

Writing Center AES 2021-22 Executive Summary Plan

Annual Assessment Report

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Unit name: The Writing Center Assessment year: 2021-22

The unit's mission

The Writing Center is the tutoring center in writing for all matriculating students at LaGuardia Community College. The Center offers individualized tutoring on any aspect of any phase of any kind of writing. The Writing Center seeks to provide a warm, supportive setting in which students gain clarity about both their difficulties and strengths as writers, and acquire insight, techniques and skills with which to approach their writing more effectively in subsequent work.

Assessment results by goal and objectives

Goal 1:

Provide an environment in which students feel supported and encouraged

Supporting Strategic plan goal: 1. Build Student Access and Success,
3. Enrich the Student Experience

Objective/outcome 1.1

1.1 Students will report on encouragement behavior by tutors.

- **Measures** --Survey % of students who report encouragement behavior by tutors.
Digital surveys will be administered.
- **Overview of findings or outcomes** (see Appendix 1)
Responses regarding tutor encouragement:
 1. Single session evaluations administered from 9/21 – 6/22:
94% perceived tutor encouragement; 6% did not.
General Writing Center evaluations administered 9/21 – 6/22:
94.1% reported specific encouraging behavior by tutors; 5.9% did not.
 2. General Writing Center evaluations administered from 9/21 – 6/22:
85.3%% felt better prepared after tutoring; another 10 % felt somewhat better prepared; 4.8% did not feel better prepared.

Overview of recommendations and next steps

The target of 90% was reached and exceeded in the main measure of this category. The high % of positive responses was supported by emphasis on this component at staff meetings and communications, which will be maintained in Fall 1, 2022. The current system of 1:1 instead of 2:1 tutoring will also be maintained; the survey will again be administered. Next year's survey will offer both a five-point and a four-point scale to measure the preparedness category, in an attempt to shed light on the meaning of the middle score, a 3, in a five-point scale.

Goal 2:

Contribute to students achieving improved outcomes in previously assessed drafts

Supporting Strategic plan goal: 2. Strengthen Learning for Students - and for Faculty, Staff and the College

Objective/outcome Students will achieve higher grades on revisions compared with previous drafts.

- **Measures** – Revision Grades were reported by faculty who referred their students to the Writing Center.
- **Overview of findings**

The plan to obtain more data from faculty about actual grade changes, needed for Goal 2, did not succeed and we received too few responses from faculty to be meaningful. Faculty who had agreed to require tutoring prior to revisions reportedly found it difficult to enforce the policy, and in general did not do so, while repeated reminders to send this data to faculty overall did not produce substantial responses. Additional data may be derived from this current term, and will be submitted at a later date if it is received.
- **Next steps**

The survey will again be administered in 2022-23. Tutors will again record original grades (or no-grade) on session reports, and instructors will be asked to provide follow-up grades. Faculty will receive repeated reminders towards the end of the semester to send grade data to the Writing Center. Most importantly, in the coming year we will again try to establish a small, different cohort of faculty to require tutoring before revisions and then communicate second-draft grades for this measurement.

Goal 3:

Contribute to students' improvement of drafts prior to first submission

Supporting Strategic plan goal: 2. Strengthen Learning for Students - and for Faculty, Staff and the College

Objective/outcome 3.1 Students will evaluate and report on improvement from pre- to post-session drafts (SLO).

- **Measures**

- Survey % of students reporting improvement (SLO)

- **Overview of findings (see Appendix 2):**

- The results compare the % reported improvement to % reporting no improvement:

- On the General Writing Center evaluations administered from 9/21 – 6/22, 86.4% reported improvement; 4.8% reported little or no improvement. 8.9% selected the somewhat ambiguous intermediate score of 3 on the 5-point scale. In Single Session evaluations 90% reported a better understanding of what their project needed; 10 % did not. The figures are similar to the preceding year, down 1% by the first measure and up 1% in the second.

Recommendations and next steps

The current system of 1:1 instead of 2:1 tutoring will be maintained. General and Single Session surveys will again be administered, with a few modifications; as with Goal #1, next year's survey will offer both a five-point and a four-point scale to measure this category, in an attempt to shed light on the meaning of the middle score, a 3, in the five-point scale. Staff meetings will continue to emphasize the critical importance of session summary and review in the closing segment of each session.

Overall summary and future directions

The Writing Center aims to provide a supportive learning setting in which knowledgeable tutors apply techniques to help students not only improve the writing they bring but also become better equipped for their future work. The 2021-22 assessment produced measurements of two of the stated objectives. The data shows increased success in creating a sense of support according to student reports, 94% and 94.1%, and increased confidence in their preparation for future assignments, 85.3% with an additional 10% feeling “somewhat” more prepared. There was a one percent decrease in the percentage of students who stated that their written drafts had improved as a result of tutoring, 86.4% compared to 87.4% the year before, but a one percent increase in the percentage of students who had a better understanding of what their project needed, 90% vs. 89%. Online surveys will continue to measure these outcomes, but as noted, next year's surveys will offer both a four and a five-point scale in different questions measuring the same issue, to gain clarity about the meaning of students' responses. Next year's surveys will also attempt to identify and separate responses by in-person students and online students and compare the data.

On a final positive note, in the context of significant staff turnover this year, the maintenance of last year's results with this year's more inexperienced staff is somewhat impressive.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Encouragement and Sense of Preparation

--Was the tutor encouraging?

--Did the tutor point out things you did well in your writing?

--Are you more prepared for future writing projects because of Writing Center tutoring?

Appendix 2: Improvement and Project Awareness:

--How much did your papers improve as a result of Writing Center tutoring?

--Did you have a better understanding of what your paper needed than you did before tutoring?