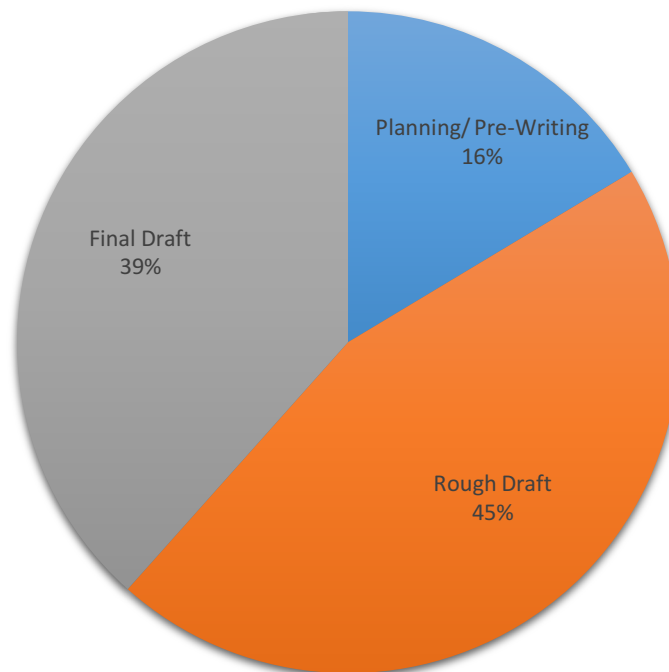




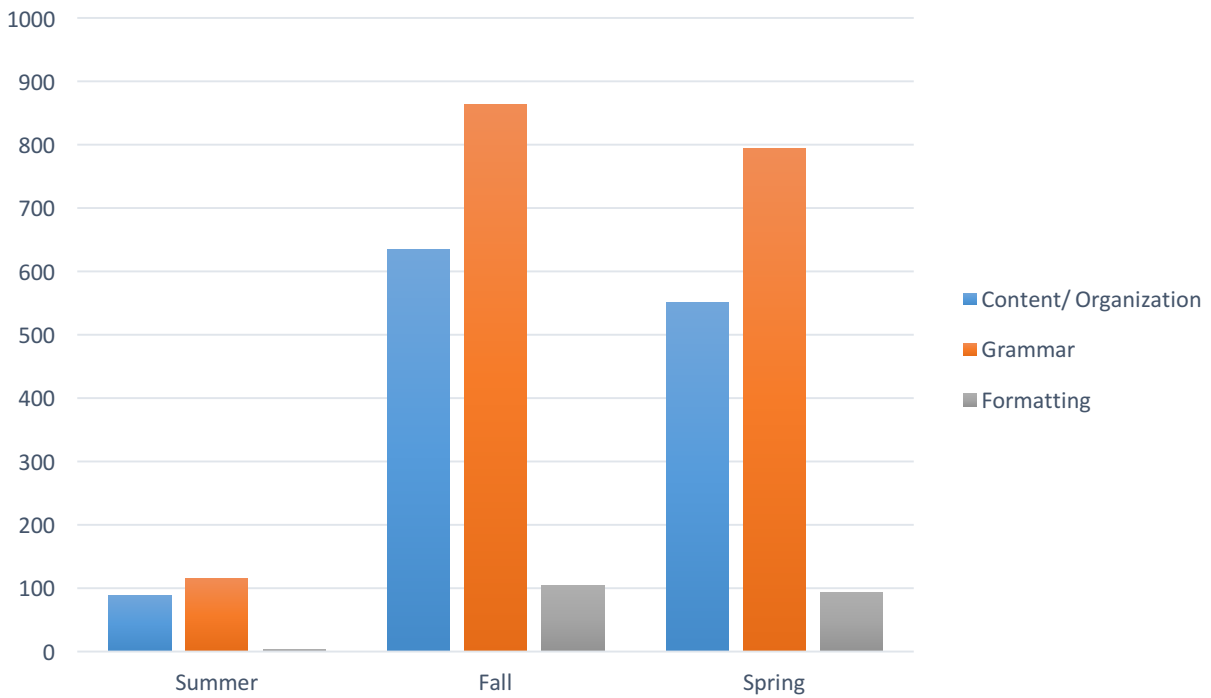
Appointments by Stage of the Writing Process



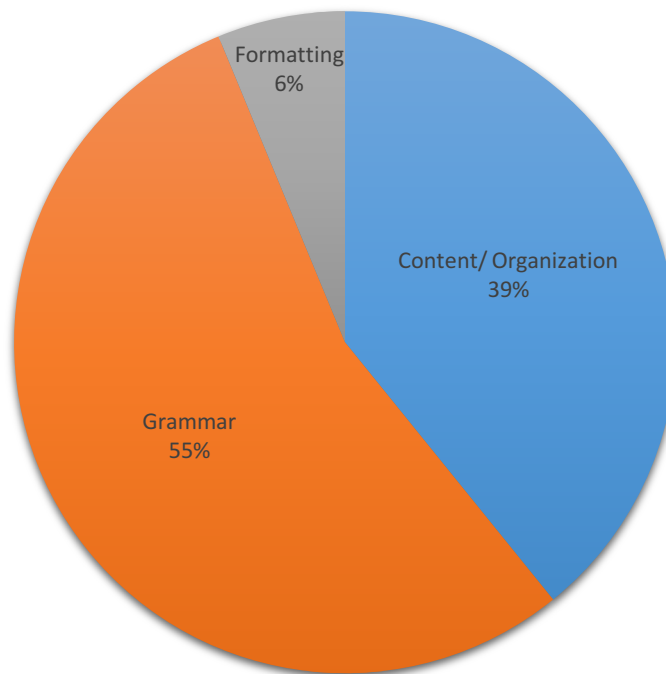
Appointments by Stage of the Writing Process



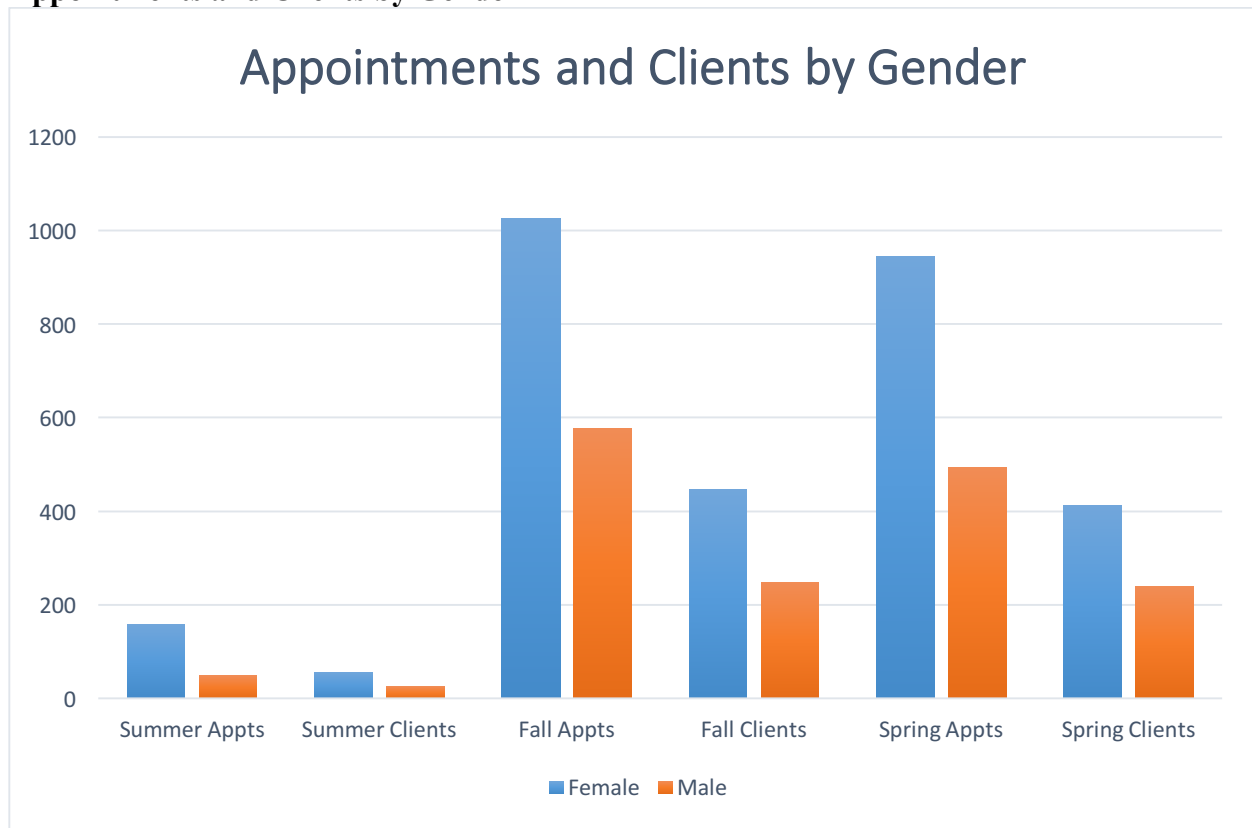
Appointments by Writing Focus



Appointments by Writing Focus



Appointments and Clients by Gender

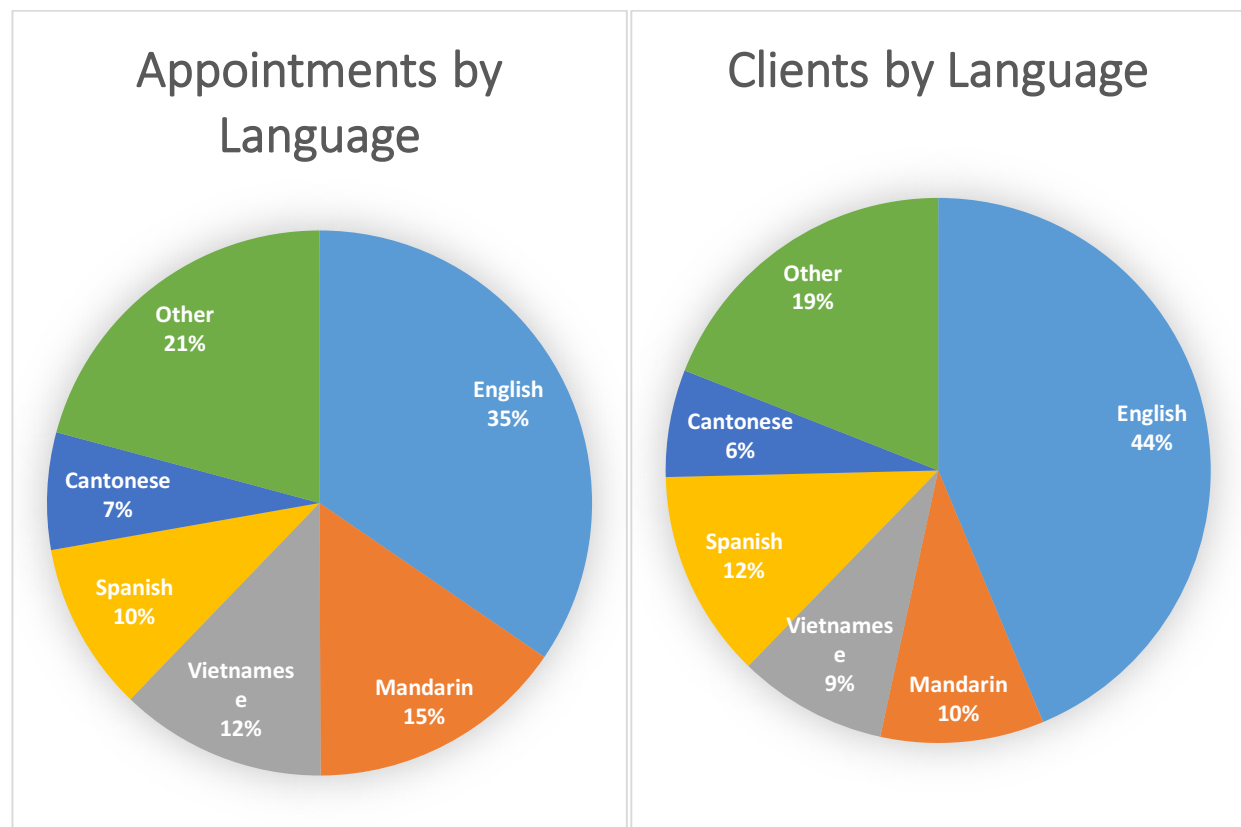


Gender	% of Total Appts	% of Total Clients
Female	65.50%	63.20%
Male	34.50%	36.80%

Languages Spoken by Writing Center Clients

When students register with our appointment reservation system, they indicate their first or home language. During the reporting period, 43.71% of tutoring clients selected English as their native language. However, these clients only had 34.56% of total appointments, averaging 2.00 visits per client. Students who self-identify as non-native English speakers continue to be the majority of Writing Center clients, and they continue to make more repeat appointments. For example, one student who speaks Mandarin visited 21 times in fall and 20 times in spring. Writing Center clients speak over 40 native languages.

Language	Total Appts	% of Total Appts	Total Clients	% of Total Clients	Avg Appts per Client
English	1124	34.56%	563	43.71%	2.00
Mandarin	500	15.38%	125	9.70%	4.00
Vietnamese	399	12.27%	114	8.85%	3.50
Spanish	326	10.02%	159	12.34%	2.05
Cantonese	226	6.95%	82	6.37%	2.76
Other	677	20.82%	245	19.02%	2.76



Language	Summer Appts	Fall Appts	Spring Appts	Total Appts	% of Total	Summer Clients	Fall Clients	Spring Clients	Total Clients	% of Total	Avg
English	63	556	505	1124	34.56%	30	305	286	563	43.71%	2.00
Mandarin	27	233	240	500	15.38%	14	64	66	125	9.70%	4.00
Vietnamese	49	212	138	399	12.27%	9	72	51	114	8.85%	3.50
Spanish	16	175	135	326	10.02%	10	88	80	159	12.34%	2.05
Cantonese	8	123	95	226	6.95%	4	48	40	82	6.37%	2.76
Japanese	5	22	52	79	2.43%	2	9	10	17	1.32%	4.65
Korean		41	33	74	2.28%		16	14	27	2.10%	2.74
Other	3	32	39	74	2.28%	2	14	14	28	2.17%	2.64
Farsi		35	27	62	1.91%		15	14	28	2.17%	2.21
Arabic	17	23	19	59	1.81%	3	7	9	17	1.32%	3.47
Amharic		25	26	51	1.57%		3	6	8	0.62%	6.38
Hindi		18	15	33	1.01%		7	11	17	1.32%	1.94
Burmese		21	1	22	0.68%		6	1	7	0.54%	3.14
Gujarati		4	17	21	0.65%		3	6	8	0.62%	2.63
Myanmar		17	4	21	0.65%		1	2	2	0.16%	10.50
Tagalog		3	17	20	0.62%		3	9	12	0.93%	1.67
Russian	2	8	9	19	0.58%	2	2	5	6	0.47%	3.17
Nepali	4	3	11	18	0.55%	1	1	4	6	0.47%	3.00
Marathi	3	5	9	17	0.52%	1	1	2	4	0.31%	4.25
Indonesian	2	6	8	16	0.49%	2	5	3	9	0.70%	1.78
Panjabi	2	5	3	10	0.31%	2	3	2	7	0.54%	1.43
Telugu		6	4	10	0.31%		5	4	9	0.70%	1.11
French		6	2	8	0.25%		1	2	2	0.16%	4.00
German	5	3		8	0.25%	1	3		4	0.31%	2.00
Turkish			8	8	0.25%			1	1	0.08%	8.00
Kinyarwanda		2	5	7	0.22%		1	1	1	0.08%	7.00
Shanghainese		1	5	6	0.18%		1	1	2	0.16%	3.00
Thai		5	1	6	0.18%		2	1	3	0.23%	2.00
Mongolian		2	3	5	0.15%		1	2	2	0.16%	2.50
Tamil	1	3		4	0.12%	1	2		3	0.23%	1.33
Urdu		1	3	4	0.12%		1	1	2	0.16%	2.00
Portuguese		1	2	3	0.09%		1	2	3	0.23%	1.00
Bengali		2		2	0.06%		2		2	0.16%	1.00
Bulgarian		1	1	2	0.06%		1	1	1	0.08%	2.00
Kannada			2	2	0.06%			1	1	0.08%	2.00
Malayalam		2		2	0.06%		2		2	0.16%	1.00
Hebrew	1			1	0.03%	1			1	0.08%	1.00
Hmong			1	1	0.03%			1	1	0.08%	1.00
Oriya	1			1	0.03%	1			1	0.08%	1.00
Tigrina		1		1	0.03%		1		1	0.08%	1.00

Ethnicities of Writing Center Clients

The Writing Center supports the goal of the university to increase retention and graduation rates through the outstanding tutoring and workshops we provide. In 2009, the Writing Center began tracking the ethnic backgrounds of Writing Center clientele to identify how many under-represented minority (URM) students are utilizing the Writing Center. Our initial data indicated that the URM population was under-represented in the Writing Center. We made a concerted effort to encourage more of these students to come to the Writing Center, and our efforts were successful. The number of URMs has continued to increase from year to year.

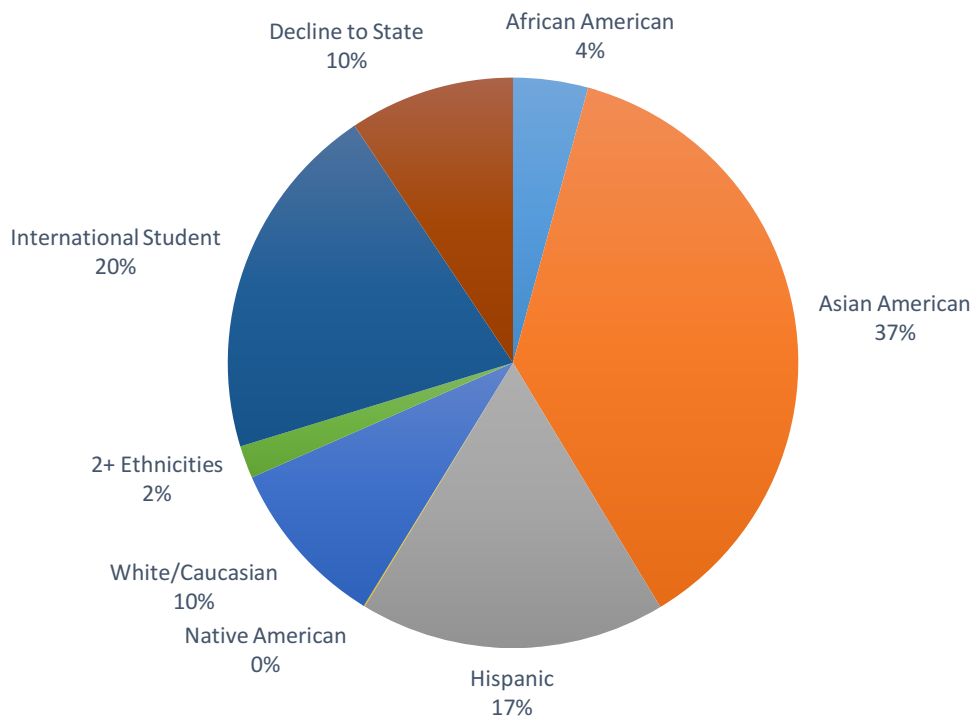
San José State University prides itself on its diversity and on the opportunities it offers under-represented students. It is committed to improving student progress toward graduation (*SJSU Strategic Plan: Vision 2017*). Therefore, it is important for the university to provide access to the tools students need to be successful: “Unbounded learning is facilitated by highly regarded faculty members actively engaging with students to provide a wide range of access to and delivery of learning content through in- and out-of-the-classroom experiences” (*SJSU Strategic Plan: Vision 2017*). The SJSU Writing Center continues to be a crucial place to assist in this process of “unbounded learning.”

The following charts show the breakdown of Writing Center clients by their ethnicity. Note that clients may choose more than one ethnicity when they register in the WOnline appointment system.

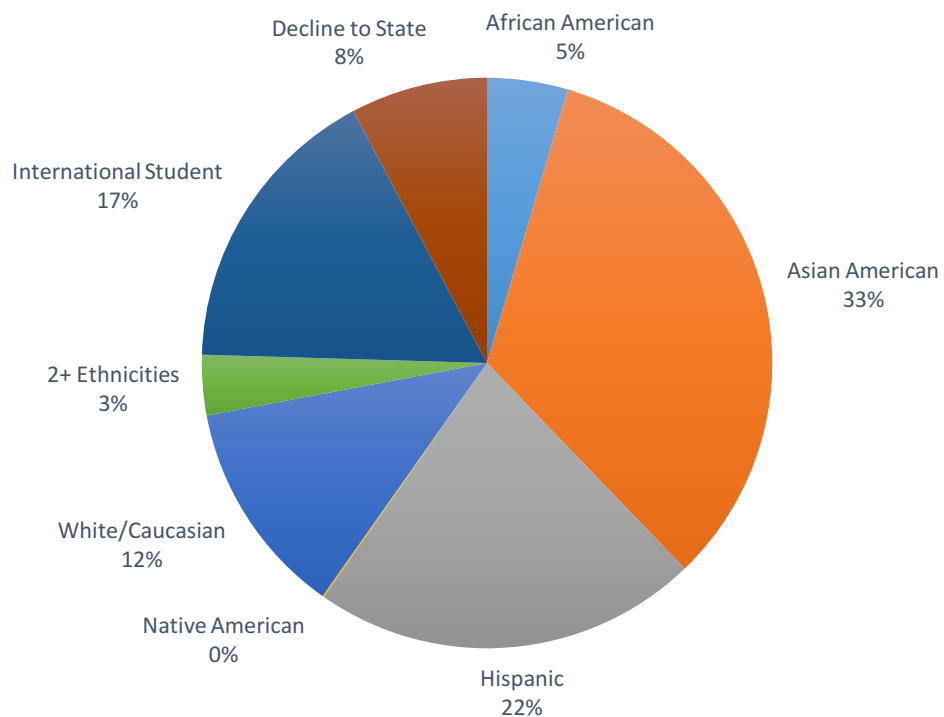
	Appointments				
Ethnicity	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
African American	3	75	60	138	4.24%
Asian American	106	587	514	1207	37.12%
Hispanic	31	305	228	564	17.34%
Native American		2		2	0.05%
White/Caucasian	6	153	155	314	9.66%
2+ Ethnicities	2	28	30	60	1.85%
International Student	55	302	305	662	20.36%
Decline to State	6	151	148	305	9.38%
Grand Total	209	1603	1440	3252	

	Clients					
Ethnicity	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
African American	2	34	29	59	4.58%	2.34
Asian American	34	246	208	428	33.23%	2.82
Hispanic	15	152	146	282	21.89%	2.00
Native American		1		1	0.08%	2.00
White/Caucasian	5	82	82	158	12.27%	1.99
2+ Ethnicities	2	22	24	44	3.42%	1.36
International Student	24	100	112	216	16.77%	3.06
Decline to State	4	60	52	100	7.76%	3.05
Grand Total	86	697	653	1288		2.52

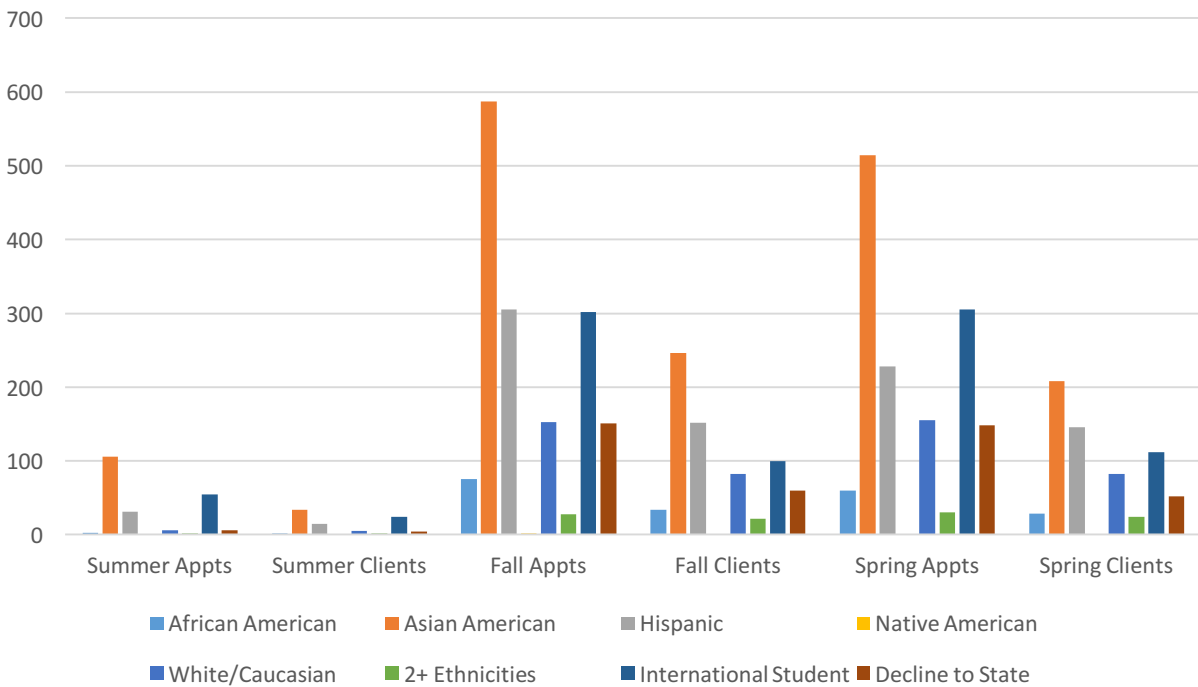
% Appointments by Ethnicity



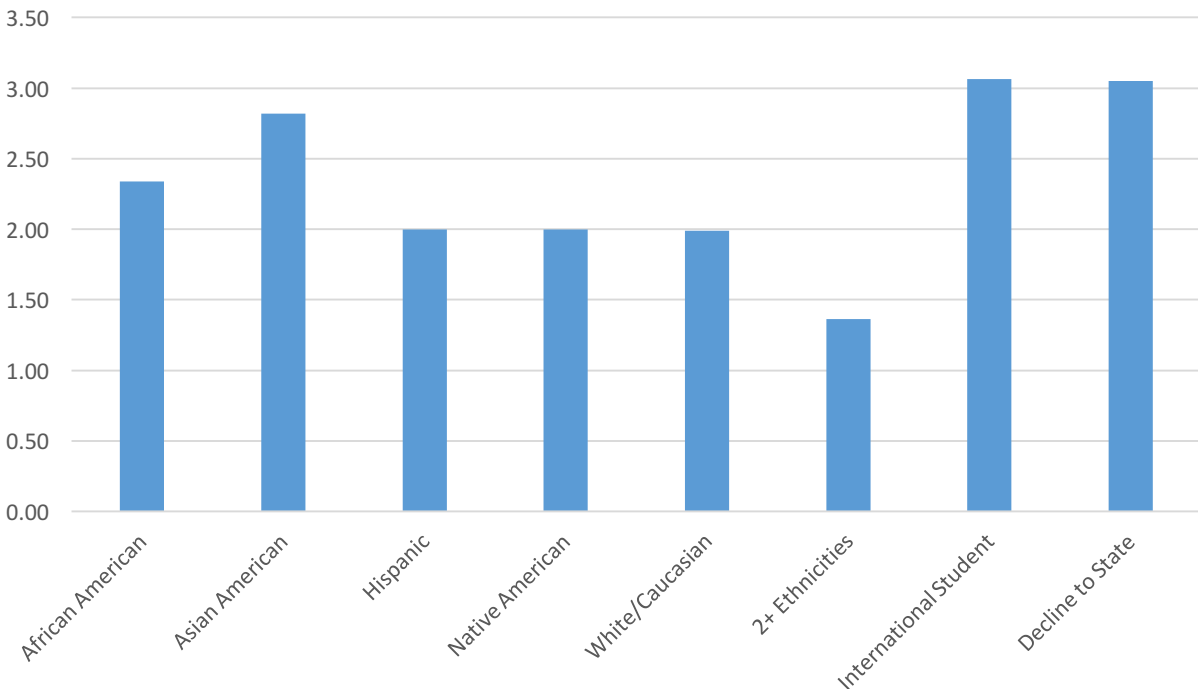
% Clients by Ethnicity



Appointments and Clients by Ethnicity



Average Appointments per Client by Ethnicity



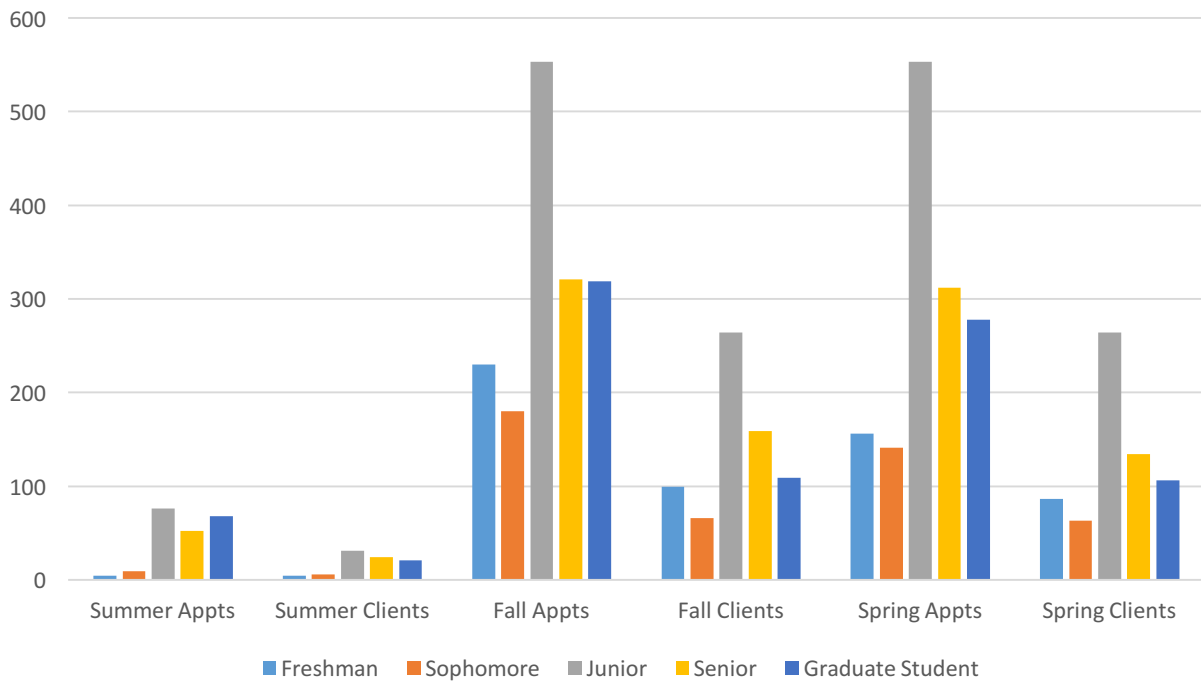
Appointments and Clients by Standing

While the Writing Center offers tutoring for all students, the majority of tutoring occurs with upper-division and graduate students, in part because there are other resources available for lower-division students across campus (e.g., Peer Connections). Juniors are our largest group of clients because 100W writing courses are most often taken at the junior level. These courses introduce writing in a specific major/discipline, so many instructors highly recommend use of Writing Center services.

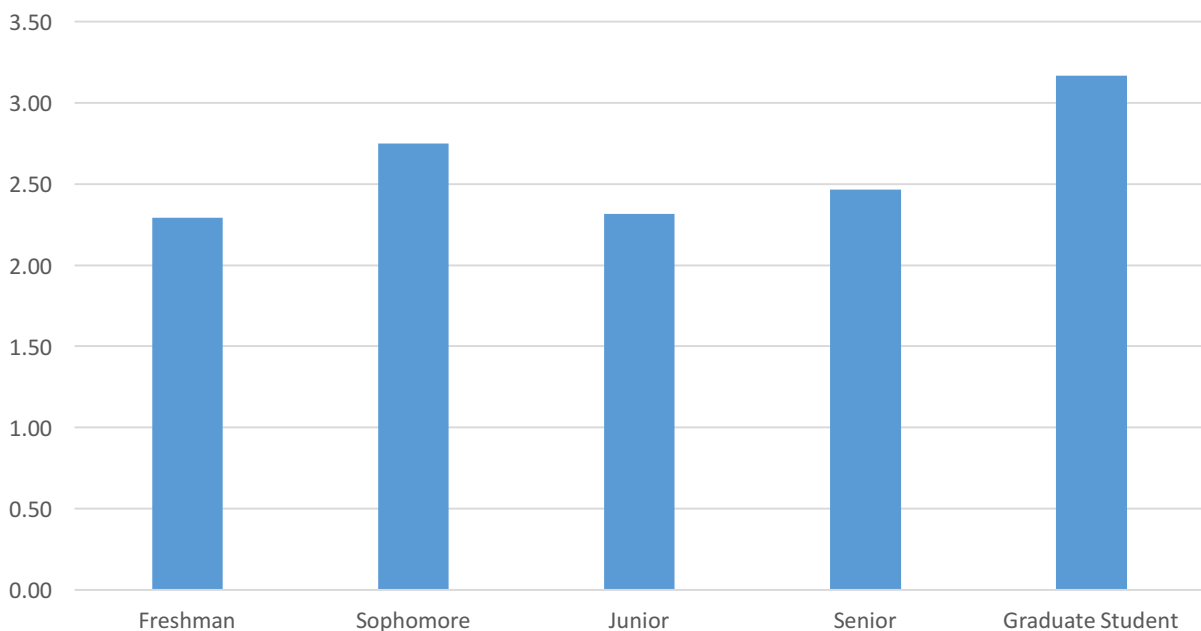
	Appointments				
Standing	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
Freshman	4	230	156	390	11.99%
Sophomore	9	180	141	330	10.15%
Junior	76	553	553	1182	36.35%
Senior	52	321	312	685	21.06%
Graduate Student	68	319	278	665	20.45%
Grand Total	209	1603	1440	3252	

	Clients					
Standing	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
Freshman	4	99	86	170	13.20%	2.29
Sophomore	6	66	63	120	9.32%	2.75
Junior	31	264	264	510	39.60%	2.32
Senior	24	159	134	278	21.58%	2.46
Graduate Student	21	109	106	210	16.30%	3.17
Grand Total	86	697	653	1288		2.52

Appointments and Clients by Standing



Average Appointments per Client per Standing



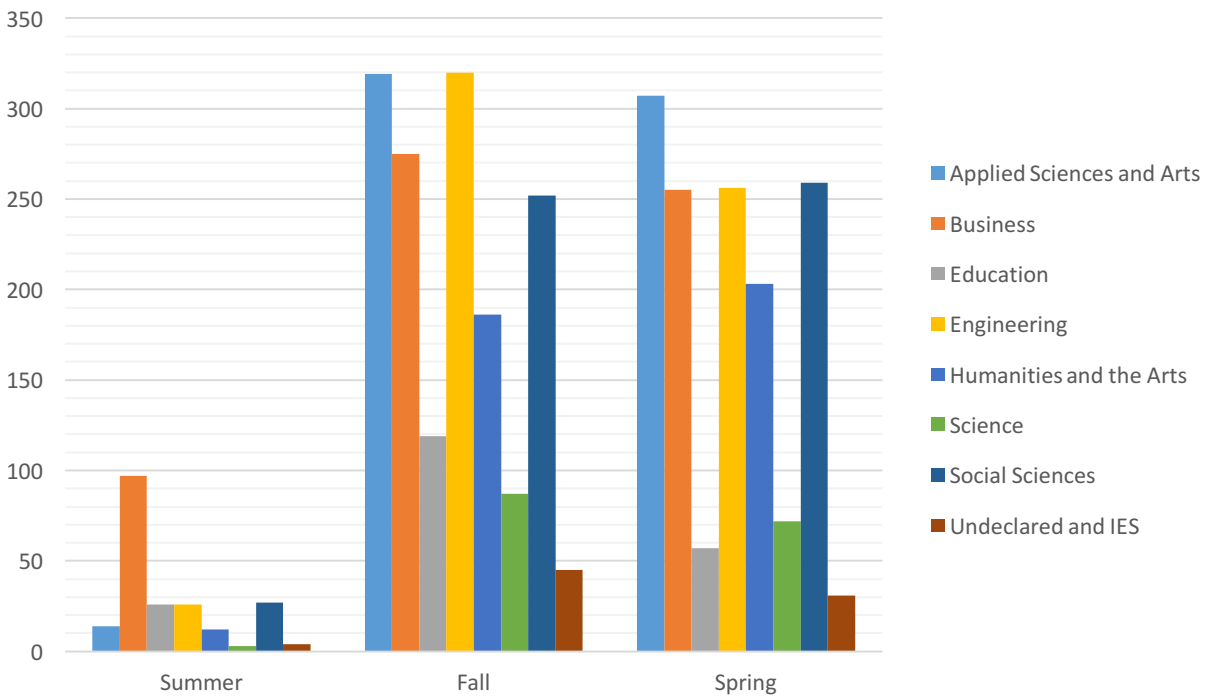
Appointments and Clients by College and Major

When registering in the WOnline system, students self-report their major and college. The following charts represent the number of appointments made by college and major. Note that this does not indicate the courses addressed in tutoring sessions, only the students' stated majors. Also note that "appointments" do not necessarily indicate the number of students as many students make repeat appointments.

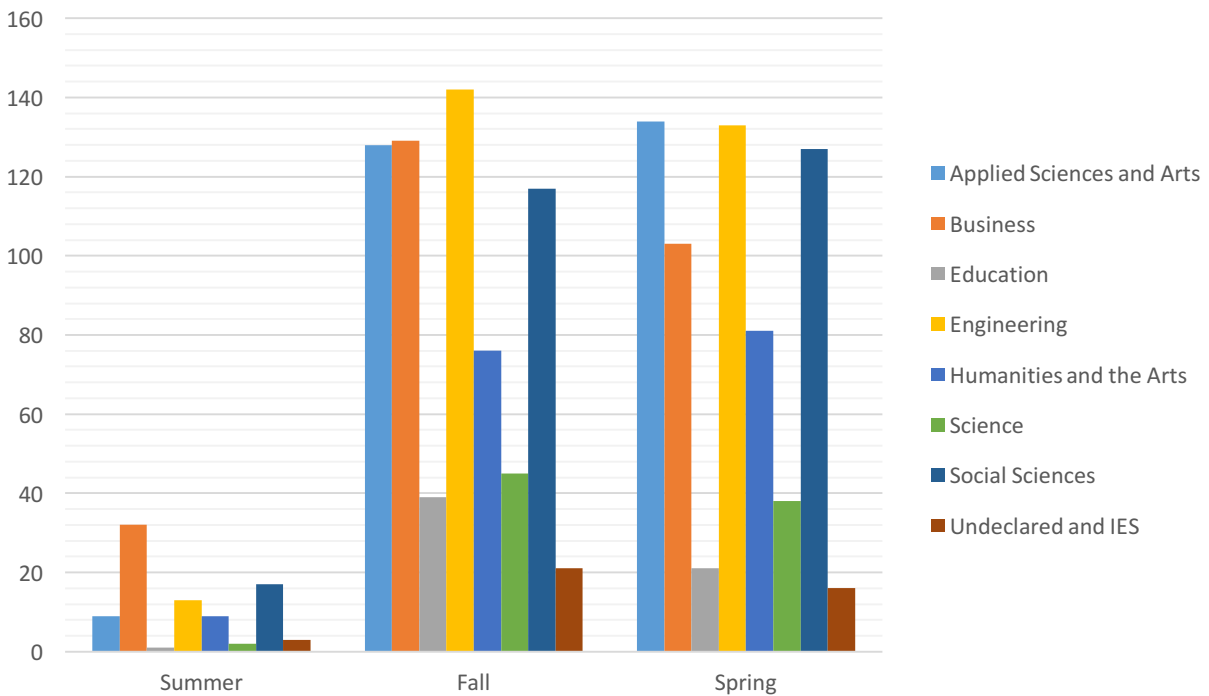
	Appointments				
College	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
Applied Sciences and Arts	14	319	307	640	19.68%
Business	97	275	255	627	19.28%
Education	26	119	57	202	6.21%
Engineering	26	320	256	602	18.51%
Humanities and the Arts	12	186	203	401	12.33%
Science	3	87	72	162	4.98%
Social Sciences	27	252	259	538	16.54%
Undeclared and IES	4	45	31	80	2.46%
Grand Total	209	1603	1440	3252	

	Clients					
College	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
Applied Sciences and Arts	9	128	134	238	18.48%	2.69
Business	32	129	103	234	18.17%	2.68
Education	1	39	21	53	4.11%	3.81
Engineering	13	142	133	270	20.96%	2.23
Humanities and the Arts	9	76	81	145	11.26%	2.77
Science	2	45	38	77	5.98%	2.10
Social Sciences	17	117	127	236	18.32%	2.28
Undeclared and IES	3	21	16	35	2.72%	2.29
Grand Total	86	697	653	1288		2.52

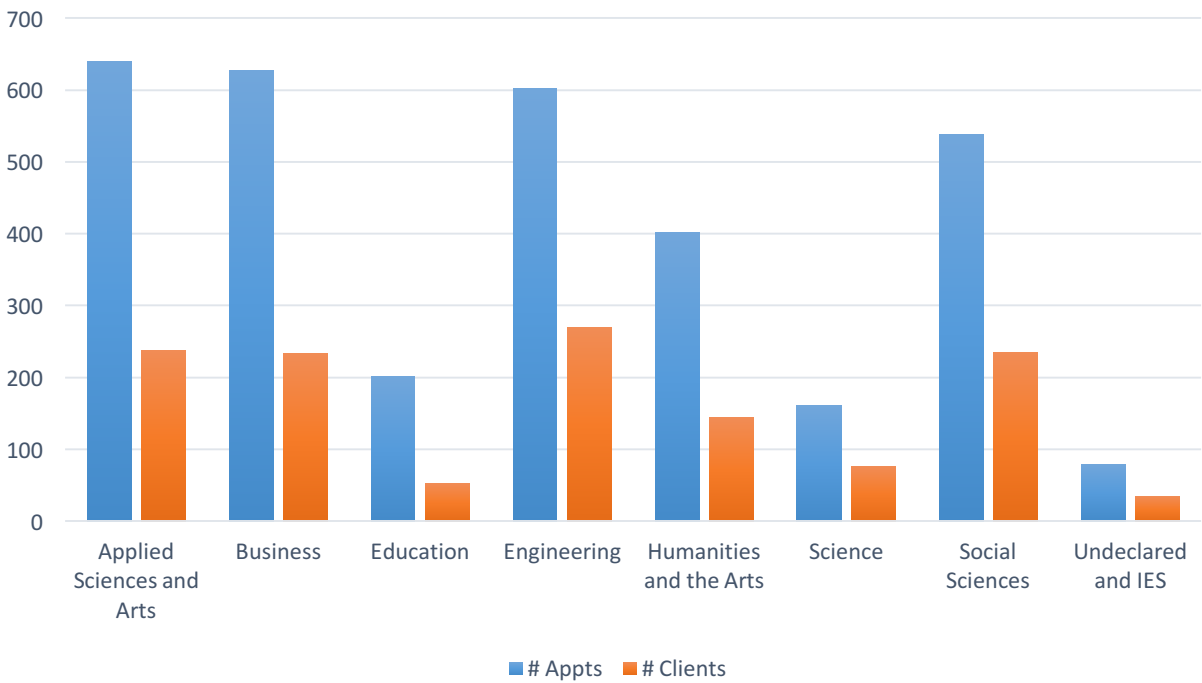
Appointments by College



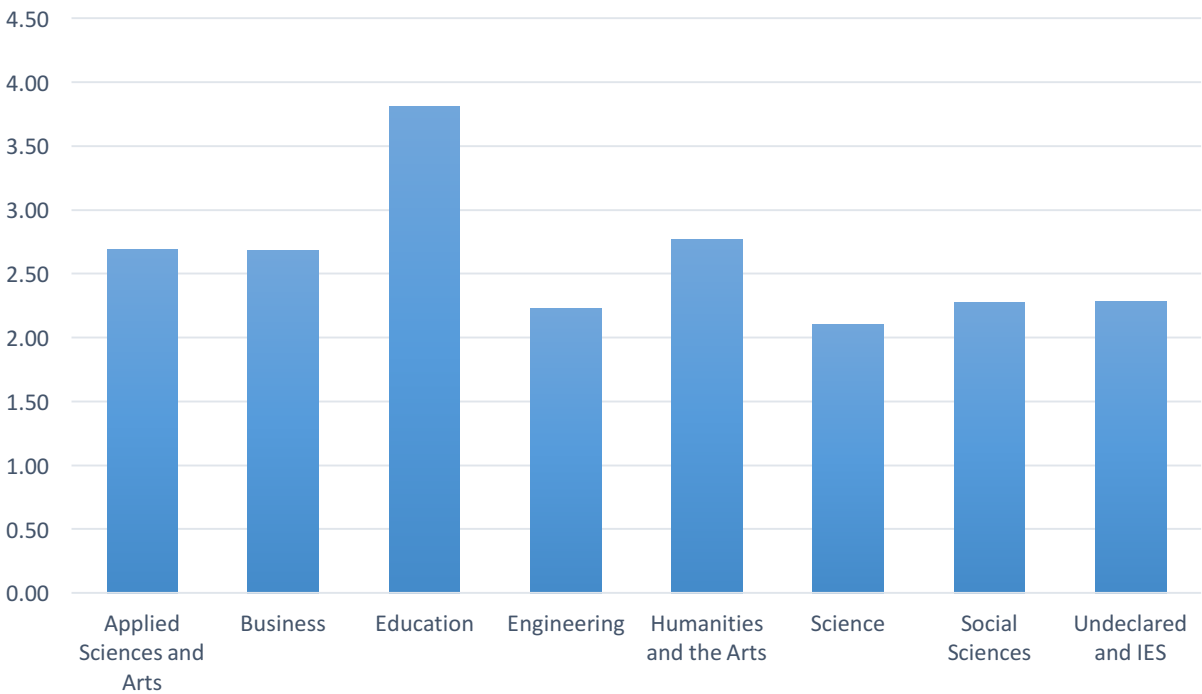
Clients by College



Appointments and Clients by College



Average Appointments per Client per College



	Appointments				
Applied Sciences and Arts	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
Advertising			2	2	0.31%
Health Science		59	72	131	20.47%
Hospitality Management	1	30	22	53	8.28%
Journalism		8	16	24	3.75%
Justice Studies		47	18	65	10.16%
Kinesiology	3	18	26	47	7.34%
Library Science		1		1	0.16%
Nursing	8	26	25	59	9.22%
Nutrition		19	46	65	10.16%
Occupational Therapy	1		17	18	2.81%
Public Health		24	4	28	4.38%
Social Work	1	87	59	147	22.97%
Total	14	319	307	640	

	Clients					
Applied Sciences and Arts	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
Advertising			2	2	0.84%	1.00
Health Science		28	38	57	23.95%	2.30
Hospitality Management	1	4	2	6	2.52%	8.83
Journalism		3	9	10	4.20%	2.40
Justice Studies		24	13	32	13.45%	2.03
Kinesiology	2	10	15	25	10.50%	1.88
Library Science		1		1	0.42%	1.00
Nursing	4	15	14	32	13.45%	1.84
Nutrition		9	12	19	7.98%	3.42
Occupational Therapy	1		13	14	5.88%	1.29
Public Health		6	4	7	2.94%	4.00
Social Work	1	28	12	33	13.87%	4.45
Total	9	128	134	238		2.69

	Appointments				
Business	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
Accounting and Finance	57	107	144	308	49.12%
Business Analytics	6	3		9	1.44%
Entrepreneurship		5	2	7	1.12%
General Business	3	74	49	126	20.10%
International Business	3	9	9	21	3.35%
Management	5	26	17	48	7.66%
Management Information Systems	16	34	21	71	11.32%
Marketing	7	17	13	37	5.90%
Total	97	275	255	627	

	Clients					
Business	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
Accounting and Finance	19	51	43	100	42.74%	3.08
Business Analytics	2	2		4	1.71%	2.25
Entrepreneurship		4	1	4	1.71%	1.75
General Business	2	24	21	39	16.67%	3.23
International Business	2	8	6	15	6.41%	1.40
Management	1	12	13	22	9.40%	2.18
Management Information Systems	3	14	9	24	10.26%	2.96
Marketing	3	14	10	26	11.11%	1.42
Total	32	129	103	234		2.68

	Appointments				
Education	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
Child and Adolescent Development		45	25	70	34.65%
Communicative Disorders and Sciences		19	2	21	10.40%
Counselor Education	26	48	18	92	45.54%
Elementary Education			12	12	5.94%
Secondary Education		7		7	3.47%
Total	26	119	57	202	

	Clients					
Education	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
Child and Adolescent Development		22	14	32	60.38%	2.19
Communicative Disorders and Sciences		7	2	8	15.09%	2.63
Counselor Education	1	9	2	9	16.98%	10.22
Elementary Education			3	3	5.66%	4.00
Secondary Education		1		1	1.89%	7.00
Total	1	39	21	53		3.81

	Appointments				
Engineering	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
Aerospace Engineering		13	3	16	2.66%
Aviation and Technology	2	18	21	41	6.81%
Biomedical, Chemical, and Materials Engineering	6	35	69	110	18.27%
Civil and Environmental Engineering	8	22	11	41	6.81%
Computer Engineering	5	75	30	110	18.27%
Electrical Engineering	2	52	54	108	17.94%
Ergonomics	1	3	1	5	0.83%
General Engineering		4	2	6	1.00%
Industrial and Systems Engineering	1	21	3	25	4.15%
Mechanical Engineering	1	33	30	64	10.63%
Software Engineering		44	32	76	12.62%
Total	26	320	256	602	

	Clients					
Engineering	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
Aerospace Engineering		8	2	10	3.70%	1.60
Aviation and Technology	1	10	11	22	8.15%	1.86
Biomedical, Chemical, and Materials Engineering	3	15	34	48	17.78%	2.29
Civil and Environmental Engineering	2	12	10	23	8.52%	1.78
Computer Engineering	2	26	16	42	15.56%	2.62
Electrical Engineering	2	29	23	48	17.78%	2.25
Ergonomics	1	2	1	3	1.11%	1.67
General Engineering		3	1	4	1.48%	1.50
Industrial and Systems Engineering	1	8	2	11	4.07%	2.27
Mechanical Engineering	1	9	15	24	8.89%	2.67
Software Engineering		20	18	35	12.96%	2.17
Total	13	142	133	270		2.23

	Appointments				
Humanities and the Arts	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
Animation		16	11	27	6.73%
Art and Art History	2	11	14	27	6.73%
Design	7	69	81	157	39.15%
English		44	41	85	21.20%
Humanities		4	10	14	3.49%
Liberal Studies	1	5	5	11	2.74%
Linguistics		5	3	8	2.00%
Music		3	4	7	1.75%
Philosophy		1		1	0.25%
Photography		6	16	22	5.49%
Radio, Television, Film		4	2	6	1.50%
TESOL		15	4	19	4.74%
World Languages	2	3	12	17	4.24%
Total	12	186	203	401	

	Clients					
Humanities and the Arts	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
Animation		3	5	7	4.83%	3.86
Art and Art History	2	7	5	14	9.66%	1.93
Design	4	28	37	57	39.31%	2.75
English		11	11	19	13.10%	4.47
Humanities		3	4	6	4.14%	2.33
Liberal Studies	1	4	4	8	5.52%	1.38
Linguistics		5	2	7	4.83%	1.14
Music		2	3	5	3.45%	1.40
Philosophy		1		1	0.69%	1.00
Photography		4	2	5	3.45%	4.40
Radio, Television, Film		3	1	4	2.76%	1.50
TESOL		4	3	6	4.14%	3.17
World Languages	2	1	4	6	4.14%	2.83
Total	9	76	81	145		2.77

	Appointments				
Science	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
Biology	2	32	28	62	38.27%
Chemistry	1	10	5	16	9.88%
Computer Science		23	10	33	20.37%
Mathematics		12	11	23	14.20%
Meteorology			1	1	0.62%
Science Education		8		8	4.94%
Statistics		2	17	19	11.73%
Total	3	87	72	162	

	Clients					
Science	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
Biology	1	21	15	30	38.96%	2.07
Chemistry	1	9	5	14	18.18%	1.14
Computer Science		6	6	12	15.58%	2.75
Mathematics		6	5	11	14.29%	2.09
Meteorology			1	1	1.30%	1.00
Science Education		2		2	2.60%	4.00
Statistics		1	6	7	9.09%	2.71
Total	2	45	38	77		2.10

	Appointments				
Social Sciences	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total
African American Studies			2	2	0.37%
Anthropology		2		2	0.37%
Behavioral Science	3	6	20	29	5.39%
Communication Studies	3	24	23	50	9.29%
Economics	1	17	30	48	8.92%
Environmental Studies	3	10	23	36	6.69%
Geography		9		9	1.67%
Global Studies		2	8	10	1.86%
History	2	17	18	37	6.88%
Mexican American Studies			1	1	0.19%
Political Science		35	11	46	8.55%
Psychology	6	83	39	128	23.79%
Public Administration		14	39	53	9.85%
Sociology	9	25	35	69	12.83%
Urban Planning		8	10	18	3.35%
Total	27	252	259	538	

	Clients					
Social Sciences	Summer	Fall	Spring	Total	% of Total	Avg Appts per Client
African American Studies			2	2	0.85%	1.00
Anthropology		2		2	0.85%	1.00
Behavioral Science	2	3	4	8	3.39%	3.63
Communication Studies	1	13	15	28	11.86%	1.79
Economics	1	9	11	17	7.20%	2.82
Environmental Studies	1	7	12	19	8.05%	1.89
Geography		1		1	0.42%	9.00
Global Studies		1	3	4	1.69%	2.50
History	1	5	5	7	2.97%	5.29
Mexican American Studies			1	1	0.42%	1.00
Political Science		13	9	19	8.05%	2.42
Psychology	4	33	21	51	21.61%	2.51
Public Administration		4	12	14	5.93%	3.79
Sociology	7	21	25	51	21.61%	1.35
Urban Planning		5	7	12	5.08%	1.50
Total	17	117	127	236		2.28

Workshops

Writing Center Workshops

Each semester, the Writing Center offers a variety of workshops targeting particular areas of need that have been identified by faculty, Writing Specialists, or students using the Writing Center. These workshops are presented in seminar fashion for up to 15 students who either sign up for the workshops in our WOnline system or show up the day of the workshop to see if any seats are available. All our workshops are taught by Writing Specialists or Writing Center faculty. Workshop topics cover different parts of the writing process.

Workshop Statistics and Attendance

During the 2016-2017 reporting period, **307** students attended **40** regularly scheduled workshops. Workshops may be cancelled if they do not meet the minimum advanced registration requirement of five participants. (Please note that the numbers presented in the table below only reflect attendees of our regularly scheduled workshops; attendees in special request workshops are presented in the table on the next page.)

Title	# Times Presented	# Attendees
Basic APA Style	3	25
Body Paragraphs	2	12
Common Grammar and Punctuation Errors	4	31
Essay Prompts and Time Management	4	47
Finding a Voice	2	11
How to Write a Killer Introduction	4	32
Muscle Verbs for Good Writing	3	20
Paraphrasing	1	10
Presenting Evidence in Tables and Figures	4	35
Revising for Clarity: Subjects and Their Verbs	2	15
Selecting and Integrating Source Materials	1	6
Transitions for Coherence	2	11
Trimming the Fat	2	15
Writing a Job Query Letter/Email	4	23
Writing for Your Audience	2	14

Requested Workshops

In some cases, faculty request specific workshops to be presented in their classrooms. This year we presented **5** requested workshops to **88** students.

Requested Workshops	# Times Presented	# Attendees
Basic APA Style	1	9
Body Paragraphs	2	57
Common Grammar and Punctuation Errors	1	12
Writing a Job Query Letter/Email	1	10

Workshop Evaluations

After every workshop, whether at the Writing Center or in a classroom, students fill out a short, four-question evaluation with numerical scores ranging from 1 to 5. The questions ask if the topic was covered thoroughly, if the information was clear, if the material will be useful, and if the student would recommend Writing Center workshops to his or her peers. The “1” score indicates strong disagreement with the statement, while the “5” score indicates strong agreement. The numbers below represent the average scores from all workshops in response to each statement. We recorded **370** responses.

Question	Average Feedback
Coverage	94.76%
Clarity	95.68%
Usefulness	94.27%
Recommendation	94.38%

Writing Resources

Introduction to Writing Resources

Every semester Writing Specialists create original writing resources to support the Writing Center mission of helping students improve their writing. They go through multiple revisions with both the Writing Center Director and Faculty-in-Residence. In years past, the resources were limited to our Homegrown Handouts, but they have recently been expanded to include posters, videos, blog posts, and other resources (e.g., flashcards or informational bookmarks).

Homegrown Handouts

During our ten years of operation, Writing Specialists at the SJSU Writing Center have created over 100 Homegrown Handouts—original writing resources that are posted on the Writing Center website (<http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/handouts>) and used in the tutoring lab.

A template format is used for these handouts, and Writing Specialists are guided through the process of creating a handout resource by Writing Center faculty members. This process involves doing research, justifying the need for the new resource, submitting a formal proposal, and creating and revising multiple drafts. In creating these handouts, Writing Specialists learn pedagogical concepts such as scaffolding and modelling while also making resources that are used by faculty and students on campus and at other schools and universities.

The handouts have a substantial reach—people from across the country and beyond have reached out to the Writing Center to indicate that they use the handouts in classroom instruction, during private tutoring sessions, and for personal enrichment. We have received messages from teachers who are using our handouts in countries such as Afghanistan, Thailand, Indonesia, and South Korea.

Writing Specialists created the following new handouts during the 2016-2017 academic year.

- “Writing a Literature Review,” by Nicky Lai
- “Paraphrasing,” by Sheldon Hentschke
- “Do’s and Don’ts of Online Posts,” by Sammy Lai

The handout about writing online posts was created at the request of SJSU’s eCampus. The video is now embedded in the eCampus course template and has been distributed to their faculty and students.

Videos

Writing Specialists created two videos for the Writing Center YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/SJSUWritingCenter>) during the 2016-2017 academic year. The videos go through the same vigorous revision process as all resource projects. Both videos are virtual tutoring sessions that cover writing-related concepts.

- “How to Write Online Feedback,” by Saya Morita
- “APA: Citing Figures,” by Jasmine Mally

The video about writing online feedback was created at the request of SJSU's eCampus. The video is now embedded in the eCampus course template and has been distributed to their faculty and students.

The Write Attitude: The Official Blog of the SJSU Writing Center

Faculty-in-Residence Maria Judnick wrote entries for and managed *The Write Attitude: The Official Blog of the SJSU Writing Center* (<https://sjsuwritingcenter.wordpress.com>). Numerous Writing Specialists also wrote various blog posts throughout the year focusing on a variety of writing-related topics; some blog posts were more substantial while others (often created by new hires) were part of our briefer "Quick Tips" or "Meme of the Week" series.

The audience of our blog continues to grow. For more information about blog statistics, please see the "Writing Center Online Presence" section of this Annual Report.

The following table shows the work that Writing Specialists completed for the blog.

Student Blogger	Title of Post	Type of Post
All Writing Specialists, with an emphasis on Jack Brady	"Welcome Back...And Welcome to the Writing Process"	A "roundblog" post discussing the parts of the writing process and featuring Jack's poster
Ariel Andrew	"Quick Tip #8: You and What Audience?"	Quick Tip series
Saya Morita	"How to Write Online Feedback"	A post about her video resource
Ines Marjanovic	"Part I: 'So What?' a Writing Series"	A look at how to use the "so what?" question in different parts of a paper
Ines Marjanovic	"Part II: 'So What?' a Writing Series"	How to use "so what?" questions in rhetorical analysis papers
Sheldon Hentschke	Meme of the Week	A look at Calvin and Hobbes comics
Ines Marjanovic	"Part III: 'So What?' a Writing Series"	How to use "so what?" questions in persuasive / argumentative papers
Nicky Lai	Meme of the Week	A look at Peanuts comics
Ines Marjanovic	"Part IV: 'So What?' a Writing Series"	How to use "so what?" questions in research papers

Student Blogger	Title of Post	Type of Post
All Writing Specialists	“The Books of Spring Break”	A “roundblog” list of book suggestions
Tim Alexander	“Four Score and Seven Years Ago...I Started my Thesis Statement.”	A longer look at the art of the thesis statement
Jasmine Mally	“Quick Tip #13: Write the Body of an Essay First”	Quick Tip series
Ines Marjanovic	Meme of the Week	A look at Bizarro.com comics
Akhil Kumar	“Quick Tip #14: Using your Time Wisely in a Timed Write”	Quick Tip series
Holly Michaelson	“When Do I Use a Comma?”	Charts on commas and their usage
Jack Brady	“Quick Tip #15: Show, Don’t Tell”	Quick Tip series
Luke Coulter	Meme of the Week	A look at the comic series XKCD
Jenn Hambly	Meme of the Week	A look at citations with popular memes
Vanessa Mendoza-Palencia	“Writing for Business Series #1: Active Voice and Strong Action Verbs for Resumes”	A short series on business writing
Daniel Tafoya	Meme of the Week	A look at controlling writer’s anxiety through popular memes
Vanessa Mendoza-Palencia	“Writing for Business Series #2: Writing the Cover Letter”	A short series on business writing
All Writing Specialists	“The Wrap-Up: Parting Advice from Graduating Specialists”	Another special “roundblog” with writing advice
All Writing Specialists	“Ask a Specialist: New Blog Feature”	Selected Writing Specialists’ answers to a question posed at the May staff meeting

Posters, Games, and Other Writing Resources

Writing Specialists created a variety of other resources to be used in the Writing Center and beyond. The games, posters, fliers, and research projects go through the same vigorous revision process as all resource projects.

- Jack Brady updated the Writing Center flier that is distributed at all tabling events and during all in-class presentations (house calls).
- Jack Brady created a poster about the writing process to reinforce that the Writing Center can help with all types of writing and during all phases of the writing process. This poster is currently being used in the Writing Center lobby, and it is being displayed at all tabling events.
- Saya Morita completed a research project that was presented at the Conference on College Composition and Communication Summer Regional Conference (CCCC@SJSU), “Understanding the Needs of Student Writers and Why Tutoring Sessions Change Focus: An Analysis of Writing Center Client Reports.” (Her complete project can be found in the “Research Projects and External Collaborations” section of this Annual Report.)
- Nicky Lai created a game about verb tenses, which gives both tutees and tutors a visual, tactile resource to use in the tutoring lab.

On-Campus Events and Collaborations

Writing Fellows Program

The director of the Writing Center, Michelle Hager, also works as the co-coordinator of the Writing Fellows program along with the director of Writing Across the Curriculum, Dr. Tom Moriarty. Undergraduate Writing Fellows are course-embedded tutors who provide writing support for students enrolled in 100W courses all across campus. Graduate Writing Fellows work with graduate students who are part of a specific college.

A Writing Fellow's duties include

- meeting with faculty members regularly to develop and deliver both in-class and out-of-class writing support.
- working with students in class.
- meeting with students in small groups outside of class to facilitate discussion, peer review, and supplemental instruction sessions.
- meeting with students individually to provide feedback on projects in all stages of the writing process, from brainstorming and organizing ideas to drafting and revising.
- creating and presenting writing workshops, both in class and outside of class.
- submitting regular written reports of activities to the faculty member and the coordinators of the Writing Fellows program.

The Writing Center director assisted in both training and supervising all Writing Fellows. She developed a comprehensive training program for the Fellows that mirrors many of the steps in the hiring/training process at the Writing Center.

In the last 2.5 years, 31 Writing Fellows have been hired, trained, placed, and supported; they have worked in 37 different classes (mostly sections of 100W), helping 925 students improve their writing. In the 2016-2017 year, Graduate Writing Fellows were placed in the College of Education and the College of Applied Sciences and Arts (CASA). Undergraduate Writing Fellows were placed in the following 100W courses during 2016-2017:

- Sociology 100W,
- Communication Studies 100W,
- Health Professions 100W,
- Foreign Languages and Literatures 100W,
- Linguistics and Language Development 100W,
- English 100W,
- English 100WB, and
- Humanities 100W.

One of the trained Graduate Writing Fellows was also hired to work as a writing tutor for the on-campus McNair Scholars Program.

MS Taxation Program Collaboration

During the spring 2012 semester, the Writing Center and the MS Taxation program of the Lucas Graduate School of Business entered into an agreement to provide additional tutoring for MST students writing articles for *The Contemporary Tax Journal*, a semi-annual journal. Akhil Kumar, an Assistant Writing Specialist majoring in Accounting, worked with MST students throughout 2016-2017. Appointments were usually 90 minutes in length and often addressed both grammar and content.

iSchool Collaboration

The SJSU School of Information (iSchool) hires one Writing Specialist every year to conduct online tutoring sessions with students in its online graduate program. The tutor works up to an additional five hours per week tutoring in the iSchool's Collaborate web conferencing environment. This partnership provides an important opportunity for the Writing Center to provide tutoring services to students in the iSchool, who take only online classes and often live outside of the Bay Area.

In the fall 2016 semester, Writing Specialist Tim Alexander worked with graduate students in the iSchool; in the spring 2017 semester, Writing Specialist Holly Michaelsen assumed this position.

Student-Athlete Success Services Collaboration

The Writing Center worked with Student-Athlete Success Services to provide tutoring services to student athletes in the evenings at the Gadway Academic Center. In fall 2016, Writing Specialist Vanessa Mendoza-Palencia completed this work, and Writing Specialist Brooke Blankenship assumed this position in spring 2017. Vanessa and Brooke conducted one-on-one tutoring sessions with numerous student athletes who needed extra assistance with their writing.

House Calls

The Writing Center offers in-class orientations to the campus community. These "house calls," presented by Writing Specialists, inform students about Writing Center services. During these presentations, Writing Specialists explain what to expect from tutoring, how to schedule appointments, and how to prepare for appointments. Students are also given information about how to sign up for Writing Center workshops and where to find our online resources that are readily available for self-study. House calls are usually presented in the classroom; however, in some cases, faculty will bring their students to the Writing Center for a tour.

Graduate Non-Resident Task Force

The Graduate Non-Resident Task Force, a sub-committee of the Non-Resident Task Force, was established in June 2016. The Writing Center Director, Michelle Hager, represents the writing program on this task force. The goal of the task force is to discuss and identify roadblocks for graduate international and non-resident students and then develop strategies to help them overcome those obstacles.

Frosh Orientation



During summer 2016, Writing Specialists Sheldon Hentschke, Brooke Blankenship, Tim Alexander, Vanessa Mendoza-Palencia, and Nicky Lai staffed the Writing Center table during the weekly resource fair at the Frosh Orientation sessions. They handed out promotional materials and talked to hundreds of students and parents about Writing Center services and the importance of college-level writing.

Admitted Spartan Day



In April 2017, Writing Specialists Ariel Andrew and Jasmine Mally staffed a table for the Writing Center at Admitted Spartan Day—an event that showcases the campus to newly admitted students and their families.

They handed out promotional materials and talked to students and parents about Writing Center services. Many students asked questions about the Writing Skills Test (WST), which is not directly linked with the Writing Center. The Writing

Specialists explained how tutoring and workshops can help students prepare for the test. Also, numerous students inquired about jobs at the Writing Center. Ariel and Jasmine spoke with several hundred students throughout the day.

Graduate Student Orientation Resource Fair

The Writing Center serves as an important resource for graduate students, and we want to ensure they are aware of our offerings before they begin classes. In both August 2016 and January 2017, Writing Specialists staffed a table for the Writing Center at the Graduate Student Orientation Resource Fair. Sheldon Hentschke and Vanessa Mendoza-Palencia were the Writing Center's representatives in August, while Ines Marjanovic and Saya Morita were the representatives in January. They handed out promotional materials and talked to several hundred students, describing the Writing Center's services.

Peer Educator Fair

In April 2017, Writing Specialist Sammy Lai staffed a table for the Writing Center at the second-annual Peer Educator Fair. She handed out promotional materials and talked to dozens of interested students, describing the Writing Center's services. She had quite a few people ask about writing cover letters and résumés.

SJSU Preview Day

In November 2016, Writing Specialists Tim Alexander and Sammy Lai worked the Writing Center table at SJSU Preview Day. This event, hosted by Student Outreach and Recruitment, is part of the new Spartan East Side Promise (SESP) program, which provides insight about the college experience to students from the East Side Union High School District.

Campus Communications

Communications with Faculty

To further the mission of the Writing Center, we seek to engage faculty in a discussion of writing and the teaching of writing. At the conclusion of each tutoring session, with the client's permission, Writing Specialists send an email report about the session to the instructor, identifying the assignment discussed and issues addressed during the session.

In many cases, the replies from instructors express appreciation for the individualized attention their students receive at the Writing Center. Sometimes the reply provides the Writing Specialist with feedback on the specifics of the assignment or comments about the challenges that the student faces in his or her writing. Occasionally, instructors have questions about teaching writing. In all cases, the email report heightens faculty awareness of how Writing Specialists and faculty can collaborate to improve student writing on a case-by-case basis.

When we opened in February 2007, only a few students wanted Writing Specialists to contact their instructors. Some clients were embarrassed to admit that they needed writing assistance. Many of them declined instructor contact simply because they did not understand the benefits of informing their instructors about their tutoring session(s). However, the number of students approving follow-up email reports has slowly increased.

Model Emails by Writing Specialists

The following emails are samples of the follow-up messages to professors that are written by our Writing Specialists and Assistant Writing Specialists. This correspondence connects the Writing Center to the campus community and allows us to engage in a dialogue with instructors about the writing process. (Student names have been blacked out for privacy.)

Sample Email #1

Dear Professor Smay,

My name is Ines Marjanovic, and I am a Writing Specialist at the Writing Center in Clark Hall. I worked with your student [REDACTED] from your HUM 1A course on December 6th. [REDACTED] has given me permission to contact you regarding her visit to the Writing Center.

During our 30-minute content session, [REDACTED] and I discussed her thesis and organization for a research paper concerning Daoism. We noticed that her thesis seemed to be more of a topic than a statement about said topic, so I suggested that she make a thesis that explores why her topic matters. From there, she wrote 4-5 possible topics, and we chose two of them that stood out to her the most. Then, I asked her to turn them into "so what?" questions. For example, if her possible topic was "humans are amoral," her question could read, "so what if humans are amoral?" The question allowed her to then weave a thesis, and she elected to look at her paper through the lens of the journey from amorality to morality but not necessarily either pole. Though we did generally discuss some organization strategies, [REDACTED] explained that she felt comfortable doing that independently so long as she had a jumping-off point, i.e. a working thesis. [REDACTED] was very receptive to my feedback, and she was a pleasure to work with.

We were unable to address every concern, but [REDACTED] feels encouraged to begin crafting her paper independently.

I am writing to inform you of this tutoring session. If you have any questions concerning the visit, please let me know.

Sincerely,
Ines Marjanovic
Writing Specialist
408-924-2308

Sample Email #2

Dear Professor Sansome,

My name is Timothy Alexander, and I am a Writing Specialist at the Writing Center in Clark Hall. I worked with your student [REDACTED] from your ENGR 100W course February 16th. [REDACTED] has given me permission to contact you regarding her visit to the Writing Center.

During the 30-minute session, [REDACTED] and I looked at the content and organization of her cover letter. In doing so, we were able to come to several notable conclusions regarding sentence clarity, paragraph cohesion, and overarching themes. To start, she and I addressed a few content-based concerns which ranged from highlighting noteworthy skills to constructing topic sentences. We then had a discussion about speaking to skills acquired from honor societies and adequately presenting them to the hiring manager. In conclusion, [REDACTED] was very receptive to many of my suggestions and provided several of her own.

Although the session was productive, we were not able to address all her concerns, so I suggested she come back if she had the time.

I am writing to let you know of this tutoring session. If you have any questions concerning this visit, or you would like me to cover any particular writing issues, please let me know.

Sincerely,
Tim Alexander
Writing Specialist
408-924-2308

Sample Email #3

Dear Professor Bane,

My name is Vanessa Palencia, and I am a Writing Specialist at the Writing Center in Clark Hall. I worked with your student [REDACTED] from your Environmental Studies 100W course on December 8th. [REDACTED] has given me permission to contact you regarding her visit to the Writing Center.

[REDACTED] brought her paper for Environmental Studies 100W to the Writing Center for help with content and organization. Namely, [REDACTED] wanted help expanding some of her ideas. We spent a majority of the time going through her paper and asking questions that could help clarify her points. In addition, she expressed some concern over whether she was repeating herself or not in the introduction paragraph and the body of her paper. I recommended that she be sure to take a different angle on each topic so that the reader can be intrigued with the differences. We also briefly went over in-text citations.

[REDACTED] was engaged throughout the whole session and did not hesitate to ask any questions. She is working hard on internalizing these concepts. I invited her back to the Writing Center if she would like additional help.

I am writing to let you know of this tutoring session. If you have any questions concerning the visit, please let me know.

Sincerely,
Vanessa Mendoza-Palencia
Writing Specialist
408-924-2308

Sample Email #4

Dear Professor Swanson,

My name is Jack Brady, and I am a Writing Specialist at the Writing Center in Clark Hall. I worked with your student [REDACTED] from your Theater 5 course on October 20th. [REDACTED] has given me permission to contact you regarding his visit to the Writing Center.

In my session with [REDACTED], we worked on the grammar of his questionnaire for a play. The biggest concern he had was his lack of complete sentences. Our solution was to write sentences as backward versions of the questions. For example, "Who am I?" can be turned into "I am ____." [REDACTED] also struggled with possessives and knowing when to add apostrophes, so I showed him a few different tips concerning them. The methods we discussed seemed to make sense to him. We also reviewed coordinating conjunctions again to fix a few areas where commas were not present. He and I also looked at capitalizing proper nouns and adding support to certain answers so that they were more substantial. A few errors were also fixed just by him reading over his paper aloud. I recommended that [REDACTED] come back for a more in-depth look at the content of his paper and future assignments.

I am writing to let you know of this tutoring session. If you have any questions regarding this visit, or would like me to cover any particular writing issues with [REDACTED], please let me know.

Sincerely,
Jack Brady
Writing Specialist
408-924-2308

Selected Faculty Responses to Writing Specialist Emails

We receive hundreds of messages every year in response to the follow-up emails that Writing Specialists send to faculty. Some of these responses express appreciation for our tutors' work while others ask questions about our services. The following emails are representative samples of the emails that we received from faculty in 2016-2017. (Student names have been blacked out for privacy.)

Hello Saya,

Thank you for your email. I am very glad to hear that [REDACTED] has reached out to the Writing Center for assistance. I have advised her to make use of your services, and I know of your efforts to help students develop as writers (rather than simply editing their work for them), and it is much appreciated. On my end, I am trying to work with her more one-on-one to help her develop her ideas in accordance with class lecture and course content. To this end, I have also advised her to visit the logic/philosophy lab on the 2nd floor of the Faculty Office Building, where the Philosophy Department is housed.

As you have probably noticed, [REDACTED] needs further assistance with developing her writing skills. And for that I thank you for sharing your expertise with her.

Best,
Anthony Korsund
Philosophy

Bravo! Ines. Thank you so much for helping students. Your work sounds perfect for [REDACTED], and I look forward to reading the paper.

I am seeing more and more upper division students without good training in writing. Thank you SO much.

Janet Giddings
Philosophy

Hi Jack,

Thank you so much for your support of our student. The writing center and the work you all do there are so integral to the education process. Please know, I cannot do my job without you.

Best,
Susan Murray
Sociology

Thank you for the update! I quickly skimmed [REDACTED]'s assignment this evening and can see a notable improvement in the clarity of the writing. Appreciate your skilled guidance!

Rick Kos
Urban Planning

Dear Samantha,

Thank you for the summary of your session with [REDACTED]. You covered very substantial subjects that are indeed pertinent to her writing.

Thank you and SJSU Student Writing Center for making a difference for our students.

With warm regards,
John Loomis
Design

Thanks so much for your assistance to [REDACTED]. She aspires to be a great writer, and your session has surely helped her.

Best regards,
Frannie Edwards
Public Administration

Hi Jack,

Thank you for letting me know. I am looking forward to reading [REDACTED]'s paper. The Writing Center always does phenomenal work!

Cheers,
John Linford
Economics

Thank you, Nicole, for the message. I always appreciate what you and other tutors do in the Writing Center to help our students strengthen their writing skills.

Sharmin Khan
Computer Science

Thank you so much Ines. I am glad that she took me up on the referral to see you all. As I am a Design professor and not an English professor I don't focus on writing skills or grammar with my students. It is almost impossible for me to review that part of their work as I am more focused on the design work. However, our discipline also is dependent upon good writing skills. Some of our students really suffer and I feel bad but there isn't anything I can do. I refer them to you all often but am unsure if they actually go to see you. Thanks for letting me know. I will remind [REDACTED] to go back and visit you on her next assignment that requires writing.

Leslie Speer
Design / Industrial Design

Jasmine,

Thank you for your message. [REDACTED] is a strong writer, and I am pleased he is taking the extra time to develop his voice.

Your detailed comments will help me focus on how to better support him.

Janet Silk
Art

Greetings, Sheldon,

Thank you for your effort and guidance with [REDACTED]. I know that SJSU's Writing Center is a place I can trust to meet my students' needs.

Kind regards,
Debra Caires
Computer Science

Dear Timothy,

For many years, I continually tell folks that the WC is the most valuable resource on campus. Thanks for all of the work you do to help students.

Best,
Victoria Sansome
Engineering

Sheldon,

Awesome! Thanks for your help with the writing of our students. We really appreciate everything you folks do at the writing center. Thanks.

Cheers,
Ishie Eswar
Computer Engineering

Hi Jasmine,

Thank you so much for your email. Thank you too for working with [REDACTED] on her paper. I am very grateful for the Writing Center and for your team's dedication to student learning.

Many of my colleagues have said great things about the work you do and that they see improvements in students' papers after sending them to the Writing Center. I'll be sure to let them know that my students are still having a great experience with you.

My Pols 15B/Hist 15B classes are going to have a short policy paper assignment soon. I think this type of paper is going to be new for many of them, so you might see more of them in April. I think I'm going to schedule a library session to help them with research skills. But I just wanted to let you know that I will be encouraging them to stop by for help with writing skills. I also offer to read drafts for organization and content.

Thank you again,
Mary Currin-Percival
Political Science

Hello Ines,

Thank you for letting me know you were working with [REDACTED]. I am happy to hear students are making use of your services as I have heard others sing your praises.

Best,
Andrea Golloher
Elementary Education

Students have greatly enjoyed working with you and Vanessa. Their grades are improving. Thank you so much. These students will be forever grateful to you.

Linda Mitchell
English

Dear Jasmine,

Thank you so much for working with my student and keeping me on the loop. The issues you have identified here are very much along the lines of what I saw as creating problems. I am hoping that this gave her enough information to go forward.

Sincerely,
Soma Sen
Social Work

Dear Vanessa,

Thank you so much for helping [REDACTED] and for contacting me. ESL students have so many needs that cannot be properly addressed in class, and I appreciate your help.

Elizabeth Grace
Accounting and Finance

Hi Ines,

Thank you so much for the report on your meeting with [REDACTED]. She and I sat down on Wednesday to look at her essay, too, and she was very enthusiastic about her experience working with you. Thank you for your awesome work! I know that [REDACTED] is already planning to visit the Writing Center regularly this semester, and I have encouraged her to follow through on that plan.

Best,

Owen Sonntag
English

Thank you for the feedback. Today they turned in their outlines, and I had the students edit one another's outlines for APA. [REDACTED] said, "Let me get out my computer and pull up Owl Purdue" and proceeded to share the site with her classmates. She also corrected me when I wrote vaguely to include the page number; she said they needed a "p.". Thought you might like the feedback :)

Felicia Noonis
Health Science and Recreation

Thank you for your support of these students in improving their group's abstract.

Best,
Keith Perry

Writing Center Online Presence

Writing Center Website

The Writing Center website (www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) is used by students, faculty, staff, and others who are interested in our services or online writing resources. All our tutoring appointments are made online through our WOnline reservation system. The direct link to make appointments is www.sjsu.mywconline.com. Students also register for writing workshops through the WOnline.

The Writing Center website offers information about our services, policies, workshops, faculty and staff, faculty projects, and employment at the Writing Center. We also post links to a variety of writing resources, including our videos and Homegrown Handouts.

The website receives heavy traffic, and between June 2016 and May 2017, it received **56,114 pageviews**. (Google Analytics tracks our website statistics.)

Online Resource Materials

The Writing Center Homegrown Handouts are often downloaded by visitors to our website. The following handouts were downloaded the most frequently.

- “Embedding Quotations”
- “Do’s and Don’ts of Online Posts”
- “Body Paragraphs”
- “APA Formatting Guidelines”
- “APA Essay Template”

Facebook and Twitter

The Facebook business page for the Writing Center has continued to grow successfully. There are **715** individual fans of the Writing Center Facebook page; in addition, many other writing centers, universities, corporations, and local businesses have liked our official page.

The Writing Center Twitter page has also continued to grow. The page currently has **777** followers.

Both of these social media outlets give the Writing Center the valuable opportunity to publicize its services and to communicate with others in the SJSU community and beyond. In the upcoming year, we plan to create accounts for both Instagram and Snapchat.

The Write Attitude: The Official Blog of the SJSU Writing Center

In the spring 2016 semester, we launched *The Write Attitude: The Official Blog of the SJSU Writing Center* (<https://sjsuwritingcenter.wordpress.com>). All blog entries are written by student Writing Specialists or our Faculty-in-Residence blog manager, Maria Judnick. The purpose of the blog is to offer students (both at SJSU and beyond) valuable information about the writing process through an informal, easy-to-access platform.

The blog has received a total of **6,148 hits**. The audience of the blog continues to grow steadily, and we have been more consistent in the last year about generating new content for the blog. (In 2016, 27 posts were published, while in 2017, 59 posts were published.) In 2016, 1,284 visitors viewed the blog 2,201 times; in 2017, 2,451 visitors viewed the blog 3,894 times.

Other university writing centers have linked to our blog posts, and we have worked with the SJSU Testing Office to develop informal, informational blog content to assist students with timed writing (as they will encounter with the WST).

We have had multiple visitors to our blog from countries such as India, Australia, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Germany, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

YouTube Videos

The Writing Center developed additional video resources in 2016-2017, and all these resources are available on our website and on our YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/SJSUWritingCenter>).

While some of our videos offer additional information about the Writing Center and its operations, other videos function as virtual tutoring sessions. In future semesters, we plan to continue developing video resources. The following videos are currently available.

- “SJSU Writing Center Virtual House Call,” 2,584 views
- “Sample Tutoring Sessions,” 1,047 views
- “Understanding an Essay from a Reader’s Perspective,” 302 views
- “Creating an Arguable Thesis Statement,” 701 views
- “How to Write Online Feedback,” 61 views

Writing Center App

During the spring 2015 semester, a team of undergraduate students from the Department of Computer Science worked with Writing Center faculty and staff to create a Writing Center app. The app allows students to access Writing Center resources on their mobile devices.

With the app, students can easily log in to the WOnline (our online reservation system) to create and manage tutoring appointments; see our location, both on campus and within Clark Hall; browse FAQs about our policies and procedures; contact the Writing Center or visit our social media pages using quick links; and access our handouts and other online writing resources. The app went through many stages of development, and it is now available for Android devices in the Google Play Store.

Research Projects and External Collaborations

Ongoing Research Projects

Michelle Hager, the Writing Center Director, is currently engaged in numerous research projects.

She is working with Dr. Julia Bleakney, the Writing Center Director at Elon University, on a project about writing center blogs. In 2016-2017, they conducted a survey that was disseminated via the WCenter listserv and the International Writing Centers Association (IWCA) member list; it was also posted in the Facebook group for writing center directors. The survey gathered information about details such as blog authors, intended audience and purpose, and the number and frequency of posts. Maria Judnick, Writing Center Faculty-in-Residence (and manager of *The Write Attitude*) will be joining them in their research. They are currently writing a literature review and discussing possible venues for publication.

Michelle is also a principal investigator in the following research projects with the SJSU Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Director, Dr. Tom Moriarty. Pat Walls, the Writing Center Office Coordinator, is also involved in one of these projects.

The following information about current collaborative research projects is posted on the WAC website (www.sjsu.edu/wac).

Comparing Utilization Patterns of Embedded Writing Fellows and Drop-In Writing Center Tutors

Principal Investigators: Michelle Hager, Pat Walls, and Tom Moriarty

Using the data we are collecting from Writing Fellows and Writing Center tutors, we are examining the usage patterns of each. Our hypothesis is that students meet with Writing Fellows earlier in the writing process.

Writing Fellows in Stretch English Classes: An Empirical Study

Principal Investigators: Tom Moriarty and Michelle Hager

Comparison between sections supported by Fellows and sections without Fellows, on a variety of survey measures and student writing samples.

Writing Fellows in Writing-Intensive Courses Outside the English Department: An Empirical Study

Principal Investigators: Michelle Hager and Tom Moriarty

Comparison between sections supported by Fellows and sections without Fellows, on a variety of survey measures and student writing samples.

They have already presented some of this research at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), and they are currently working on turning their most recent presentation into a publishable piece.

Writing Center Alumni Project

Last summer, the Writing Center Director administered a survey to former students who worked at the Writing Center (collecting both qualitative and quantitative data). The survey results reveal the impact the Writing Center has on student employees. We currently have former Writing Specialists teaching at various levels, working as writers or editors in tech companies such as Facebook and Netgear, and studying in PhD programs. Without exception, the survey responses detail how working at the SJSU Writing Center professionalizes the Writing Specialists and teaches them valuable, transferrable skills.

Bay Area Writing Center Colloquium



In May 2017, the SJSU Writing Center hosted the first Bay Area Writing Center Colloquium. Representatives from writing centers throughout the Bay Area were invited to a half-day discussion about challenges, best practices, and possible collaborations. The colloquium had 20 attendees from many local universities and community colleges. The following list is a representative sampling of feedback from the end-of-day evaluations.

- “Just the act of getting together was so helpful. Getting to know people from other colleges was great.”
- “I liked that it was a discussion. Each person/group had a chance to be heard.”
- “I learned a lot about different approaches to training tutors. Our institution needs more development in this area, so I’m glad I gained insight.”
- “I liked the collaborative session because it’s a good way that we can continue our connections.”
- “Now that we’ve met and established a desire for community, it might be best to integrate representatives of each institution into each discussion group.”
- “I thought the event was well planned and that the activities were very effective. There was enough structure to keep things on track, but it was open ended enough to have great discussions. The topics were excellent.”
- “Meeting everyone and talking about challenges. Good to know that I’m not alone in some of the challenges. Thanks, SJSU team! I’m excited about the future.”

At the end of the half-day meeting, attendees made plans about future meetings and collaborations. They also voted on a group name: Association of Bay Area Writing Centers.

Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC)

In March 2017, the Writing Center Director, Michelle Hager, and the Writing Center Office Coordinator, Pat Walls, presented on the panel, “Cultivating the Data for New Kinds of Writing Support: An Empirical Study of Writing Fellows in the First Year Writing Classroom” at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in Portland, Oregon. They presented their research with the Writing Across the Curriculum Director, Dr. Tom Moriarty. The three also established the Writing Fellows Special Interest Group (SIG) at CCCC.

The panel presentation was well attended, and the interactive discussion led to ideas being exchanged about how students use writing center tutors versus embedded writing fellows. The presentation handout is included in the appendix (Appendix Document #1).

Fremont Union High School District Transition Partnership Program

In summer 2016, staff and students from the Fremont Union High School District Transition Partnership Program visited the Writing Center. The program helps recently graduated students with developmental disabilities transition into careers and post-secondary education. Pat Walls led a tour of the Writing Center, and he discussed the importance of writing in informal, academic, and professional settings.

Best Practices for Teaching Writing in STEM

In the 2016-2017 academic year, Faculty-in-Residence Shannon Bane conducted a survey of current writing needs in STEM, as well as an inventory and analysis of specific pedagogy for STEM-related writing classes. She also analyzed current STEM writing curriculum and requirements at SJSU and suggested ways in which the Writing Center might support students in these majors. Her completed report is included in the appendix (Appendix Document #2).

Understanding the Needs of Student Writers and Why Tutoring Sessions Change Focus

During the spring 2017 semester, Writing Specialist Saya Morita conducted a research project that examined client reports written by SJSU Writing Center tutors during the fall 2016 term. Specifically, she analyzed what tutors and students discussed when they worked on grammar, content, organization, and formatting; she also studied why and how often the focus of a tutoring session changes. (e.g., If a student initially requests to work on grammar during a session, how often does the focus change to content once the session is actually conducted?)

Her findings concluded that 30% of our tutoring sessions changed focus in fall 2016, most of them from grammar to content. These findings are consistent with our tutor training, in which we encourage tutors to try to focus on higher-order concerns first. Saya presented this research at the CCCC@SJSU regional conference. Her completed report is included in the appendix (Appendix Document #3).

Appendix

Appendix Document #1

Cultivating the Data for New Kinds of Writing Support: An Empirical Study of Writing Fellows in the First-Year Writing Classroom

Session G.22 | Friday, 9:30-10:45AM

CCCC | Portland, OR | March 2017

Presenters

Tom Moriarty, WAC Director, San José State University

Michelle Hager, Writing Center Director, San José State University

Pat Walls, Writing Center Office Coordinator, San José State University

Agenda

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Overview of our Study
- 3) Our Hypotheses
- 4) Challenges/Limitations of the Research Project
- 5) Areas for Comparison
- 6) Conclusions and Next Steps
- 7) Discussion

Research Questions

- Are there differences in how First Year Writing students work with Writing Fellows and Writing Center tutors? Do they tend to work with them at different points in the writing process? Do they work with them on different things?
- How do student and instructor opinions compare between courses supported by Writing Fellows and those without Fellows?

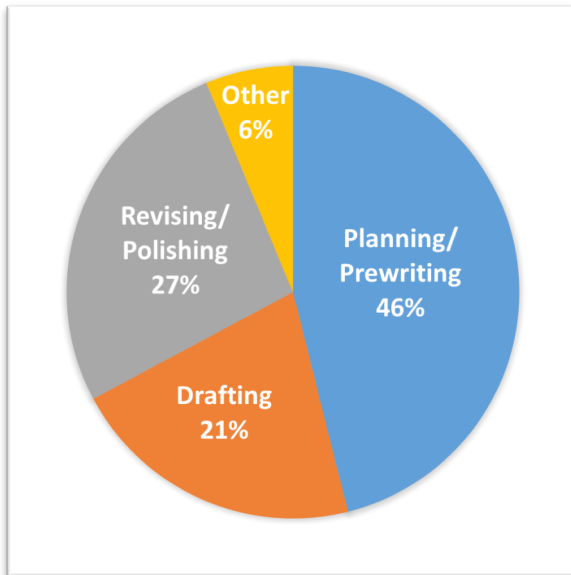
Hypotheses

- We hypothesized that (1) students would see Writing Fellows earlier in the writing process as opposed to when they see Writing Specialists at the Writing Center, (2) students would want to work on higher-order concerns more frequently with Writing Fellows since the Fellows are embedded in their classes and are more familiar with the course content, and (3) students and faculty in sections with Fellows would score higher on a variety of opinion measures than those in sections without Fellows.
- NOTE: We are not suggesting a preference for one method of tutoring over the other—they are both equally valuable. However, this usage data helps writing program administrators make decisions about how to deploy services and resources.

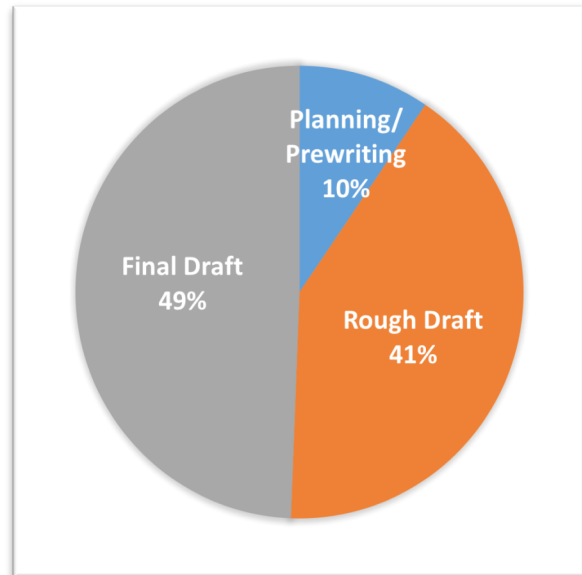
Selected Data

Findings: Stage of the Writing Process

Writing Fellows

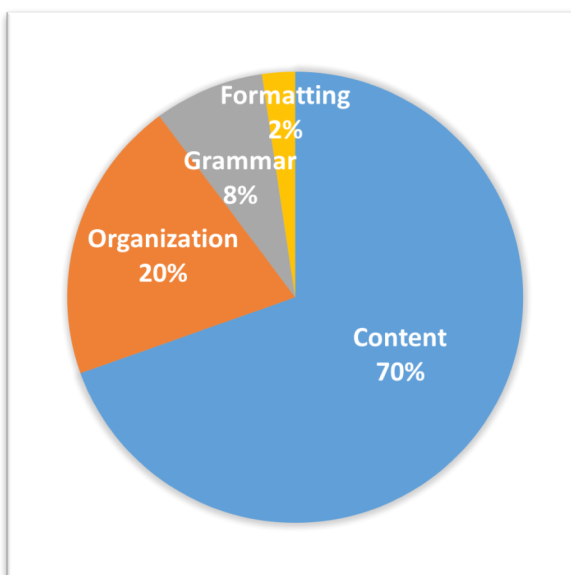


Writing Center

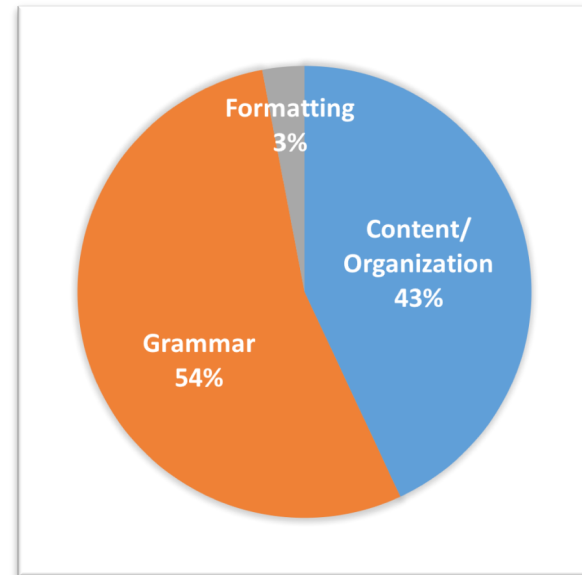


Findings: Focus of Session

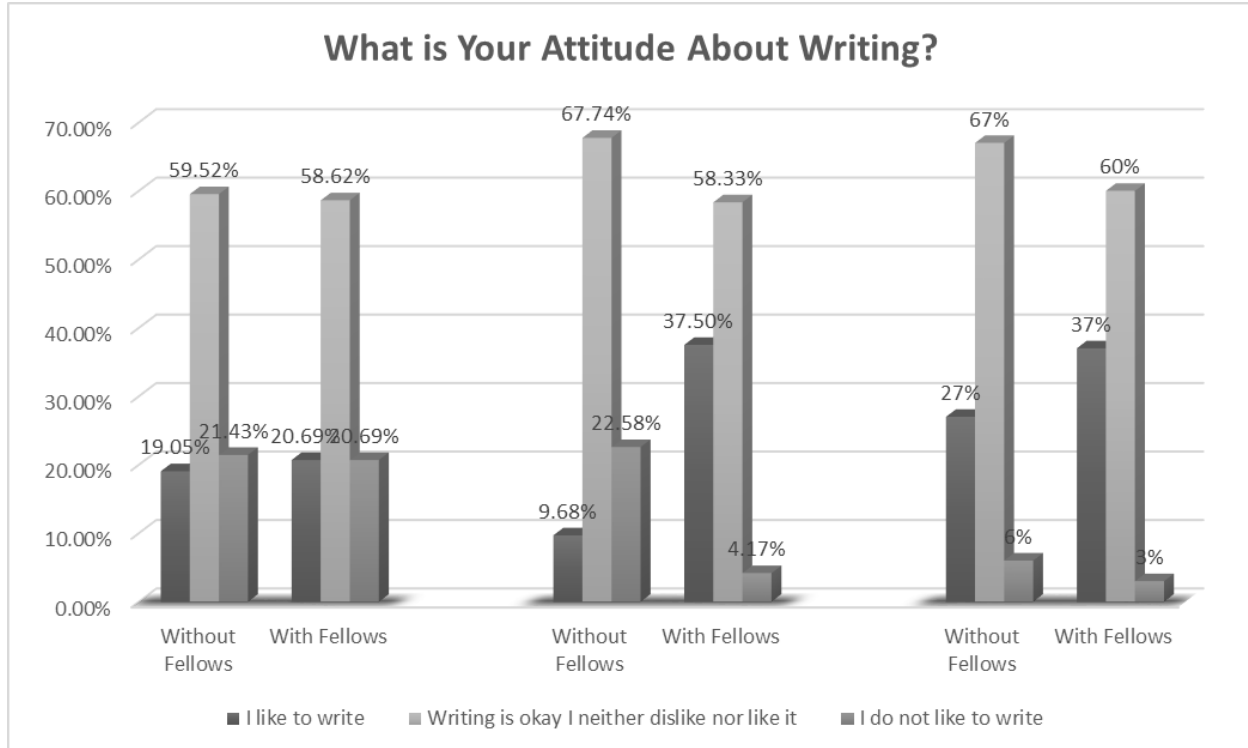
Writing Fellows



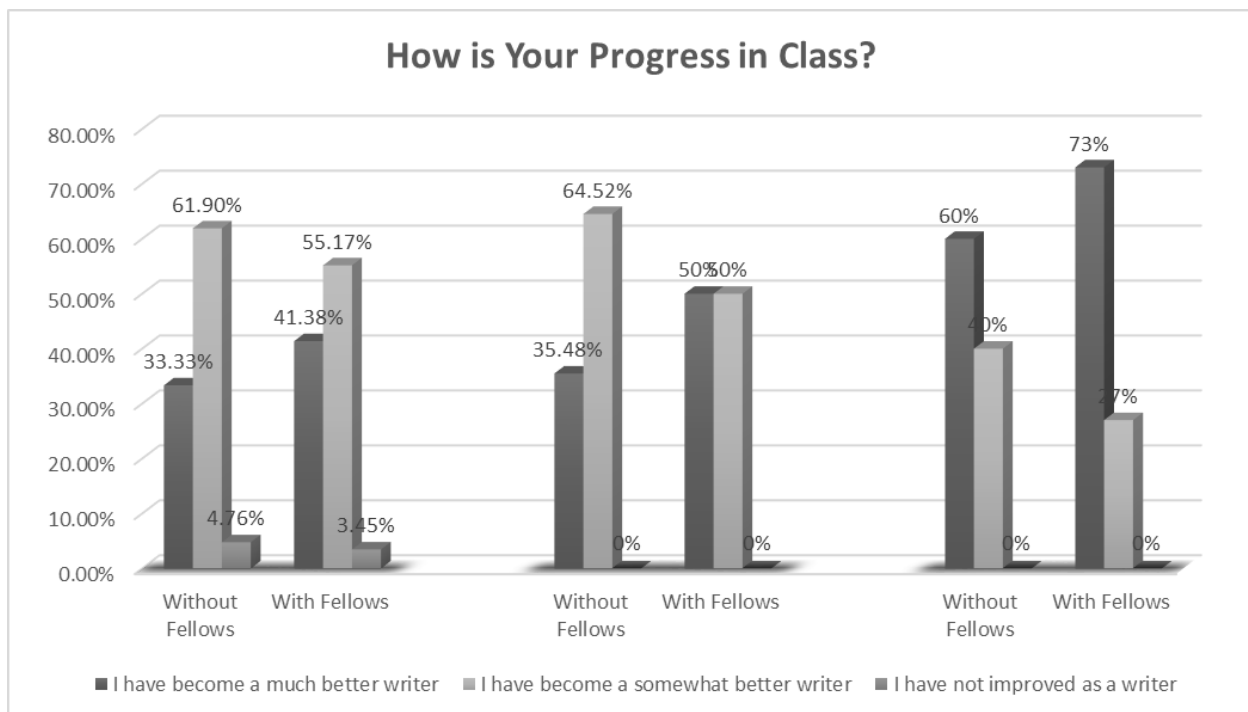
Writing Center



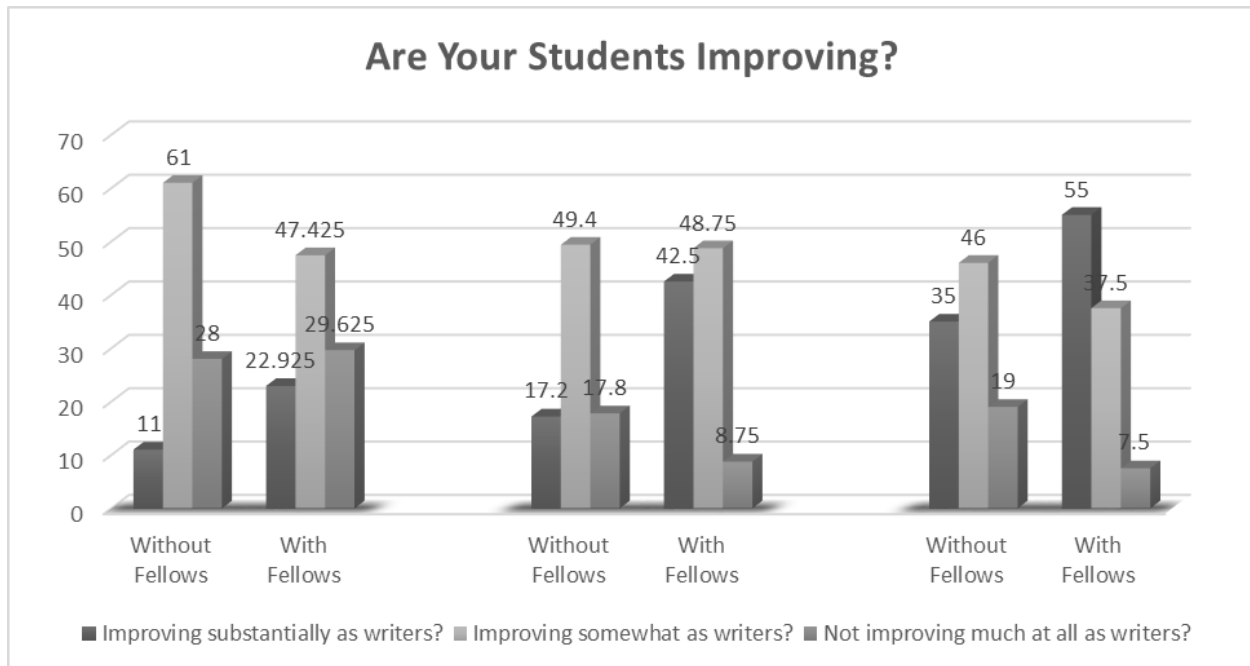
Student Opinions: Courses With Fellows vs. Courses Without



Student Opinions: Courses With Fellows vs. Courses Without



Faculty Opinions: Courses With Fellows vs. Courses Without



Appendix Document #2

Best Practices for Teaching Writing in STEM: A Literature Survey and Case Study of San José State University's 100W Courses in STEM Disciplines

By Shannon Bane, Faculty-in-Residence

Introduction

STEM Fields Provide Opportunities for Graduates

Opportunities in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields are outpacing growth in other job sectors; between 1960 and 2011, the number of employees in STEM fields grew 3.3%, twice the average annual growth rate of 1.5% for the total workforce (NSF 2014). STEM employment survived the 2007-2009 downturn better than other occupations; employment, while slow, rose slightly, while the total workforce shrank during the same time period.

Estimates of the science and engineering (S&E) workforce range from approximately 5 million to over 19 million, depending on the definition used (NSF 2014). In 2010, approximately 5.4 million college graduates were employed in S&E occupations in the US: computer and math sciences (2.4 million), engineering (1.6 million), life sciences (597,000), social sciences (518,000), and physical sciences (320,000) (NSF 2014). In addition to these specialized fields, S&E knowledge and skills are applied throughout the US economy. Over 16.5 million college-educated employees report that their job requires competency equivalent to a bachelor's degree level of technical expertise in one or more STEM fields (NSF 2014). This is significantly higher than the 5.4 million employees with formal STEM titles (NSF 2014).

NSF reports that US universities awarded nearly 550,000 bachelor's degrees in science and engineering fields in 2011, an increase of 39% since 2001 (NSF 2014). The largest number of STEM graduates were from California; its universities conferred a total of 68,228 STEM undergraduate degrees in 2011 (NSF 2014).

Background

Need for Specialized Writing Instruction for STEM Majors in Higher Education

STEM professions vary tremendously in scope and practice, as do their professional written communication needs and standards. This is reflected in the diversity of genres developed for these disciplines, and includes specific organization, language, and style, intended for specific purpose, recipients, and/or audiences (e.g., clients, professionals, journals, publications). STEM graduates must be prepared to write these academic and/or professional documents as practitioners within their specific field; these documents include

- proposals,
- grants,
- scientific journal articles (includes abstracts),
- environmental literature,
- grant writing,
- emails/memos,

- compliance documents (legal), and
- product specifications.

In contrast to highly purposed and specialized professional writing, writing in universities must also be used to evaluate proficient understanding and communication of content, synthesis of ideas, and/or ability to identify and use genre, form/style, and formatting. Although students are asked to write using a variety of formats, often designed to mimic or teach either academic or professional writing format, style, and language, some assignments are purely for assessment. Assignments typically assigned to university students include

- essays,
- research papers,
- literature reviews,
- proposals,
- abstracts,
- lab reports,
- critiques,
- emails/memos, and
- grants.

Education provided by universities preparing students for careers in STEM fields aims to provide the theory, content, and communication skills necessary for success in these fields, while also meeting both broader university and specific departmental goals and requirements. Students typically enroll in a general writing course for freshman and a departmental or genre-specific writing course as a junior. General writing classes are designed to improve grammar and syntax, language, organization, rhetoric, and information literacy, and are often taught by faculty within or affiliated with university English departments. To prepare students in STEM majors for their transition from student to practitioner, upper-division general education or specialized classes also focus on mastery of specialized theory and content, disciplinary literacy (thinking and writing like a “professional in that specific field”), and content literacy (how to understand genre-specific writing) (Ruzycki 2015). The integration of these goals necessitates specialized writing instruction to provide the student with appropriate training in specific language, writing styles, and document production.

Challenges Encountered by Faculty Teaching Writing

Although both faculty and students value writing in education, they also acknowledge that undergraduate students enter college lacking writing skills and often do not improve throughout their post-secondary education (Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006). This is one of many challenges faced by professors who teach general writing classes at universities.

The most common challenge faced by faculty teaching writing classes is the large time commitment needed to grade papers in contrast to other kinds of assignments (Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006). In addition, the range of writing abilities and experience can vary tremendously among students in a class, and in some classes, international students and/or students for which English is not a first language may need specialized support, which faculty may not have the training or comfort level to provide. Additional skills needed for writing,

including information literacy (research), have changed substantially with the developing technology, and may require collaborations with librarians or information technology faculty (Fister 1993).

Additional challenges arise from discrepancies between faculty and student expectations and/or understanding of the assignment, which can lead to disappointment in the type or quality of work turned in and the grade that is received (Nelson and Hayes 1988; Wingate, Andon, Cogo 2011; Lea and Street 1998). Students often see papers as tasks to accomplish, in which they provide information and facts to a professor who already knows about the subject; these students often report writing assignments as “boring” or “pointless” (Nelson and Hayes 1988). In fact, faculty intention for writing assignments is for students to learn and improve their writing process and analyze and interpret the information they are interacting with (Nelson and Hayes 1988). When faculty and student expectations do not align, students fail to achieve the objectives of the assignments. Students also develop low investment strategies to complete research and writing when they feel that assignments are not clear, if they procrastinate or want to spend minimal amount of time writing, or if faculty does not intervene or interact with them during the writing process (Nelson and Hayes 1988).

Lastly, students often do not read comments on papers returned at the end of the quarter/semester, and for papers returned at other times, they report not understanding instructor comments on their writing and do not seek out clarification, making future efforts less likely to be successful (Wingate, Andon, and Cogo 2011; Hounsell 1987). Over time, failure to address these discrepancies result in recurring patterns of mistakes that seem to continue with the student through their education, even into graduate school (Fallahi, Wood, Austad 2006; Gambell 1984).

Additional Issues with Teaching Writing in STEM (Special/Specific Needs of STEM Writing)

Universities’ need to help students develop a deep understanding of content and communication skills relevant to their anticipated professional field creates a unique and often complex set of student learning objectives for professors. The faculty who teach genre-specific writing must balance these competing needs within the individual classes they teach. As a result, STEM writing faculty experience all the general concerns mentioned above, and also report discipline-specific challenges.

The most common additional issues encountered by STEM faculty teaching writing include feeling uncomfortable or being unprepared to teach writing (compared to teaching STEM content), or that they do not want to give up time teaching content to teach writing (Patterson and Slinger-Friedman 2012; Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006). This is possibly because many faculty are skilled academic writers, but they may have limited experience in industry contexts (Conrad, et al. 2015).

Coming into discipline-specific writing courses as juniors, many students have misconceptions or little knowledge of expected structure of writing in STEM genres (Conrad, et al. 2015). Students may not have encountered professional papers or practiced specific genre styles or used technical language in their papers, or developed disciplinary literacy, in which students read, speak, and write using habits of thinking within a core discipline (Ruzycki 2015; Wingate,

Andon, and Cogo 2011; Chapman 2003; Nelson and Hayes 1988). Conventions of their STEM profession need to be learned, and students need to be prepared to provide quality written work upon graduation for the best chances of being hired (Conrad, et al. 2015).

Other challenges arise from the pedagogical differences between English writing instructors and science teachers, who often teach writing in different ways (Pytash, et al. 2016). As a result, students may not see the connections between the two subjects, or they may need to be shown the links between writing competence and comprehension of subject material, genre conventions, and applications that require clearly communicating content (Steward, et al. 2015; Pytash, et al. 2016). Students may also lack the exposure to multi-modal skills used in STEM writing, including the use of graphs, tables, drawing, maps, and photographs to convey ideas, relationships, and significance of data (Pytash, et al. 2016; Lemke 1998).

Differences Between Student and Practitioner Work

The purpose of professional communication documents is specific and focused, intended to provide information to clients and/or peers (Conrad, et al. 2015). Practitioners write for clarity and purpose, while, by necessity, students are asked to also demonstrate understanding of theory, concepts, and competence (Conrad, et al. 2015). The need for professors to facilitate content literacy and teach genre-specific (and often, remedial) writing skills, in addition to the challenges discussed above, exemplify the challenges faced by STEM writing professors. Not surprisingly, prospective employers find that new hires from universities are often more prepared technically than in writing, and, in these cases, employers report being unsatisfied with the writing preparation students receive at universities (Conrad, et al. 2015).

Conrad, et al. (2015) found that student writing differs from practitioner writing in three distinct ways.

1. Genre organization. Within STEM disciplines, documents produced by practitioners are fairly standardized in terms of basic organization, even across firms and states because they serve the same or similar functions or because document content and organization are based upon convention. In contrast, students have little knowledge of expected document structure within the genre. Student papers will often lack context for the project and/or document, even when assignments are modeled on practitioner genres.
2. Sentence structure. STEM practitioners typically write with more concision than students (e.g., one idea per sentence) because practitioners aim to provide unambiguous and quick reading for clients for a specific purpose or outcome. Students tend to write more complex and/or compound sentences with multiple ideas, often with vague or inaccurate information, confusing sentence length and use of jargon with sounding more intelligent or professional.
3. Word Choice. Practitioners use more precise words and phrases, especially in engineering or areas of other detailed work. Students often choose vague words that can convey inaccurate and/or imprecise information (i.e., superlatives or absolutes) because they do not yet value concision and accuracy in their technical writing. In addition, students lack awareness between unambiguous writing and unintentional liability and other professional consequences.

Preparing students for the STEM workplace necessitates that universities help close these gaps between student and practitioner writing. Students need to be provided with the training, tools, and experience to step into entry-level positions and provide prospective employers with the skills that they seek from graduates.

Methods

I conducted research for the San José State University Writing Center, in conjunction with Writing Across the Curriculum, during the 2016-2017 academic year, during which I served as a faculty-in-residence. This research focused on providing information to support and enhance writing instruction and resources to students in STEM majors with the goal of helping them to prepare and be competitive for STEM internships and jobs upon graduation. I was interested in documenting current approaches to teaching writing and improving student outcomes within STEM majors at universities, including SJSU. I conducted a literature survey, looking at the published results of many different scales of effort, including those undertaken university-wide, within individual departments, and in individual classes. In spring 2017, I conducted a Qualtrics survey of SJSU 100W (upper-division genre-specific writing classes) instructors in STEM disciplines to document current approaches and observations within our university. (The survey consisted of nine questions.) After comparing the results of the literature survey to the administered survey, I made recommendations for improving student outcomes in STEM writing programs at SJSU on several levels: university (including support services), department, and course. Support services include the Writing Center, which supports student writers, and Writing Across the Curriculum, which supports faculty who teach writing.

Results

The results of my research are broken down into a discussion of the literature survey (and further divided by scale at the university, department, and class level) and Qualtrics survey results from SJSU 100W instructors.

Literature Survey Results: Summary of Efforts to Improve Writing in STEM

University-Scale Programs

Two universities reported successful system-wide efforts to improve STEM writing: Duke University (Moskovitz 2011) and Howard College of Arts and Sciences at Samford University (Chapman 2003). Duke's program focuses on pairing students with alumni within their field, and Samford University supports and funds significant undergraduate research and writing efforts.

The Duke Reader Project. The Duke Reader Project is a collaboration between their Writing Center and Alumni Affairs (Moskovitz 2011). The program pairs a student with an alumnus that has volunteered to read one of their papers, offer advice, and talk with them about helping their writing to aim more towards a professional audience (Moskovitz 2011). The alumni who volunteer for this program are often professionals in particular fields, including STEM, and serve as the "target audience" for the paper.

Alumni Affairs provides the platform for writing instructors to advertise specific assignments available for collaboration and provides communication with alumni to inform them of volunteer opportunities. The assignment descriptions are very specific so that alumni can determine if they can contribute comfortably, and the volunteer hours are kept to four hours total per student. These four hours offer more individual attention than a faculty member can provide to every student, yet a small and discrete time investment of the alumni. Additionally, the Reader Project provides Duke alumni with a way to stay active with the university (and vice versa) and connect students with professional contacts and interactions.

Moskovitz (2011) found that students who participate in this program improve their ability to write for a particular and specialized audience, are more likely to seek input on future writing assignments, are more critical of their own writing in the future, and are left with a better sense of writing beyond the classroom. These students were also more likely to write papers earlier and express deeper understanding of the topic on which they wrote. Alumni reported wanting to spend more time interacting with students, and many continued to volunteer in the reader pool, some up to four times.

Emphasis on Student Research: Howard College of Arts and Sciences, Samford University. At Samford University's Howard College of Arts and Sciences, STEM writing outcomes are improved by linking writing to research opportunities. Chapman (2003) reports that the college puts a heavy emphasis on undergraduate research and writing with the goal of framing the writing requirement preparation for senior research as opposed to an obstacle to overcome or an abstract application.

Within the university, writing requirements are scaffolded, meaning that the skills learned in one class are reexamined and expanded in subsequent classes. For example, all freshman take an interdisciplinary communications course (writing intensive, oral communication, research strategies, and documentation of sources), and then specific genres are taught in each department. Within both classes, basic writing skills (i.e., grammar, rhetoric, outlining, information literacy) are introduced, and then they continue to be developed in subsequent classes using more advanced skills and applications. The overall goal of all of the writing instruction is to support student research, with a goal/requirement that undergraduate students present research at an annual university-wide "Student Showcase" (Chapman 2003). Students can then present at subject-specific regional and national meetings or National Conference of Undergraduate Research (NCUR.org) (Chapman 2003).

Students gain valuable research experience, and, because they must write for a specific goal and/or outcome, have focus and purpose, and are strongly invested in clear communication. Researchers also report that students learn more and appreciate directed research where they play a significant role (Chapman 2003).

Chapman (2003) attributes the success of Samford's program to the funding that supports it. In addition to salary, the university provides separate funding for professors who teach senior seminars or directed research courses, for students who travel to NCUR, and for the production of the Student Showcase.

Department Programs

Within individual STEM departments, writing instruction can be organized to improve student outcomes across multiple upper-division courses. To accomplish this, faculty within STEM departments must work closely to create clear goals and objectives, both within individual classes and through the series of classes required for graduation within the major. These goals and objectives must be made clear to students throughout their university careers. For example, Stewart, et al. (2015) suggested that departments draft and implement operational definitions for proficiency in oral and written communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and other key educational outcomes. They found that these definitions were especially helpful if integrated into grading rubrics and student learning outcomes so that students could link individual assignments/efforts to their overall educational goals.

The STEM departments that implemented successful department-wide writing programs reported working with professionals to develop curriculum that best prepares students for jobs in their fields (Conrad, et al. 2015), scaffolding skills within and between classes to provide constant and consistent student exposure to the curriculum (Stewart, et al. 2015, Chapman 2003, Monroe 2003), as well as using writing portfolios or samples from throughout a student's journey towards graduation to evaluate writing progress (Chapman 2003; Nelson and Hayes 1988).

Collaboration Among Faculty, Practitioners, and Writing Specialists. The Civil Engineering Writing Project is based at Portland State University and also includes Cal Poly Pomona, Howard University, and Lawrence Technological University (Conrad, et al. 2015). The purpose of this project is to assemble practitioners, applied linguists, and engineering faculty to examine the differences between student and practitioner writing and develop materials to address student weaknesses and assess effectiveness. After preliminary analyses, the panel created new teaching materials, which were incorporated into existing upper-division engineering courses; these materials are currently being assessed for their effectiveness.

The principles underlying the project include

- collaboration with professionals, who provide current industry contexts and needs;
- empirical analysis of writing, including the identification of differences between practitioner and student writing (e.g., organization, language, etc.);
- functional perspective on language, including the impact of word use on meaning and communication, not just stylistic concerns;
- direct instruction, wherein instructors clearly outline expectations for writing in workplace genres, including the use of specific language and grammar; and
- design and integration of new materials into existing courses, so that no new programming is needed.

The outcome of the project was the development of new course materials: free-standing units that can be incorporated into engineering classes. The materials address the principles stated above, plus an additional criterion; materials clarify student misconceptions about writing and provide numerous examples of practitioner work. The new materials include

- introductory units, which review basic writing principles covered in previous writing courses (e.g., writing is an iterative process that includes review and revision, audience and purpose shape writing) using practitioner examples;

- genre-based units, which cover the typical purpose, audience, organization, and format of specific professional document types (using explicit comparisons with student writing for contrast);
- language units, which address effective language choices in civil engineering contexts (e.g., explain which words to use and why, how to simplify and clarify language).

The units were incorporated into seven civil engineering courses, and the quantitative results of the first term of the study showed statistically significant improvements in sentence structure ($p < 0.01$), word choices ($p < 0.05$), effectiveness of rhetorical functions ($p < 0.001$), and improvement in scores ($p < 0.05$). The success of these units indicate that collaborations between STEM faculty, practitioners/professionals, and linguists/writing specialists are effective in bridging the gap between student writing and practitioner writing, and also in preparing students for professional work in their STEM field so that prospective job seekers are well-qualified and competitive.

Scaffolding. The Chemistry Department at the University of Toronto uses a coordinated approach to teaching writing across five third-year, single-semester undergraduate courses via their Writing Instruction and Training (WIT) program (Stewart, et al. 2015). WIT is a university-supported program that assists departments in designing writing programs to strengthen and improve student writing; the Chemistry Department implemented the WIT program over six years and found that student survey results indicated notable positive responses, especially as students participated in the program for longer periods of time. This published paper provided substantial detail about the design and implementation of their program.

The WIT program uses a hierarchy of both faculty and trained teaching assistants to provide students with writing feedback in third-year lab-based undergraduate classes. The program is organized so that chemistry majors take at least one of the participating courses during their upper-division coursework within the department, although most students take several WIT classes (Stewart, et al. 2015).

For the study, the program coordinator (a faculty member within the Chemistry Department) worked with faculty and the WIT director to identify components within the selected classes that could be modified to incorporate enhanced writing elements. Additional materials were drafted for students, including rubrics, writing tip sheets, and supplementary writing information. These components were incorporated into existing assignments (e.g., lab manuals), an initial investment of between 2-10 hours per course (Stewart, et al. 2015). The courses and assignments stayed relatively stable over the course of the study, so little additional time and energy were needed beyond the first effort. Approximately 90-120 students participated in the program over the six-year study.

After the writing materials were drafted, the departmental WIT Coordinator worked with the Lead Writing Teaching Assistant, who then trained the course TAs to support instruction and grading. Specific roles and responsibilities, including writing evaluation, were set for both faculty and TAs. Rubrics and sample papers were used to ensure consistent grading, and specific instruction for TA feedback on student papers was taught and practiced. The Lead Writing Teaching Assistant was available for consultation by TAs all semester and provides a course

evaluation to the faculty/instructor at the end of the semester. One of the most important concepts is the focus on the specific assignment, class outcomes, and how the efforts of both faculty and TAs support the WIT program goals within the department. These efforts may necessitate the separation of content goals from writing goals.

The scaffolded skills taught to students are intended to teach professional writing abilities needed by graduates entering the work force in Chemistry: reading examples of professional writing, researching, learning construction of an academic paper or other professional paper, becoming proficient in grammar and sentence construction, and using genre-specific language. The components deemed most successful in improving student writing in STEM are

- using design elements in several courses to better communicate the department's message about writing,
- decoupling assessment of content from writing in assignments,
- offering low-stakes writing tasks that encourage iteration (turning in lab reports for comment but no grade and then revising for final submission),
- using highly structured short tasks like writing abstracts (including fixing "bad" abstracts by rewriting them and using a model to compare their revisions), and
- providing section-by-section objectives and evaluation criteria in highly structured rubrics.

Surveys of undergraduate students who participated in the WIT program within the Chemistry Department show strong feelings among students that the writing feedback provided by the WIT program was helpful (approximately 80%), would help them write better lab reports in future classes (approximately 85%), and would help them be better scientific writers after graduation (approximately 96%) (Stewart, et al. 2015). Seniors (students who completed all graduate requirements, including WIT classes) strongly agreed that the WIT program and feedback from their TAs helped them self-evaluate and identify areas to work on their writing (92%) and improved specific writing skills within their genre/major (84%).

Student Portfolios and Writing Comparisons. Programs designed to incrementally improve STEM writing within departments can be measured by comparing baseline abilities of first-year students with graduating seniors (Chapman 2003; Nelson and Hayes 1988). These comparisons benefit departments in two specific ways: they allow evaluation of the progress students make throughout their time in the department, and they also provide a range and realistic estimate of student achievement (Chapman 2003; Nelson and Hayes 1988). When combined with strong and clear criterion for student achievement, both portfolios and writing samples can be used to quantify assessments of any assignment and/or program that is implemented after the initial baseline is established.

Individual Courses

Within an individual course, faculty can structure writing assignments to improve student writing throughout a semester and potentially achieve lasting improvements. Writing assignments can be linked/scaffolded, and/or structured to achieve specific goals and approaches, such as identifying genre specific organization or language, and include self-diagnoses of writing issues.

Improving Students' Writing Process and Teaching Self-Identification of Writing Issues.

It is important that students come to see writing as a “contextual act” instead of a discrete task that is unrelated to either the content of a class or their future goals. Research shows that improving student understanding and practice of the writing process can help make the skills needed for research and writing transferrable to their future efforts, and that learning to self-identify their writing issues can help them stop making chronic mistakes in their writing.

Nelson and Hayes (1988) found that students who use a “process log” become familiar and comfortable with the writing process quickly. In the process log, students reflect on where they are within the writing process in relation to the assignment at hand, create a plan to accomplish specific tasks, and report what progress they have made towards completing their research and/or writing. These tasks can include searching for sources, using the library, taking notes, selecting sources, organizing papers, outlining, writing, and/or formatting. In identifying the tasks and progress, students stay focused and on-task, and they work toward a self-identified/constructed writing process.

Two studies found that the approach and strategies students take to writing papers varies depending on their understanding of the purpose of the assignment, which is related to class standing (and, therefore, experience) (Nelson and Hayes 1998; Fister 1993). First-year students tended to be more “fact finding” or content-driven, while upper division students were more concerned with finding an issue or approach (“issue driven”) to guide their writing (Nelson and Hayes 1998). First-year students tended to struggle with research and writing, trying to write papers based upon the sources that they found rather than having an idea to develop. Upper-division students had improved their research and writing skills, minimizing the time searching for sources, improving analysis of the content and context of sources, and providing support for more independent ideas within their papers. Researchers found that over time, as students moved on from a content-driven approach to a more issue-driven approach, students were able to design better papers. They chose evidence for rhetorical purposes, producing more specific supports for their ideas rather than structuring a paper around the evidence they already had, which often resulted in an unorganized or underdeveloped idea.

The amount and type of instructor intervention in writing assignments can also make a huge difference in the amount of time and effort that students put into their research and writing. Writing is a gradual process that needs “developmental feedback” (Bharuthram and McKenna 2006), and when students perceive that they are not guided through the skills they need to learn, or get minimal feedback and intervention, they procrastinate or put little effort into their research and writing assignments (Nelson and Hayes 1998). These students often label their writing assignments as “boring” or “pointless” (Nelson and Hayes 1998). In contrast, students who are provided intermediate feedback tend to start work early and focus on high-level goals for both their research and writing, and they have improved organization and idea development.

Feedback given to students is best utilized when tied to revisions or future assignments/efforts; otherwise, students tend to ignore input and repeat mistakes. Teaching students to identify their patterns of writing errors can help them in drafting future papers and in revising current ones. One professor at SJSU identifies patterns of errors in early papers, has students practice fixing their errors, and, later in the semester, asks students to list their common error patterns at the top of subsequent papers, and then identify and fix the errors themselves (Cook 2017). Students learn

the grammar theory, then identification, and finally practice that helps to make lasting changes in their writing.

Grammar support software. MacMillan's *Writer's Help* is an online resource, reference, diagnostic, and practice program for students. At San José State University, *Writer's Help* has been integrated into Canvas, the campus-wide learning platform, where it can be used independently or can be directly linked to STEM writing classes. This program offers diagnostic quizzes and adaptive tutorials on a number of topics, including grammar and comprehension. In theory, the diagnostics can help faculty identify common deficiencies amongst each unique set of students in their classes, which can then be integrated into class curriculum. It can also help individual students identify deficiencies and/or areas of grammar that need additional work, practice, and attention. A series of short tutorials (called "LearningCurve" in *Writer's Help*) in those areas can be assigned to students, resulting in links to relevant grammar lessons and focused practice to remedy their mistakes.

For all of the potential of this program to help students and provide individualized help, it can be difficult to use for both students and faculty. Feedback from SJSU students and faculty that have used the program has been favorable, but unfortunately, both students and faculty commonly experience problems accessing and using this program, especially when embedded in 100W courses. In addition, the program can be difficult to set up and use without frequent support from MacMillan.

Integrating content and writing. Many researchers have found benefit in embedding writing assignments in STEM content courses rather than teaching writing as a separate class or module within a class (Wingate, Andon, and Cogo 2011; Monroe 2003; Conrad, et al. 2015). This decreases the amount of classes that students are required to take and helps students recognize the benefit of clear and concise writing to convey their understanding of course content. When combined with reading and practicing genre-specific format, embedded writing assignments can teach or provide students with practice in writing professional-type documents.

Clarifying assignment directives and outcomes

Students perform better when they clearly understand the purpose, steps, and outcomes of research and writing (Conrad, et al. 2015). Writing instruction that directly addresses common student misconceptions about writing can help focus student efforts to complete research and writing assignments (Conrad, et al. 2015). It is especially helpful for students to be taught about the writing process in addition to scaffolding assignments to help them through the writing process; research and writing are not linear, and they require completing several tasks simultaneously or revisiting tasks (especially research) as ideas and organization develop (Fister 1993). Students who understand the writing process will better understand the relationships between individual assignments and are more likely to be able to replicate the writing process in future classes. They are also more likely to better understand and learn professional writing structure and techniques when explained in a similar context.

Genre-specific instruction and experiences

Differences between writing by STEM students and experienced practitioners are minimized as students gain knowledge and experience in writing genre-specific documents. Class materials

should teach students about expectations for workplace genres, as well as techniques for choosing effective words, using proper grammar, organizing a document, and identifying conventions of particular genres (Conrad, et al. 2015; Moskovitz 2011).

Students who are led through detailed reading of practitioner writing become acquainted with genre-specific style, organization, grammar, word choices, and punctuation (as well as number of mistakes) (Conrad, et al. 2015). The benefits of the readings are enhanced if instructors help students make explicit and empirical comparisons between student versions of the genre and practitioners' use of the genre (Conrad, et al. 2015; Wingate, Andon, and Cogo 2011). In this way, academic writing can teach "real" use of language and organization, mimic professional documents, and lead students closer towards disciplinary literacy, the concept of thinking like a practitioner in the field of choice, to support core content ideas, thinking, and effective communication (Ruzycki 2015).

Instructors can also provide students with a functional perspective on language in terms of the words, grammar, and organization used in STEM writing. For instance, language can be analyzed and taught for its impact on meaning and communication in addition to style (Conrad, et al. 2015). Ancillary materials such as handouts, wikis, etc. are also helpful resources that can provide writing instruction and/or hints to students in addition to lectures and assignments (Conrad, et al. 2015; Stewart, et al. 2015). Language that is genre-specific should be included in writing and content lessons, as well as ancillary materials. Advanced genre-specific language assignments should ask students to revise examples of "bad" writing that they can later compare to "good" examples (Stewart, et al. 2015; Conrad, et al. 2015). These efforts allow direct comparison of student to practitioner writing, closing the gap between the two.

Experiential learning supports disciplinary literacy as students are taught with the goal of providing students with professional opportunities. In genre-specific STEM writing, students can learn to use language (vocabulary) to make explicit connections between the definition of the concept and the application and improvements in the practice of the concept (Ruzycki 2015). For example, conducting research and writing with the goal of presenting or creating a poster gives students the chance to practice professional writing and presentation skills exhibited by practitioners, giving purpose and an application for their efforts (Chapman 2003). Practical experiences are more akin to writing and projects that they will later produce as practitioners for clients and colleagues.

Also along the lines of genre-specific instruction is the use of an alternative audience for a research paper other than the instructor to provide a different, and, hopefully professional, perspective and feedback (Nelson and Hayes 1988; Ruzycki 2015). Students often see their instructor as an examiner or finder of errors in form or content, so writing for anyone else, especially a professional or other audience, may improve student performance (Nelson and Hayes 1988). In addition, practitioners can provide feedback on organization, language, grammar, and other genre-specific aspects of student writing, steering them toward a more professional outcome.

Assessment Strategies

Assessing the efficacy of new techniques for improving writing skills of STEM students will identify those that are working, and to what extent, as well as those that may need refining. Strategies to measure student progress are best accomplished with an assignment at the beginning of the semester to generate a baseline sample of writing at the beginning of class to assess strengths and deficits of the class. Curriculum can be tailored to the results of the baseline, addressing common mistakes in writing and grammar, and can be taught in short (15-minute) lessons throughout the semester (Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006). A writing sample or assignment completed at the end of the semester can be used for comparison to the baseline sample, with parameters related to lessons taught throughout the semester.

Additionally, strong, clear rubrics can be used to assess student accomplishment in writing and/or content, for individual assignments or over several drafts of an assignment (Stewart, et al. 2015; Patterson and Slinger-Friedman 2012 Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006). Clearly written rubrics provide clarification of the assignment's objectives and expectations for students, thereby improving the consistency and quality of the assignments that are submitted. Rubrics also provide feedback on specific writing skills for individual assignments, as well as functioning as a means to measure student progress over several drafts of one assignment, or several assignments. Rubrics work best when they detail specific expectations of aspects of a writing assignment that will be evaluated, along with clear weighting of each aspect in respect to a student's score. They should be provided to students with the writing prompt and used for any peer reviews and subsequent drafts, when applicable.

Revision opportunities help students to address comments, identify patterns of mistakes and deficits, and practice writing skills (Nelson and Hayes 1988; Cook 2017). Since many students do not read comments on papers, requiring revisions forces them to work through their shortcomings on a single document, hopefully developing new skills and habits. Nelson and Hayes (1988) felt that this approach works especially well when substantial comments are provided on a low-stakes assignment (an early first draft or outline) with a chance to identify problems and improve their reports before being graded. Writing a paper in a series of drafts can also be used to teach students that research and writing are concomitant activities and that problems can be circumvented in early drafts (Fister 1993; Nelson and Hayes 1988; Stewart, et al. 2015).

Peer review can be an invaluable and transferrable skill for students. It can help them develop a critical eye, expose them to different student approaches to the assignment, and provide them with feedback for revision (Gooblar 2017; Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006). It can also help to lighten the workload for instructors. Instructions for peer reviews must be explicit and structured so that students have to provide constructive feedback, or they may not expend the effort or stretch their current review skills (Gooblar 2017). Gooblar (2017) also requires students to ask for specific kinds of feedback in a note provided as a cover page and provides "feedback forms," a two-sided sheet with a series of questions to answer about the draft (e.g., find the thesis and restate it in their own words) designed to help their peers (as opposed to judging them).

How to Decrease the Amount of Time for Teaching and Grading

Grading writing assignments takes a substantial amount of time and is the major reason that faculty decline to assign them (Patterson and Slinger-Friedman 2012). Decreasing the time and effort in writing evaluation can increase the number of writing assignments/opportunities that instructors offer their students. There are many options for decreasing grading time and effort:

- Teaching efforts can be divided between professors and teaching assistants using a hierarchical structure to teach and grade writing (Wingate, Andon, and Cogo 2011; Stewart, et al. 2015).
- Patterson and Slinger-Friedman (2012) suggest giving completion/participation grades on some writing assignments, encouraging writing but not adding much time to an instructor's workload.
- Instructors should only provide extensive written comments and suggestions on papers that are going to be revised; summary comments are sufficient for discrete or individual writing assignments and are more likely to be read by students (Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006).
- As stated above, using clear rubrics for grading papers substantially reduces the amount of time needed to grade individual papers (Patterson and Slinger-Friedman 2012; Stewart, et al. 2015; Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006).
- Also mentioned previously, the use of peer reviews and evaluations can decrease the amount of time an instructor spends providing comments and/or grading assignments by distributing the work between students and the instructor (Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006).
- It requires much less time to grade assignments that are highly structured, short tasks such as abstracts and short revisions of "bad" writing than it does to grade longer papers (Stewart, et al. 2015).

Survey Results

I created a Qualtrics survey for San José State University 100W instructors in STEM disciplines to get an idea of how genre-specific writing in STEM was being taught within the university. The survey consisted of questions in which participants could choose as many answers as applied, including a write-in option. Questions ranged from the area of STEM in which the participant taught 100W, the types of assignments they assign, common writing problems they encounter, the teaching practices they employ, and whether or not they collaborate with other instructors in their departments. Invitations to respond to the survey were sent out to thirty-nine 100W STEM instructors, and nine responses were recorded, a 23% response rate.

Of the nine respondents, two self-reported teaching in science (25% of respondents), three in social science (e.g., anthropology, economics, psychology, sociology) (38%), one in technology (13%), and two in engineering (25%). No 100W instructors from the Math Department responded.

The most commonly assigned formal writing assignments were research proposals (88% of respondents assigned this type of assignment), followed by long research papers (8+ pages) and annotated bibliographies (75% each), and short research papers (4-7 pages), critiques or reviews, and abstracts (50% each).

The most commonly assigned informal writing assignments were journals (71%), followed by essay exam questions (57%).

Instructors assigned the following types of professional writing assignments most often: resumés or curriculum vitae (88%), job application cover letters and PowerPoint presentations (75% each), professional emails and memoranda (38% each), and agenda (25%).

Eleven student writing issues were common in the literature. At SJSU, 100W instructors in STEM disciplines self-reported encountering all eleven of these student writing issues to varying degrees (Table 2).

Table 2. Student writing issues encountered most often by STEM 100W instructors at SJSU (self-reported).

Student Error	Percent of Respondents Encountering the Error
Mechanical errors (spelling, grammar, punctuation)	88
Developing a research question and/or thesis	75
Adequately supporting ideas/arguments	75
Using vague language and/or incorrect terminology	75
Developing a clear argument	63
Lack of transitions	50
Locating and choosing appropriate sources	38
Analytical thinking	38
Organization, logical sequencing, and/or linking of ideas	38
Paragraph organization/construction	38
Appropriate citing and referencing (avoiding plagiarism)	38

Teaching practices that most respondents employ in their classes include assigning drafts of papers due for peer review (100% of respondents); providing rubrics with their assignments, requiring drafts of papers for instructor review, and providing opportunities for revision/resubmission (after reviews or grades are assigned) (88% of respondents); providing time to free-write/brainstorm about assignments in class, requiring outlines prior to drafts of papers, offering examples of professional writing (75%); and working with tutors outside of class (50%).

Writing instruction offered by 100W instructors in STEM disciplines at SJSU includes style, format, citations, and references (100% of respondents); grammar and/or syntax, paper organization/outlining, research techniques, guidance for reading peer reviewed articles (88% each); how to address the writing prompt (63%); and scaffolded assignments (50%).

Seventy-five percent of respondents collaborate with other instructors within their departments to create a consistent and cohesive writing curriculum for their majors. These respondents cite that this is accomplished through meetings and sharing documents and metrics. All respondents report collaboration with other 100W faculty; there were no reports of collaborations with

instructors of other upper-division courses within their departments, although the lack of data does not definitively rule these types of collaborations out.

Six of the nine respondents offered their most successful teaching technique, assignment, or approach to writing in STEM. The responses included the following comments.

- “Assignments that build into a lit review: pre topic, topic props, outlines, drafts, final drafts, posters”
- “Clear guidance and high expectations”
- “In class peer review is essential, allowing students to get instant feedback from different perspectives. Also, allowing student to re-write assignments they did not score well on is something I endorse and encourage”
- “Language-based pedagogy with feedback that re-enforces key terms and concepts”
- “Hands-on collaborative activities”

Comparison of Literature Review to SJSU Survey Results

The techniques identified in the literature survey are condensed in table format and presented by organizational level (e.g., university-wide, department-wide, and within a class) in Table 1. Because the survey was only sent to 100W instructors in STEM disciplines, some of the techniques identified in the literature survey were not specifically included in the administered survey. This does not necessarily mean that they are not employed by San José State University faculty teaching writing in STEM, only that the question was not included, or that the 100W instructor did not or was not able to provide that information.

In some cases, additional information was available that I included in the table. For instance, the College of Science has an annual Research Day, during which graduate and undergraduate students who have participated in individual research projects present their findings in a poster session. These projects were not likely conducted via 100W classes, and are therefore not represented in survey findings, but they are included in the table.

Of the seven techniques that were specifically included in the survey, SJSU 100W instructors in STEM disciplines include all seven in their classes. With only the Writing Across the Curriculum program offering support across disciplines, and no formal collaborative opportunities, these results show some adherence to current pedagogy and best practices by respondent faculty for those techniques surveyed. An additional survey designed to solicit information from several instructors from writing-intensive upper-division courses within a single department would identify answers for other categories, and would provide a more comprehensive comparison of the various approaches to teaching writing within STEM departments at SJSU and those within the literature.

Table 1. A comparison of techniques to improve student writing identified in the literature search to those employed by SJSU instructors as self-reported in March 2017 survey and via SJSU websites. Not all teaching techniques apply to 100W instructors in STEM disciplines at SJSU (e.g., university-wide and department-wide techniques); therefore, not all techniques were included in the survey.

Techniques for Teaching Writing in STEM	Included in Survey (Applicable to SJSU STEM 100W Instructors)	SJSU STEM 100W Writing Instructors Report Utilizing
University-Level Techniques		
Utilize alumni association to provide access to professionals in the field	No	
Provide research opportunities for undergraduates for practical/experiential writing (i.e., "Student Showcase")	No	Yes - SJSU College of Science Research Day (optional participation)
Department-Level Techniques		
Scaffolding writing skills amongst upper division classes	No	
Use of heirarchy of faculty and TAs for teaching and grading writing	No	
Use of student portfolios and/or writing comparisons of 1st year and graduating seniors	No	
Class-Level Techniques		
Students self-identify their writing issues/shorcomings	No	
Use of a process log to learn writing process	No	
Clarify the purpose of the writing assignments	Yes	Yes
Instructors provide substantial feedback to early drafts	Yes	Yes
Multiple revisions of documents to provide a chance to respond to feedback	Yes	Yes
Use of software to learn grammar or other writing skills	No	
Integrating teaching of writing and content	No	
Read examples of professional writing	Yes	Yes
Use language-based approach	No	Yes- Instructor volunteered information
Use experiential/research based activities to teach genre-specific writing with purpose	No	Yes - SJSU College of Science Research Day (optional participation)

Write for an alternative audience (a practitioner instead of instructor)	No	
Use of rubrics	Yes	Yes
Use of peer review	Yes	Yes
Work with professionals	Yes - Interview a professional	Yes

Discussion

Teaching Writing in STEM at San Jose State University

Current Writing Requirements at SJSU

Current writing requirements for graduation include a first-year writing class (generally a one-semester English 1A course or a one-year Stretch English class), followed by the Writing Skills Test (WST) that qualifies a student to take the 100W class (upper-division general education writing requirement) within their major. Students must pass the 100W class within or approved by their major with a “C” or higher in order to graduate.

Genre-specific writing instruction for STEM majors occurs within STEM departments, specifically in 100W courses (Table 2). Faculty teaching writing in 100W classes are often those affiliated with that STEM department, but it is not uncommon for faculty from the English Department to be recruited to teach 100W classes for STEM departments. Most STEM departments have a genre-specific 100W classes, although the College of Engineering has a general 100W that serves all Engineering majors, and Health Science and Recreation and Nutrition, Food Science, and Packaging share a 100W class.

Table 2. STEM majors at SJSU.

Anthropology	Kinesiology	Mechanical Engineering
Biological Sciences	Mathematics and Statistics	Aerospace Engineering
Chemistry	Meteorology and Climate Science	Biomedical, chemical, and materials Engineering
Computer Science	Nursing	Civil and Environmental Engineering
Environmental Studies	Nutrition, Food Science, and Packaging	Computer Engineering
Geography	Physics and astronomy	Electrical Engineering
Geology	Psychology	General Engineering
Health Science and Recreation	Technology	Industrial and Systems Engineering

Support for Writing at SJSU

There are two programs designed specifically to support writing at SJSU: Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) provides support to faculty, and the Writing Center (WC) offers support for students.

Writing Across the Curriculum. The WAC program at SJSU supports university-wide efforts to develop 100W and writing-intensive classes by offering workshops and seminars, providing materials, supporting research, and providing a platform by and for faculty teaching writing (<http://www.sjsu.edu/wac/>). This program emphasizes the commonalities and transferability of writing practices between majors (Monroe 2003). Research has found that WAC programs are especially useful in supporting the teaching of basic and technical writing skills (Fallahi, Wood, and Austad 2006).

SJSU's WAC program is unique in that it also offers seminars that are typically associated with Writing In the Disciplines (WID) programs. WID differs from WAC in its emphasis on disciplinary differences, diversity, and heterogeneity within and between academic fields (Monroe 2003). These seminars focus on departmental-level efforts to improve writing and seek to provide faculty with support to teach genre-specific, professional writing skills to students.

The WAC program at SJSU also supports a Writing Fellows program, which, in conjunction with SJSU's Writing Center, hires and trains students to provide embedded classroom support for specific 100W courses for an entire semester (five hours per week). The Writing Fellow works with faculty to support students both in and out of the classroom, in any and all assignments and stages of writing.

The Writing Center. SJSU's Writing Center supports student success in writing by offering one-on-one tutoring, workshops tailored for and delivered to a specific class, workshops, and online resources (such as a blog, videos, handouts). Tutors can help students with prewriting, grammar, organization, formatting, and content development issues, with the intent of improving a student's overall writing skills (as opposed to providing editing services). Although some tutors are from the English Department, their goal of supporting and supplementing writing instruction for all students is reflected in their service of all departments and colleges within the university.

During the 2016/2017 academic year, the Writing Center served 1,288 clients for 3,252 tutoring sessions (2.52 sessions per client) (Hager and Walls 2017). Of the total clients/students, 24% were from the Colleges of Engineering or Science (STEM majors), with an additional 37% from the Colleges of Social Science and Applied Sciences and Arts (not all majors within these colleges are STEM majors, but the majority are). So, potentially 50-60% of all of the students served by the Writing Center are from STEM disciplines.

Recommendations

The results of the literature survey and administered survey, when compared to SJSU's current writing requirements and programs, shows some alignment with current practices. There are, however, a number of areas where additional programming may provide additional support for STEM writing and teaching within the university.

University-wide

SJSU may benefit from a program like Duke University's Reader Project, in which alumni are recruited via the Alumni Association (or a department with a strong alumni network) to work

with a student on a professional writing assignment in their area of expertise. This gives alumni a way to stay connected and give back to their alma mater (and/or department) and the students an experience and connection with professionals in their field. Students are provided a chance to get direct feedback on their writing skills and style from a practitioner in their field and a feel for how their writing will need to change as they transition to a job outside of university. Instructors will benefit from the exposure that students get to professionals, including additional feedback on their writing.

Within SJSU, specific colleges and/or departments have “Research Day” or poster presentations/sessions in which undergraduate students present their findings from individual research projects. For instance, the College of Science has one, as does the Environmental Studies Department (within the College of Social Science), and the Computer Science Department may have in the past, although I found no evidence of one being held spring 2017. Both the College of Science and Environmental Studies events are held in the spring as the academic year winds down. It would be interesting to see if students would derive any additional benefit if the undergraduate research presentation events were combined into a campus-wide event with wider implications (for scholarship money, additional research presentation opportunities, etc.). The value in tying writing activities to a purposeful outcome may provide the context and practical application to focus student writing activities throughout the year (or, even more importantly, throughout their entire university experience). The challenge of increasing the scale of undergraduate research is the cost associated with this kind of program, which may not be supported in a public system (California State University).

WAC and WC provide significant resources and support for faculty and students teaching or enrolled in writing courses at SJSU. Additional support for STEM disciplines is available via The Writing Fellows program (joint WAC/WC program) via the use of embedded tutors in specific 100W classes. Currently, there are Writing Fellows available for the following STEM disciplines: Computer Science, Engineering, and Environmental Studies. As this program grows, additional recruitment of STEM-specific tutors (that have taken and passed that department’s 100W) will provide additional in-class writing support for STEM students and instructors.

It would be interesting to study and/or quantify the benefits of WAC and WC programs at SJSU in terms of their contributions to improvements in student learning in STEM for the faculty and students who use them versus those who do not, or to look at relationships between the benefit to research, writing, and editing skills and the amount of time spent with additional instruction and/or tutoring from any source (e.g., in-class with a professor or Writing Fellow, in the Writing Center’s workshops and/or one-on-one tutoring) and/or new assignments and/or pedagogy that develop from WAC seminars.

Within STEM Departments

I am not aware of any STEM departments on campus that scaffold their writing skills over several upper-division courses, that use a hierarchical structure to provide additional teaching opportunities in writing-intensive courses (faculty and teaching assistants), or that take writing samples from first-year students and graduating seniors for comparison (the collaboration responses from STEM 100W instructors only indicated collaboration with fellow 100W

instructors.) I am also curious if there are any STEM departments that require that a writing portfolio be submitted as a graduation requirement. All of these approaches could be utilized to quantify department-wide writing assessments and utilized to analyze the outcome of any subsequent programming changes, or to draft and implement clear departmental goals and expectations for writing, including realistic writing expectations of graduating seniors. The implementation and quantitative output of a department-wide assessment system like this could inform all levels of writing programming across the university, including first-year writing classes and WAC and WC programming.

Additionally, I am curious as to whether any STEM departments work with any professionals/practitioners in their fields in regard to student writing. I know that there are a number of STEM 100W classes that require students to interview professionals in their field of interest, but am not aware of any department that has collaborated with alumni to mentor STEM writing students similar to Duke's Reader Project (Moskovitz 2011), or developed a department-wide curriculum with practitioners and linguists and writing specialists like The Civil Engineering Writing Project at Portland State University, Cal Poly Pomona, Howard University, and Lawrence Technological University (Conrad, et al. 2015). And, if no similar collaborations exist, it would be helpful to know if the resources and will are present for the development of such programs at SJSU, or within STEM departments at SJSU.

For Individual Classes

Results of the SJSU survey of 100W instructors in STEM disciplines indicate that the majority of these instructors incorporate the techniques and approaches reported in the literature, including the use of detailed rubrics, scaffolding assignments, providing clear and detailed instructions/writing prompts, employing language-based pedagogy, providing feedback on early drafts and revisions, providing examples of professional writing, and working with tutors. Individual instructors wanting additional support for teaching writing in STEM 100W classes benefit from WAC programming, including workshops such as, "Discovering eCampus Resources for Writing Instructors," "Working with Multilingual Writers," "Providing Feedback on Student Writing," and "Designing Effective Assignments and Assignment Sequences" (among others). These seminars help streamline course organization, feedback, and grading, and they create and support a collaborative network of instructors. Several STEM writing instructors have expressed interest in sharing and collaboration specific to STEM fields, and WAC may provide the structure to support these needs, both at large and as subgroup of instructors that focus on the specific needs of STEM students and faculty.

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Appendix Document #3

Understanding the Needs of Student Writers and Why Tutoring Sessions Change Focus: An Analysis of Writing Center Client Reports

By Saya Morita, Writing Specialist

About the SJSU Writing Center

The Writing Center at San Jose State University (a large, public, Master's comprehensive university), provides one-on-one tutoring, workshops, and various writing resources to all students. The Writing Center serves a diverse population, with students of all majors, grade levels, and backgrounds; many of the students who come to the Writing Center are bilingual or multilingual students. Integral to the Writing Center are Writing Specialists or writing tutors who conduct all tutoring sessions and are also students at SJSU.

About Client Report Forms

After every tutoring session, Writing Specialists fill out a client report form where they enter information such as the ideas or concepts that were discussed, concerns or questions the tutees had, and the interaction between the tutee and the Writing Specialist. As client reports provide detailed accounts of what occurred during tutoring sessions, information found in client reports provide valuable information about tutoring sessions not only to the SJSU Writing Center but also to other colleges and Writing Centers.

About the Study

For this study, I analyzed a total of 1571 client reports from the fall 2016 semester. The study is divided into two parts. The purpose of the first part of the study is to examine the needs and demands of the students who come to the Writing Center by quantifying the specific concepts that are discussed in the sessions (e.g., articles, subject-verb agreement, if it was a grammar session); in the second part of the study, I analyze how frequently the focus of a session changes (e.g., a student might indicate he wants to work on grammar, but the client report indicates that it became a content session) and why.

Purpose

This research project is intended to be one that will benefit those working at Writing Centers; however, it will also benefit writing/composition and English language instructors, and as a result, our students. By understanding what goes on in tutoring sessions, we will be able to better anticipate and prepare for the needs of our tutees. By examining the shifts in focus, I hope to provide a better understanding to all writing and language instructors and writing program administrators about the significance of one-on-one writing support for developing students' writing skills.

Research Questions

1. What specific concepts are discussed in Writing Center tutoring sessions? What are the needs of the tutees?
2. How often does the focus of a session change? Why does it change?
3. Does the shift in focus have an impact on the quality and outcome of the sessions?

Hypothesis

The hypothesis for the change in focus shifts is that they change due to the tutees' misunderstanding of the expectations and requirements of their writing assignments and/or due to a lack of awareness about their own strengths and weaknesses in writing, and Writing Specialists play a key role in helping tutees become more mindful about their writing skills.

Findings

GRAMMAR

Table 1

Number of client reports in which the following grammatical concepts are mentioned.

Number of client reports	Items (concepts)
477	verb (verbs, verb tense)
425	article (definite article, indefinite article, zero article)
317	comma (Oxford comma, comma splice, serial comma)
305	noun (nouns, noun phrase)
293	subject (subject-verb agreement, subject-antecedent agreement)
214	plural (plural nouns, pluralization)
165	preposition
132	punctuation
122	parallel (structure & parallelism)
112	word choice
207	coordinating conjunction, FANBOYS
99	transition (transitions, transitional, transitioned)
97	colon and semicolon
95	pronoun
73	independent clause
69	relative (relative pronouns)
65	continuity (verb continuity)
57	active (active voice)
55	nominalization
53	run-on
52	compound (compound sentences)
51	possessive

50	wordiness
44	passive (passive voice)
41	quotation
40	fragment (sentence fragment)
37	capitalization
34	adjective
34	phrasal (phrasal verbs)
34	restrictive (restrictive clauses, non-restrictive clauses)
33	adverb
22	antecedent (pronoun-antecedent)
22	appositive
11	gerund (gerunds)
17	subordinate (subordinate clauses, subordinating conjunctions)
7	contraction
6	auxiliary (auxiliary verb)
6	participle (participles, present participle, past participle)
6	predicate
1	particle
1	apostrophe
1	expletive

The most frequently occurring topics in grammar sessions were (1) verbs, (2) articles, and (3) commas. Verbs include the use of verbs and verb tenses. Articles include the zero, definite, and indefinite articles. Commas include comma splices and Oxford commas/serial commas. Additionally, tutoring sessions that talked about nouns, including noun phrases, were common as well.

The findings show that Writing Specialists need to be able to clearly explain a variety of grammar concepts, particularly regarding verb tenses, articles, and commas. For frequently occurring grammar concepts such as these, Writing Specialists may need to go beyond providing basic definitions. For example, when explaining the differences among the zero, definite, and indefinite articles, simply talking about general vs. specific may not be helpful for tutees, especially for multilingual learners since they may already know a great deal about grammar concepts. Instead, it would be more useful for Writing Specialists to provide explanations as to why a particular article works in the given context. Specific to verb tenses was the tutees' confusion as to when they should use the present tense or past tense when writing research papers, as well as confusion between the simple past tense and present perfect tense. Punctuation also seems to be another prominent issue among tutees of all backgrounds. Many tutees seem to have a weak understanding of sentence structures, resulting in misuse of punctuation. Not having a proper understanding of parts of speech also seems to be another issue that can affect the overall quality of tutees' writing.

FORMATTING

Table 2

Number of client reports in which the following formatting concepts are mentioned.

Number of client reports	Items (concepts)
157	APA
134	citation (in-text citation)
107	reference (reference page)
30	MLA
6	Chicago/Turabian

In regard to formatting, the majority of sessions focused on APA formatting, which is reflective of the majors and courses of the tutees. This signifies that to give proper support to tutees, Writing Specialists must be well-versed in APA formatting. Particularly, Writing Specialists need to know how to write in-text citations and reference pages. Although Chicago/Turabian style formatting was not very common, there were six tutoring sessions where the focus was on Chicago/Turabian, so Writing Specialists need to be at least aware of the style and know basic guidelines.

CONTENT AND ORGANIZATION

Table 3

Number of client reports in which the following content and organizational concepts were mentioned.

Number of client reports	Items (concepts)
240	thesis (thesis statement)
204	prompt
153	introduction
145	body (body paragraphs)
143	conclusion
137	topic

112	word choice
106	argument
99	transition (transitions, transitional, transitioned)
87	PIE
68	topic sentence
55	summary and summarize
53	redundancy
51	funnel (funnel method)
51	claim
50	wordiness
24	evidence
22	triangle (inverted triangle, reverse triangle)
18	coherence
12	paraphrase
12	hook
12	consistency
10	proofread
9	formality
7	tone (formal tone, polite tone)
6	counterargument
4	plagiarism

The overall trend with content and organization seems to be that tutees come to the Writing Center to talk about their writing assignments with Writing Specialists. Tutees needed the most help with their thesis, specifically their thesis statements. This suggests that perhaps students do not know what a thesis is or how to write one. Since coming up with a thesis/thesis statement involves brainstorming, the findings show that Writing Specialists play a significant role in helping tutees discuss their ideas—something that could be harder to do in classrooms and teacher-student conferences where teachers are limited in their availability. Discussion of the prompt was also another frequently occurring topic. This shows that much time is spent on addressing the requirements of the prompt as well as trying to understand it. Although Writing Specialists cannot interpret professors' comments and instructions, they play a vital role in helping tutees understand the expectations of the assignment. This could be a reflection of the students' hesitance in approaching their professors for help, which could be an indicator that students feel more comfortable and less intimidated talking to peers (Writing Specialists) than faculty. If this is the case, Writing Specialists play a significant role in acting as a bridge between students and their courses/professors.

FOCUS SHIFTS

Out of 1571 client reports, there were 472 focus shifts (30% of sessions/client reports). The table below shows the total number of tutoring sessions in relation to the initial focus and focus after shifts were made.

Table 4
Initial Focus vs. Focus After Tutoring Sessions

	Initial Focus (%)	Focus After Tutoring Sessions (%)
Grammar	941 (60%)	895 (52%)
Content/organization	491 (31%)	648 (38%)
Formatting	124 (8%)	150 (9%)
Unspecified	15 (0.9%)	12 (0.7%)
Total	1571	1705**

**The reason why the total number after analysis is higher than the total before analysis is because some sessions had more than one focus.

Table 5 shows what the shifts were made from and what the shifts were made to. *Shifting from* indicates the number of times tutoring sessions shifted away from the initial focus while *shifting to* indicates the number of times tutoring sessions shifted their focus to a different focus.

Table 5
Focus shifts

	Number of tutoring sessions shifting focus FROM (%)	Number of tutoring sessions shifting focus TO (%)
Grammar	248 (52%)	205 (34%)
Content/organization	143 (30%)	296 (49%)
Formatting	81 (17%)	106 (17%)
Total	472	607

The results show that a little over half of all tutoring sessions with focus shifts made shifts away from grammar, while the most number of shifts were made to content/organization. Shifting from something does not necessarily mean that the focus completely shifted away from it. In many cases, the session still touched upon the initial focus in some way while also focusing on another focus. Although all tutoring sessions start with only one focus, many ended up with more than one focus. This explains why the total number of tutoring sessions shifting to a particular focus is higher than the original.

Although tutees come to the Writing Center for help with grammar most often, it was also mostly from grammar where focus shifts occurred. Instead of focusing on grammar, shifts were made to another focus, with the most being to content/organization. In the end, the difference between the total number of tutoring sessions that focused on grammar and content/organization is only 247, compared with the original 450. Although this does not change the fact that more students come for help with grammar than any other focus, content/organization is also an area that many students need help with. The numbers indicate that for reasons we will see next, content/organization is not the most common initial focus but increased in importance during and after the tutees' visit to the Writing Center. This focus shift trend also demonstrates how Writing Specialists are trained to address higher-order concerns (content and organization) before lower-order concerns (grammar and formatting).

To understand why focus shifts occur in the first place, I analyzed client reports and found the below reasons to be the most common causes.

Reasons for the shifting of focus:

- Students wanted to switch.
- There was time left over in the session to talk about another focus.
- Some students wanted help with more than one focus.
- During the session, students and Writing Specialists realized that the focus should be on something else.
- The focus shifted naturally as the session progressed while students and Writing Specialists focused on what they perceived to be of most significance.
- Students did not really know what to work on, so Writing Specialists advised students to focus on what they perceived to be most important.
- Students did not understand the difference between grammar, content/organization, and formatting when filling out their appointment forms, so they selected a focus by guessing or at random.
- Students wanted to start where they left off in the previous session. After the Writing Specialists explained that they need to work on something else as to avoid editing, they shifted their focus onto something else.

Conclusion

The study shows that tutees come to the Writing Center seeking help most often with grammar. Particularly, verb tenses, articles, and commas were the top three most frequently talked about concepts during grammar-oriented tutoring sessions. However, most focus shifts occurred to content/organization, which indicates that Writing Specialists play a significant role in guiding tutees to see the overall picture of their papers instead of focusing only on sentence-level concerns. In terms of content/organization, discussions about the thesis/thesis statement and the assignment prompt were two of the most frequently occurring topics.

Although 30% of all client reports had focus shifts, many tutoring sessions focused on more than one focus throughout the entire session (e.g., grammar and formatting). These sessions seem to focus on the specific needs and questions that tutees bring with them, rather than on a general focus such as grammar. Perhaps for tutees who are aware of their own strengths and weaknesses in writing, it may be more productive if Writing Specialists addressed the specific concerns and questions of tutees rather than on trying to adhere to one focus. Finally, the findings show that although content/organization is a significant focus, there is also a great demand for grammar. This suggests that more resources could be created for grammar-related concepts such as verb tenses, articles, and commas. Moreover, when tutors working at writing centers are being trained, they should practice explaining such concepts.

While conducting the study, several questions arose, which require further investigation. It is my hope that this study opens doors for discussion and encourages other Writing Specialists and WC Directors to come up with ideas and pursue projects of their own.

- There seems to be difficulty in defining the focus of a session as some concepts overlap. Are grammar, formatting, and content/organization clearly defined and understood by Writing Specialists? For example, where do style, clarity, diction, cohesion, wordiness, and vocabulary fit in? (Note that “wordiness” occurs with some frequency in both grammar and content/organization client reports. Does this indicate that “wordiness” can be a sentence-level issue OR it can be an issue that affects content and organization more than sentence-level clarity?)
- Does the focus change when the assignment changes?
- Should tutoring sessions be primarily content/focused-based or needs-based where tutors use a more holistic approach to tutoring?

The purpose of this project was to examine our client reports so that we can better serve all students who come to the Writing Center and find out the general needs of tutees who utilize writing centers at colleges and universities. Although further research can be done to improve the quality and quantity of the study, I hope this project provides some insights as to what writing centers can do to improve their services.

I would like to close by expressing my gratitude to the WC Director Michelle Hager, Faculty-in-Residence Maria Judnick, and Office Coordinator Pat Walls, as I would not have been able to freely pursue and carry out this research project without their guidance. Conducting this research has helped me gain research experience, encouraged me to think deeper about tutoring, and reaffirmed the significance of Writing Centers. The Writing Center is a valuable resource for all students at SJSU, and I am grateful that I could be a part of it.