

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

Introduction

The 2017-2018 academic year saw the Writing Center continuing to serve UGA's students through both traditional face-to-face consultations and a variety of other formats, including online appointments and specially designed classes and workshops. Keeping with trends seen over past years, the spring semester saw fewer clients than in the fall, but training hours and efficient scheduling helped boost the overall percentage of productive hours spent in the center. Looking at numbers across all five Writing Center locations (Park 66, Digital Learning Lab, MLC, Science Library, and Online) from summer, fall, and spring semesters, the Writing Center saw an impressive increase of over 6 percentage points in terms of filled session time compared to the 2016-2017 academic year. Feedback from client exit surveys attests to the continued quality of support offered by consultants despite the increased time spent in consultations or training.

Outside of the five Writing Center locations, consultants also delivered an impressive number of presentations to individual classes, offering lessons on specific writing topics at the request of instructors from across campus. The strong relationship between the Writing Center and faculty from the Biology department continued, though Science Library visits being slightly lower than previous years suggest a need to increase promotion of the location's services or lower the number of sessions offered. Similarly, the Digital Learning Lab seems to merit more promotion or slightly different scheduling practices considering its historically low numbers this spring. However, most other locations show strong growth in terms of visits, with online consultations proving to be quite popular this academic year.

The Writing Center's commitment to supporting not just undergraduate but graduate students led to increased partnership with the Graduate School. Not only was the Dissertation Boot Camp again successfully run in the summer of 2017, but the boot camp was also offered in the form of a class that met once a week during the fall. In addition, the Writing Center offered a three-part workshop on writing literature reviews during the spring 2018 semester with the help of the Graduate School.

Serving a diverse array of students in a variety of locations, continuing training for consultants, and increasing visibility across campus kept the Writing Center busy this academic year, but the work continues to be rewarding for consultants and beneficial for UGA students. The following pages provide documentation of the Writing Center's strong commitment to helping all UGA students strive for excellence in their writing this past academic year. Looking forward, the center plans to continue efficient scheduling, specialized training, and cross-campus collaborations in order to best serve the UGA campus at large.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

Writing Center Usage by Location

The following charts offer the most accurate data about amount of sessions offered and attended after consulting WOnline's automated records and consulting the following formulas, developed and employed by the previous assistant director, Robby Nadler, the past two years.

Table Key:

Sessions Offered is the total number of appointments available for students to sign up for on an average week. Desk shifts (30 minute "working breaks" that allow consultants time to fill out session report forms, use the restroom, and/or decompress before beginning their next session) are excluded from this calculation, as are "Miscellaneous Student" sessions, which denote a consultant was performing work or training related to the Writing Center but not consulting during that time. This number is calculated by manually counting the appointments shown as available during most weeks on UGA's MyWOnline scheduler.

Filled Sessions represents the number of appointments filled by consultant work. This number excludes desk shifts but includes "Miscellaneous Student" sessions because the latter is a filled duty. This number is found by running a WOnline report of how many sessions were conducted at a certain location, then deleting the number of desk shifts and adding back the number of hour-long appointments that took place.

Sunk Shifts account for necessary markers on the schedule system— but ones that are not indicative of performance. This total number is made up of two sets of data: desk shifts and placeholders. Whenever an available appointment needs to be blocked out (for example, a consultant is sick and needs to have his/her schedule removed from available appointments), a placeholder is utilized. Both of these numbers are easily found using tools already existing in WOnline.

Unfilled Sessions are sessions that were available for consultation but went unbooked. These are manually counted by clicking through the online schedule at the end of the semester.

Absentees are sessions in which the client did not show up. This number comprises no-shows and 12- hour cancellations. While both numbers contribute to total appointments, only the no-show number is factored in the Percent Filled category. Both no-shows and 12-hour cancellations can be searched for successfully using WOnline.

Percent Filled represents the number of Filled Sessions over the Filled Sessions plus Unfilled Sessions. This metric determines how successful a location was in utilizing its offered time.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

- **Park Hall**

Park Hall 30-minute Sessions			
	Summer 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
Sessions Offered	14	72	72
Filled Sessions	49	809	897
Sunk Shifts (DS/PL)	18 (18/0)	367 (244/123)	220 (189/31)
Unfilled Sessions	2	95	193
Absentees (NS/12)	16 (14/2)	116 (112/4)	136 (127/9)
Percent Filled	96.92%	90.64%	84.15%

Observations for Summer 2017

The Writing Center's primary location in Park Hall continues to see strong usage rates, including during the summer. Summer 2017 seems to have found the ideal number of sessions to offer during the semester. Summer 2016 saw a 100% filled rate when the location offered 9 sessions per week, suggesting that some students seeking appointments may have been unable to book. The increase from 9 to 14 sessions during the Summer 2017 semester allowed the percent filled rate to fall to 96.92%, which seems an ideal number.

Recommendations

Future summer schedules should aim for a similar amount of sessions offered (in the range of 10-20) in order to continue encouraging efficient use of the Writing Center's staff.

Observations for Fall 2017

The amount of placeholders during the fall 2017 semester are unusually high due to two reasons. First, during September, inclement weather related to Hurricane Irma closed UGA campus two days and caused a delayed opening on a third day. Second, later in the semester, one consultant became quite ill and had to miss more than two weeks of work. Despite these circumstances beyond our control, Park Hall still reached a strong percent filled rate. While last year's report suggested aiming for 80-90 sessions offered each week in Park, for Fall 2017, 72 seems to have been a rather ideal number, leaving comparatively few unfilled sessions.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

Recommendations

Future fall schedules should consider 70-80 sessions a week a reasonable offering and continue avoiding double coverage of the location during early morning and late afternoon hours.

Observations for Spring 2018

Thanks to continued weekly training sessions for staff, Spring 2018 numbers for Park Hall mirrored the success seen in the Spring of 2017, when percent usage increased from numbers historically in the 60s or 70s to the 80s. Mandated training continues to be an effective way to make productive use of consultants' time and increase percent usage rates in the face of decreased appointments in the spring, largely due to fewer FYC classes being offered.

Recommendations

In the future, the Writing Center should continue regular training and consider other ways consultants might productively use time each week to work on Writing Center projects.

- Digital Learning Lab

Digital Learning Lab		
30-minute Sessions		
	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
Sessions Offered	20 per week	31 per week
Filled Sessions	211	193
Sunk Shifts (DS/PL)	20 (0/20)	14 (0/14)
Unfilled Sessions	27	213
Absentees (NS/12)	34 (34/0)	47 (45/2)
Percent Filled	90.07%	52.77%

Observations Fall 2017

Fall 2017 saw the Digital Learning Lab's percent filled jump to 90%, an increase of 5 percentage points in comparison to Fall 2016. This is due, in part, to the fact several hours of two consultants' shifts went to work on an on-going project led by outgoing assistant director Robby Nadler each week.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

Recommendations

Keeping sessions offered close to 20 each week continues to be advisable for this location to see maximum efficiency.

Observations for Spring 2018

As in past years, spring saw lower numbers in terms of this location's use, mostly due to fewer FYC classes running in the spring.

Recommendations

If possible, future spring schedules should aim to offer no more than 20 sessions a week in this location.

- MLC

MLC		
30-minute Sessions		
	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
Sessions Offered	7 per week	6 per week
Filled Sessions	67	51
Sunk Shifts (DS/PL)	46 (39/7)	6 (0/6)
Unfilled Sessions	5	21
Absentees (NS/12)	13 (13/0)	10 (9/1)
Percent Filled	94.12%	74.07%

Observations for Fall 2017

The MLC location shows one of the largest gains in percent filled in comparison with Fall 2016 numbers, which were noted as unusually low in last year's report. Decreasing the weekly amount of sessions offered from 9 to 7 seems to be the driving factor increasing the percent filled from 71% in Fall 2016 to 94% in Fall 2017.

Recommendations

Future scheduling should strive to offer no fewer than 7 and no more than 9 sessions a week based on these showings.

Observations for Spring 2018

Spring 2018 saw surprisingly low traffic in the MLC location, mirroring the anomaly noted in the MLC's Fall 2016 numbers. Offering 10 sessions per week in the spring of 2017 resulted in a percent filled rate of 88, but decreasing sessions offered at this location did not raise the percentage of filled sessions.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

Recommendations Spring 2018

Though all locations see reduced traffic in the spring, increased efforts to advertise the MLC location may be merited in Spring 2019.

- Science Library

Science Library 30-minute Sessions	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
Sessions Offered	21 per week	23 per week
Filled Sessions	161	151
Sunk Shifts (DS/PL)	74 (60/14)	82 (64/18)
Unfilled Sessions	65	127
Absentees (NS/12)	27 (26/1)	34 (31/3)
Percent Filled	74.21%	58.89%

Observations for Fall 2017

A graduate student from the sciences offered sessions marketed specifically for students needing help with science writing in this location. The percent filled rate is a good bit lower than last fall's rate of 81.82%, but the location was offering all-purpose writing help at that time, which may have helped increase traffic.

Recommendations

The percent filled rate of 74% suggests a need to slightly lower the number of sessions offered.

Observations for Spring 2018

This location's spring percent filled rate of almost 59% is the lowest of any location reporting this academic year. Historically, the Science Library's percent filled has been in the low 60s during spring, so this number does suggest an abnormally slow semester.

Recommendations

Based on past year's numbers, 10-12 sessions a week would be a more efficient use of Writing Center resources. Moving some of the appointments offered at this location to the Park Hall location could help improve numbers, but increased advertising of the space and its services should also occur.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

- Online

Online Consultations			
30-minute Sessions			
	Summer 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
Sessions Offered	6 per week	9 per week	6 per week
Filled Sessions	32	87	55
Sunk Shifts (DS/PL)	6 (6/0)	0 (0/0)	15 (15/0)
Unfilled Sessions	0	6	8
Absentees (NS/12)	10 (9/1)	21 (21/0)	12 (12/0)
Percent Filled	100.00%	94.74%	89.33%

Observations Summer 2017

With the most remarkable percent filled rate of any location this year, summer 2017's online appointments showed excellent utilization.

Recommendations

Future summers should offer no fewer than 8 sessions a week to make sure enough space is available for students seeking online appointments.

Observations for Fall 2017 and Spring 2018

This year sees the Writing Center's online appointments utilized far more often than in years past. Both semesters show the location being busier than in past semesters. Offering online appointments beginning no earlier than 7:00pm drove an increase in both fall and spring's online numbers in comparison to the previous year.

Recommendations

Online appointments should continue to be offered in the evening hours when possible and offerings should remain in the 6-12 sessions per week range.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

- All Locations

All Locations			
30-minute Sessions			
	Summer 2017	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
Sessions Offered	20 per week	129 per week	138 per week
Filled Sessions	81	1335	1347
Sunk Shifts (DS/PL)	24 (24/0)	507 (343/164)	337 (268/69)
Unfilled Sessions	2	198	562
Absentees (NS/12)	26 (23/3)	211 (206/5)	239 (224/15)
Percent Filled	97.59%	86.97%	70.56%

Overall Percent Filled: 85.04%

For comparison's sake, a table featuring the previous academic year's figures is provided below:

All Locations			
30-minute Sessions			
	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Spring 2017
Sessions Offered	15 per week	165 per week	155 (142)
Filled Sessions	80	1606	1459
Sunk Shifts (DS/PL)	24 (24/0)	382 (382/0)	257 (257/0)
Unfilled Sessions	24	444	507
Absentees (NS/12)	22 (15/7)	278 (257/21)	204 (198/6)
Percent Filled	80.95%	80.75%	76.57%

Overall Percent Filled: 78.76%

Observations

The tables above provide an overview of the Writing Center's strong performance over the past two years. Improved scheduling practices, including avoiding double coverage and dedicating some consultant hours to weekly training during the spring semesters, have helped increase the overall percent filled for all locations. Some locations, such as the Science Library and Digital Learning Lab, should be monitored closely this coming academic year in order to determine if

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

decreased usage of those locations this spring semester is part of larger trends. Most locations should continue using current scheduling practices and maintain a similar amount of sessions offered each week. The overall percent filled rate of 85.04% suggests that the majority of consultants' time on the clock is dedicated to serving student writers, while still leaving enough unfilled appointment slots to indicate the center is not overburdened or underserving students' needs.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

Clients Served

- **Client Make-Up**

After completing a session, Writing Center consultants fill out a Client Report form. As part of this form, consultants provide demographic information about the clients they just saw. Since this information is reported by the consultants and not the clients themselves, errors may exist in reporting.¹ It should also be noted that some consultants fail to complete Client Report forms after every session, leaving us without a complete set of data. However, the following provides at least a partial portrayal of the students the Writing Center served during the 2017-2018 academic year.

Client Marker	Undergraduate	Graduate
Number of Clients Seen (as reported by consultants)	1256 (66.80% of clients seen)	624 (33.19% of clients seen)

Client Marker	Native	International
Number of Clients Seen (as reported by consultants)	1108 (58.93% of clients seen)	772 (41.06% of clients seen)

Observations and Recommendations

According to numbers found on UGA's website, graduate students make up about 23% of the overall student population. The numbers above suggest, then, that we see a higher rate of graduate students than would be expected. With a third of our clients coming from graduate classes, administration should remain mindful of how we might best train consultants to work with graduate students and cater to the unique needs of these students.

Similarly, the Writing Center continues to see a high percentage of international students, perhaps due to them having less inhibitions in terms of seeking help with writing. Accordingly, training for both new and continuing consultants should include adequate time spent discussing how to best serve students from international backgrounds.

¹ Clients do provide their own demographic data when registering for appointments, but WCOOnline does not allow us to remove No Shows and Cancellations from the numbers provided. Thus, consultants' Client Report forms are our best indicator of whom the Writing Center actually serves.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

- Client Needs

Throughout the Summer 2017, Fall 2017, and Spring 2018 semesters, each student who visited the Writing Center received an email after their session was complete. This email included an invitation to complete an exit survey assessing their Writing Center appointment. The following two tables shows results that come from the 466 completed surveys received during the 2017-2018 academic year and are included in an effort to provide an understanding of who uses our Writing Center and for what purposes.

I RECEIVED HELP FOR A CLASS OR ASSIGNMENT IN

First-Year-Composition (FYC)	95 (20.39%)
Education	65 (13.95%)
Application Materials	56 (12.02%)
Social Sciences	47 (10.09%)
Humanities	39 (8.37%)
Journalism/Media	16 (3.43%)
Life Sciences	15 (3.22%)
Engineering	9 (1.93%)
Fine Arts	5 (1.07%)
Mathematics/Statistics	4 (0.86%)
Physical Sciences	3 (0.64%)
Sciences	1 (0.21%)
Other	111 (23.82%)

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

I WORKED ON A/AN

Essay	271 (58.15%)
Thesis/Dissertation	80 (17.17%)
Statement of Purpose	69 (14.81%)
Lab Report	7 (1.5%)
Other	39 (8.37%)

Observations and Recommendations

The results shown in the tables above confirm FYC students continue to be one of the largest group of students we see in the Writing Center. As noted in last year's end-of-year report, students seeking help with application materials comprise a good many of our visitors, especially at the beginning of the spring semester.

Based on the data above, during the coming year, the Writing Center should consider focusing at least some consultant training on working with writers from Education, non-English humanities subjects, and the social sciences. Also, the large number of graduate students bringing thesis or dissertations to the Writing Center suggests a need to provide time during training to discuss the unique challenges consulting in regards to such large projects present.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

Client Satisfaction

The following section includes results from the client exit survey with the intention of demonstrating the Writing Center's effectiveness and possible areas for improvement.

- **Survey Statistics**

The 2017-2018 academic year marks the first time we have a year's worth of responses to the survey question:

IF YOU'VE VISITED THE WRITING CENTER BEFORE, WOULD YOU SAY YOUR PRIOR APPOINTMENT HELPED YOU EARN A BETTER GRADE, GAIN ADMISSION TO YOUR PROGRAM, OR ANY OTHER DESIRED OUTCOME?

Yes	247 (86.06%)
Somewhat	34 (11.84%)
No	6 (2.09%)
This was my first appointment/NA	179*

*This number was not included when calculating the percentages shown for other answers.

Despite only receiving 466 survey responses, the Writing Center still finds these results quite revealing. According to these statistics, the vast majority of returning clients find our services at least somewhat helpful in terms of receiving help towards achieving desired outcomes.

Other measures of the Writing Center's efficacy come in the form of responses to the following three prompts:

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

I WOULD RATE THIS SESSION

Excellent	307 (65.88%)
Very Good	103 (22.10%)
Good	38 (8.15%)
Fair	9 (1.93%)
Poor	4 (0.86%)
Unacceptable	5 (1.07%)

I WILL RETURN TO THE CENTER

Yes	445 (95.49%)
No	5 (1.07%)
Maybe	16 (3.43%)

I WILL RECOMMEND THE CENTER

Yes	439 (94.21%)
No	8 (1.72%)
Maybe	19 (4.08%)

Observations and Recommendations

Again, results demonstrate the vast majority of clients completing surveys leave the Writing Center highly satisfied with their experience. These numbers closely mirror those of past years, and indicate a continued tradition of excellent work performed by Writing Center consultants. Going forward, the Writing Center should consider making use of these statistics as part of class visits and other forms of advertising the center's services.

UGA Writing Center End of Year Report, 2017-2018

- **Comments about Consultations**

The post-session survey's final question allows clients to provide a brief comment about their experience in the Writing Center. As the statistics above suggest, most of these comments are positive. Clients often note they appreciate consultants due to their "nice" (42 times), "kind" (17 times), and "patient" (16 times) demeanors.

In terms of negative feedback, two themes emerge: 1) 12 clients mention dissatisfaction with the limited amount of time they are allowed in the center, wishing for longer sessions. 2) Several clients report frustration because they showed up to the wrong location for their appointment and, thus, missed or were very late to their actual appointment. While the former complaint represents only a small percentage of clients' views, the center should consider the value and feasibility of allowing undergraduates longer sessions. The latter complaint has been addressed by updating the online scheduler and reminder emails with appointment locations in bold.

Class Visits and Presentations

Writing Center Class Visits or Presentations	Fall 2017	Spring 2018
FYC Classes	18	7
English Classes	1	0
Other	13	8
Totals	32	15

Observations

Throughout the course of the academic year, the Writing Center gave a total of 47 presentations around campus, promoting our services or delivering writing lessons tailored to the instructor's requests. These visits include 25 FYC classes, two of which took the form of presentations on appropriately using quotations in academic writing. At the end of each semester, a special presentation on creating effective FYC portfolios was given in the Brumby residence hall. Other special presentations were given in classes such as kinesiology, comparative literature, engineering, environmental design, and sociology. This range of diverse disciplines highlights the Writing Center's continued efforts to provide writing support across campus.

The spring semester also saw the Writing Center collaborating with other campus resource offices in new ways. Incoming Assistant Director Paula Rawlins worked with the Exploratory Center to offer two sessions providing students wishing to apply to the Terry School of Business with tips on how to write a successful statement of purpose. Both sessions saw excellent turnout with total attendance reaching well over 100 students. Paula also worked with Judy Milton of the Graduate School to offer a three-part workshop for graduate students on how to compile and write literature reviews. Again, interest and attendance for these sessions was quite high, proving the Writing Center has served both undergraduate and graduate students across campus well this year.