CENTRE FOR WRITERS ANNUAL REPORT

Spring 2010-Winter 2011

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Gabrielle Broitman-Levandovsky and Celine LePage

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I. STAFF

1. Director

Dr. Lucie Moussu has been the Director of the Centre for Writers since July 2009 and is a tenure-track faculty member in the Department of English and Film Studies. She teaches WRS 301/603.

2. Maren Bolstler

Maren Bolstler joined the C4W in November 2009. She is currently the only full time Administrative Assistant with the C4W. She is responsible for the day to day management of the C4W, including staff supervision.

3. Other administrative help

Becky Halliday was the C4W’S Administrative Assistant from October 2007 to August 2010.

One student (Celine LePage), who took WRS 301 in Winter 2010, was hired to work as Maren’s assistant for Fall 2010 and Winter 2011, six hours per week. She worked on compiling statistics and filing archives.

In addition, all the tutors were trained to work at the main desk, answering the phone, making appointments, helping walk-in clients, photocopying materials, and any other administrative tasks that required immediate attention.

4. Tutors

Recruitment

The C4W is continuing with the process put in place last year for potential recruits:

1. All applicants who have not taken WRS 301/603 are required to take two tests (cf. Appendix A for Tutor tests 1 and 2) and come for an interview. The tests are not graded but used as conversation starters.
2. If the applicants successfully pass the tests and interview and have previous writing centre experience, they are immediately hired (pending budget approval).
3. If the applicants pass the tests but do not have sufficient writing centre/tutoring/teaching experience, they are asked to take/audit WRS 301/603. While taking/auditing the course, they are allowed to start working as tutors and are paid for class attendance.
4. If the applicants do not pass the tests, they are advised to take WRS 301/603 and reapply the following semester.

During Summer 2010, the C4W advertised WRS 301 through several Faculties and departments, seeking recommendations from instructors, e-mailing Arts students through
listserv, and e-mailing existing C4W clients. The C4W also posted job ads for both undergraduate and graduate tutors through Career and Placement Services (CAPS), as well as the GSA’s e-newsletter.

These recruiting practices helped fill out the WRS 301/603 course but the C4W was ultimately unable to hire the 6 qualified applicants who could have worked as tutors in the Fall 2010, due to budgetary constraints.

It has been noted that it is more difficult to hire Masters students than PhD or undergraduate students because Masters students have less time in their schedules to take WRS 603. It is especially difficult with Masters of Engineering students who, because of time issues and funding, find it nearly impossible to take WRS 603. In addition, WRS 603 does not count towards their respective degrees.

It is especially difficult to hire international students at the graduate level, not only because WRS 603 does not count towards their respective degrees but also because of the costs associated with international tuition. In addition, these students’ advisors are often reluctant to allow additional courses to be added to the required course work. Although undergraduate international students also face high tuition costs, they are more willing to take the course because WRS 301 can count as an elective.

This hiring situation has forced the C4W to be extremely flexible and creative in its hiring practices—graduate students are in many cases allowed to audit the course, and sometimes are even paid to do so.

**Writing Studies 301/603: training course**

In Fall 2010, 2 graduate students took WRS 603, 1 graduate student audited the course, and 13 undergraduate students took WRS 301.

For the first time, WRS 301/603 was not offered in the Winter 2011 semester, which means there were no new tutors that semester and there is no new cohort from which to hire for Fall 2011. As such, there will be only 8 returning tutors. While there will be students in 301/603 in Fall 2011 who will do their practicum at the Centre in October and November, this will not happen immediately upon opening. As a precautionary measure, the cap on student registration for 301/603 was raised (from 15 to 18 for WRS 301, and from 3 to 8 for WRS 603) to increase the number of potential tutors for Winter 2012. WRS 301/603 will also not be taught in the Winter 2012 semester. This issue needs to be addressed.

**New tutors**

In the Fall 2010 semester, 5 undergraduate tutors, who had taken 301 in Winter 2010, were hired. Two Graduate students, who had taken 603 in Winter 2010, were also hired.
In the Winter 2011 semester, 1 graduate student was hired after taking 603 in Fall 2010. Eight undergraduate tutors were hired after taking 301 in Fall 2010.

Returning tutors

Of the 2009-2010 staff, 7 undergraduate and 4 graduate tutors returned. One undergraduate tutor, who had been on probation since January, was let go before Reading Week, 2011.

Salaries/contracts

In Fall 2010, the C4W opened the third week of the semester in an attempt to save money and operated until the end of the semester. However, opening late created chaos in the C4W because the third week of class was very close to midterms and too many people came in at once. In the Winter 2011 semester, the C4W opened the second week of class and stayed open until the end of class.

The C4W continued with past policies regarding graduate students, who are hired under Teaching Assistant (TA) contracts. These contracts are three months in duration. The graduate students are allowed to work additional hours (e.g., by helping with class visits and writing group projects) that are paid as extra hours at the end of the semester.

Undergraduate tutors are paid bi-weekly, on an hourly basis. They are assigned a certain number of hours at the beginning of the semester but can increase or decrease their hours quite easily.

Tutor demographics – academic programs

Fall 2010

During this semester, the C4W tutoring staff was comprised of 32 tutors:
- 23 undergraduate tutors (10 paid tutors and 13 WRS 301 students)
- 9 graduate tutors (6 paid tutors and 3 WRS 603 students)

Undergraduate tutors:
- Double major in English Literature and Chinese
- Double major in Biological Sciences and Latin
- Honors Physiology
- Chemistry major and English minor
- English major and Creative Writing minor
- Double major in Physiology and Development Biology
- English
- Computer Science
- Double major in English and Economics
- Ancient and Medieval History major and Creative Writing minor
- Double major in English and Philosophy
- Psychology major and Sociology minor
- Biological Sciences major and Psychology minor
- English major and Comparative Literature minor
- Paleontology

Graduate tutors’ programs:

- Masters in Educational Policy Studies
- PhD English and Film Studies
- Masters in English and Film Studies
- PhD Physical Education and Recreation
- PhD Political Science
- Masters in History

Winter 2011

During the Winter semester, the C4W staff was comprised of 26 tutors:

- 20 undergraduate tutors
- 6 graduate tutors

Undergraduate tutors

- Double major in English and Chinese
- Chemistry major and English minor
- English major and Creative Writing minor
- English
- Computer Science
- Double major in English and Economics
- Education after degree
- Ancient and Medieval History major and Creative Writing Minor
- Double major in Biological Sciences and Latin
- Double major in English and Philosophy
- English major and History minor
- Education
- Psychology major and Sociology minor
- Biological Sciences major and Psychology minor
- Physiology and Developmental Biology

Graduate tutors’ programs:

- Masters in Educational Policy Studies
- PhD English and Film Studies
- Masters in English
- PhD Physical Education and Recreation
- Masters in History

5. **The Centre for Writers as a “Community of Learners”**

**Building a community**

Research shows that the most successful writing centres are those in which the tutors participate in the decision-making process and expand their understanding of every aspect involved in running a writing centre. Tutors have been given several opportunities to become much more involved in the non-tutoring aspects of the C4W in a number of ways, as the following examples show:

- Tutors were asked to work a number of hours at the front desk. This allowed them to gain valuable practical administrative experience that they can then add to their CVs.
- After Dr. Jon Olson’s visit, Dr. Moussu asked the tutors if they wanted to establish a “senior-tutor” hierarchy (cf. Appendix B for Dr. Olson’s report) and the tutors rejected the idea, saying that they felt it would complicate relationships amongst tutors and would not improve tutoring services and practices.

Dr. Moussu also successfully involved tutors in her own projects:

- She presented her TESOL Conference paper at a staff education meeting.
- She asked tutors to participate in a small pilot study relate to ESL/EAL students.
- The tutors also helped with a larger scale research project involving all C4W clients in Winter 2011.
- Dr. Moussu asked the tutors for input before she rewrote the *Guiding Principles for the Centre for Writers* (cf. Appendix C for the revised version of the *Guiding Principles*).

Dr. Moussu thought it important to involve tutors in her research and to make them realize that this position is more than just a job; it is an opportunity to learn and gain credentials that will increase their competitive advantage in a very difficult job market. The skill set acquired at the Centre for Writers is very advantageous for both real world and academic applications.

At the end of the Fall 2010 semester, tutors were asked to fill out a feedback form asking them a number of questions. Examples of tutor comments are as follows:

**Overall, has your tutoring experience been positive?**

- Yes, very. I have really enjoyed interacting with new people every day and making new friends.
- It is very rewarding hearing clients return to tell me they improved their grades!
Have you learned anything during your time as a tutor? If so, what?

- I’ve learned the kind of books and authors many disciplines emphasize.
- I have learned how to communicate at a one-on-one level.
- I have learned tons of techniques for my own writing.
- I have learned how to stop trying to fix all things at once and instead to really focus on a few.

Has your experience as a tutor helped you in other non-tutoring situations?

- Yes. My listening skills have really carried over into other areas and how to identify what people are trying to say.
- Yes! I know how to help my classmates and family think through their problems until they have a workable solution. I know, as a tutor, the subject is writing, but I can expand and apply these skills to any rhetorical situation.
- The things I learned have also been helpful in helping my little brother with his essays.
- Tutoring has made me more comfortable with public speaking.
- I have been helping my lab mates throughout the term and they do appreciate the help.

Would you recommend working as a C4W tutor to others?

- Only if they can consistently and genuinely care about what other people struggle with in their writing.
- Definitely! It’s a great experience.
- Always have.

What do you like about working at the C4W?

- I really enjoy some of the people I work with. They are so friendly and welcoming.
- I’m happy that we are having an end-of-semester potluck get-together. I think we should continue having these types of things.
- Free tea. And candy. And all my coworkers. And a great boss.
- I think this is a great place to work!
- Enhances my self-esteem.
- I like sharing my passion for writing and language.
- I loved experiencing increased responsibility at the C4W this year.
- I’ve had several fantastic conversations about tutoring methods with this interesting bunch of individuals.

Is there anything you dislike about working at the C4W?

- Sometimes, the noise level is a bit too high.
- The perception among certain demographics that we are grammar teachers.
I feel that more positive reinforcement of things tutors do well and less harsh criticisms of things to be improved on would go a long way.

I feel that I am increasingly expected to be an editor/grammar instructor, for ESL/EAL students in particular. I find this frustrating because I don't find it overly productive nor is it in keeping with our guiding principles.

Some appointments seem too short and it's frustrating that clients occasionally can't book longer appointments because the schedule is so full.

Are there any changes you would recommend that the C4W make?

- More appointments available whenever possible. I feel so bad leaving students who probably can't get the next appointment that they need.
- Being able to be more involved in the admin at the C4W has been great. I hope this will continue and even increase in the future.
- Improve the client report forms to make the data more useful for improving one's tutoring practices.
- I hope we continue, through efforts like the guiding principles, to clarify our role for students. Tutors should have the right to say we don't do something.
- We need more graduate tutors if the budget allows...
- I hope the C4W grows stronger and faster, becoming the best writing centre in Canada!

Events

The C4W hosted a Holiday potluck in December 2010 for tutors and staff, which had excellent attendance. In March 2011, the C4W hosted a year-end party for tutors and staff. Both of these offered tutors the opportunity to socialize outside of work and debrief at the end of each semester.

II. WRITING CENTRE SERVICES AND USE

1. Users

Spring and Summer 2010

For the first time ever, the C4W was open during Spring and Summer sessions. Four tutors were hired for each session and the C4W was open four hours per day, three days per week.

Graduate students from the Faculties of Arts, Science, and Engineering seem to be the C4W’s main clients in the Spring and Summer.

Centre for Writers usage statistics

Total number of reservations (30-minute appointments) in Spring: 194 (68% capacity)
Total number of reservations (30-minute appointments) in Summer: 111 (38.5% capacity)
Reservation by Standing

Spring 2010

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Standing</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Year undergraduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhD students</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master students</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Year undergraduate</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Degree</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Year undergraduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth Year undergraduate</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-doc</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faculty</td>
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Summer 2010

<table>
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<th>Standing</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>PhD students</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master students</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Year undergraduate</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Year undergraduate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third Year undergraduate</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth Year undergraduate</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After Degree</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Year undergraduate</td>
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<td>Post-doc</td>
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Reservations by language

Spring 2010

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<th>Language</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<td>Chinese</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>Persian</td>
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<td>Cantonese</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farsi</td>
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Summer 2010

<table>
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<td>Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persian</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reservation by Faculty/department

Spring 2010

61  Arts (31.5% of total reservations)
46  Science
26  Engineering
22  Nursing
20  ALES
10  Education
 9  Other

Summer 2010

38  Arts (34% of total reservations)
19  Engineering
18  Science
15  Other
10  Education
 6  Nursing
 5  ALES

Fall 2010 and Winter 2011

As has been the case in previous years, usage fluctuated over the course of each semester. Both Fall 2010 and Winter 2011 semesters had strikingly similar numbers of total reservations (2854 and 2872, respectively) and of average daily reservations (both 49). However, the trends were drastically different. Fall 2010 opened at over 90% capacity. At its peak, the daily waiting list topped 91 people. Winter semester had a much slower start, with usage percentages as low as 32% in the first week and an often empty waiting list; however, the rest of the semester was consistently very busy.

Centre for Writers usage statistics: September 20, 2010—April 13, 2011 (last year's numbers in parenthesis)

Total number of unique clients who came in for appointments: **1877** (1747)
Total number of reservations (30-minute appointments) in Fall: 2854
Total number of reservations (30-minute appointments) in Winter: 2872
TOTAL number of reservations (30-minute appointments), **full year: 5726** (4652)
Total number of walk-in reservations for Fall: 171
Total number of walk-in reservations for Winter: 203
TOTAL number of walk-in reservations, **full year: 374** (271)
Total number of express tutoring sessions for Fall: 52
Total number of express tutoring sessions for Winter: 29
TOTAL number of express tutoring sessions, **full year: 81** (0)
TOTAL number of no-shows (30-minute appointments) **full year: 646** (402)
TOTAL number of unfilled 30-minute appointments, **full year: 646-374-81=191**
Average TOTAL capacity, **full year: over 90%**

TOTAL number of feedback forms collected from clients, **full year: 3983**

Number of clients who attended once: **923 (828)**
Number of clients who attended between 2 and 9 times: **908 (853)**
Number of clients who attended ten or more times: **46 (66)**

**Reservations by standing (last year's numbers in parenthesis)**

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<td>(last year's percentage: 41%)</td>
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<td>Reception (0)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third Year undergraduate</td>
<td>551</td>
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<tr>
<td>(475)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Year undergraduate</td>
<td>495</td>
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<td>(731)</td>
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<td>Master students (483)</td>
<td>380</td>
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<tr>
<td>PhD students (326)</td>
<td>364</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fourth Year undergraduate</td>
<td>256</td>
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<tr>
<td>(405)</td>
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<td>After Degree (193)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fifth Year undergraduate</td>
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<td>(70)</td>
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<td>Staff (17)</td>
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<td>Post Doc (10)</td>
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<td>Faculty (23)</td>
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<td>Contract Instructors (4)</td>
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**Reservations by language**

<table>
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<th>Language</th>
<th>Reservations</th>
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<tr>
<td>(51% of total reservations) (last year's percentage: 52%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
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<td>Korean</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td>Mandarin</td>
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<td>Farsi</td>
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<td>Spanish</td>
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<td>Japanese</td>
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</table>
18 German
15 Twi
14 Gujarati
13 Filipino
13 Hindi
12 Turkish
10 Tagalog

Reservation by Faculty/department

ALES (Agricultural, Life and Environmental Sciences)

141 ALES - Undeclared major
103 ALES - Agricultural Food and Nutritional Science
49 ALES - Human Ecology
44 ALES - Renewable Resource
19 ALES - Rural Economy

Arts

302 Arts - Undeclared major
256 Arts - Economics
98 Arts - Political Science
89 Arts - English and Film Studies
67 Arts - History and Classics
56 Arts - Psychology
53 Arts - Philosophy
50 Arts - Drama
44 Arts - Sociology
40 Arts - Music
36 Arts - Art and Design
27 Arts - East Asian Studies
22 Arts - Interdisciplinary
14 Arts - Linguistics
11 Arts - Modern Languages and Cultural Studies
3 Arts - Women’s Studies

Business

76 Business - Finance and Management Science
42 Business - Undeclared major
20 Business - Accounting and Management Information Systems
14 Business - Marketing, Business Economics, and Law
4 Business - Strategic Management and Organization
### Campus St. Jean

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### Education

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<td>Education - Educational Policy Studies</td>
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<td>76</td>
<td>Education - Secondary Education</td>
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<td>45</td>
<td>Education - Elementary Education</td>
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### Engineering

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<td>Engineering - Mechanical Engineering</td>
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<td>Engineering - Electrical Engineering</td>
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<td>Engineering - Mining and Petroleum Engineering</td>
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### Faculty of Law

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### School of Library and Information Studies

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### Medicine and Dentistry

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### School of Native Studies

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### Nursing

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### Open Studies

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### Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences</td>
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</table>
**Physical Education and Recreation**

173 Physical Education and Recreation

**School of Public Health**

36 Public Health - Public Health Sciences
19 Public Health - Centre for Health Promotion Studies

**Rehabilitation Medicine**

28 Rehabilitation Medicine

**Science**

558 Science - Undeclared major
470 Science - Biological Sciences
141 Science - Chemistry
81 Science - Computing Science
49 Science - Psychology
40 Science - Mathematical and Statistical Sciences
24 Science - Earth & Atmospheric Sciences
7 Science - Physics

**Other/blank**

1211 Other (including Reception)
38 Left blank

**Percentage of reservations by Faculty/school (last year's percentages in parenthesis)**

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<th>Last Year's Percentage</th>
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<td>30.0%</td>
<td>Science</td>
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<td>25.5%</td>
<td>Arts</td>
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<td>9.8%</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt; 1%</td>
<td>Law</td>
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2. Visits and presentations

Informal presentations

Many tutors took the initiative to speak to their professors and request a few minutes to speak to their classes about the C4W and the services it offers. Some tutors also passed out postcards to classmates and friends. Many professors requested C4W postcards to distribute to their classes, and they advertised the C4W in course syllabi and on their websites.

Classroom visits

Classroom visits and presentations are a key component of the C4W’s promotional plan, as the C4W can provide information directly to its client base. At the beginning of each semester, the C4W advertised classroom visits via email. Interested professors and lecturers then contacted the C4W. Both undergraduate and graduate tutors conducted the classroom visits and presentations.

Between Spring 2010 and Winter 2011, 27 classroom visits were organized. While numbers are not available for the Spring 2010 courses visited, in Fall 2010 and Winter 2011 the C4W spoke to approximately 800 clients about the Centre and its services.

Library presentations

In partnership with U of A Libraries, the C4W participated in information sessions hosted by the Libraries for 100-level English courses. These sessions are designed to introduce students to resources available on campus. The C4W presented to 24 different groups. Promotional postcards were also distributed to the students.

The classes that benefitted from a C4W presentation are broken down as follows:

- ENGL 123 (9 groups)
- ENGL 122 (4 groups)
- ENGL 121 (3 groups)
- ENGL 124 (2 groups)
- ENGL 125 (1 group)
- ENGL 199 (1 group)
Orientations/fairs

This year, the C4W participated in both Undergraduate and Graduate Orientations by having booths set up. This allowed the tutors at the booths to interact with undergraduate and graduate level students, and for all incoming students to find out more about C4W services.

The C4W also participated in the Arts Career Fair in October by having a booth set up. Although no new tutors were hired as a result of the fair, it was an opportunity to promote the C4W's services and WRS 301/603 to students on campus.

3. **Online tutoring**

Starting in Winter 2010, the Centre for Writers, in collaboration with the Faculty of Extension, began offering an online writing tutoring support service to distance students enrolled in Extension courses. Students were offered two methods for receiving assistance: via forum posts made to their eClass section, or through requests sent to a C4W email address (cf. Appendix D for online tutoring forms).

The project was expanded in Fall 2010 and continued through the Winter 2011 semester. One graduate course, NURS 502, involved direct communication between tutor and students through a one-time, synchronous lecture delivered through the eClass Live function. This session was held at the beginning of the Winter semester. The tutor provided an introduction to the various modes of writing support, as well as an introduction to graduate level writing.

Semester breakdown:

**Fall 2010** (11 courses, 26 sections)
- 17 requests
- 9 individual users

**Winter 2011** (Extension: 12 courses, 22 sections; Nursing: 1 graduate course/section)
- 21 requests
- 11 users

This project budgeted for 1 hour per request, and on average, that guideline was met. Some requests (for example, questions regarding citation formats, thesis statement review, and the like) took less than an hour, while others (structural concerns, topic sentence review, introduction and conclusion help, and so on) took more. Meetings with John Sinclair, the NURS 502 instructor, and the NURS 502 seminar accounted for another 5-6 hours.

If the C4W goes forward with the project in Spring/Summer of 2011 and/or Fall 2011, it should plan for 1-2 hours of meetings (per semester) with John Sinclair, and an additional
1-2 hours of meetings with any instructors from other Faculties who may want to take part. Contact with instructors new to the service should be required so that both instructors and tutors have a clear understanding of the course goals, the student writing goals and the project’s goals and scope.

4. **Individualized support**

This new initiative started in Fall 2010 was based around assisting individual professors and Faculty Advisors with their students’ writing challenges, as well as individual groups of graduate students with common writing issues. Examples of such individualized assistance include the following:

**Dr. Ted Bishop**

Two of Dr. Bishop’s ESL/EAL students from English 121 were identified as likely to fail the course. They were paired up with tutors from the C4W and met every week throughout the semester to work on their assignments. Two native speakers of English from a 300-level Shakespeare course were also identified by Dr. Bishop and were matched up with tutors to meet with on a weekly basis throughout the semester.

**Dr. Moira Glerum**

Dr. Glerum was concerned that one of her PhD students would be unable to successfully write and defend her research proposal for her Candidacy examination. As such, Dr. Glerum’s student met with a tutor for 4 hours to completely rewrite her proposal, which she subsequently successfully defended (cf. Appendix E for Dr. Glerum’s letter of thanks).

**Classroom workshops**

**POLS 459 writing seminars**

In March, two 1-hour presentations were given to Dr. Siobhan Byrne’s Political Science 459 students, with excellent feedback. The tutorials focused on writing techniques for their term papers

**Group tutoring**

This year, the C4W offered two group-tutoring services run by graduate tutors:

**ESL/EAL sessions**

At the request of Melissa Casey, International Student Advisor for the Faculty of Arts, two 3-hour group lectures and three 3-hour one-on-one consulting sessions were offered for 12 Chinese students who signed up in advance. The group lectures were well attended: 11 out of 12 students attended the first lecture and 9 students attended the second lecture. The
first lecture looked at MLA citation, while the second focused on introductions and conducting research.

The first consulting session was during Reading Week and afforded the 7 students who attended an opportunity to receive individual guidance on their mid-term assignments. Students attended the following two sessions based on when their assignments were due. These sessions focused on writing focused thesis statements, developing coherent topic sentences and linking each argument back to the thesis.

**PERLS sessions**

Three Masters and two PhD students working on their theses in the Faculty of Physical Education, Recreation and Leisure Studies met with a tutor every other week during the Winter 2011 semester to discuss issues related to the writing of their theses and dissertations.

5. **Client satisfaction:**

After each tutoring session, tutors asked clients to fill out an anonymous feedback form (cf. Appendix F for an example of the feedback form). This feedback form allowed clients to rate the usefulness and clarity of the session, as well as whether or not they plan to return or recommend the C4W to other clients. In the Fall, this feedback was compiled periodically throughout the semester to gauge the C4W’s and tutors’ performance and progress. In the Winter semester, tutors could access their individual statistics every other week. The statistics calculated from this data provide a comprehensive view of the C4W’s strengths and weaknesses.

**Student feedback**

**Fall 2010**

A total of 1932 feedback forms were collected in the Fall 2010 semester (*last year’s percentages in parenthesis*):

- 76% of clients found their session very useful (74%)
- 79% of clients felt their tutor explained concepts very clearly (78%)
- 88% of clients would very likely return to the C4W (85%)
- 86% of clients would very likely recommend the C4W to other clients (89%)

Clients also had the option of leaving comments (cf. Appendix G for an example of a letter of thanks from a student). These comments were useful in identifying the C4W’s strengths and areas that required improvement. Positive comments included:

- “My tutor really helped me realize how I can make my writing more clear and concise.”
- “This was a great session. It helped me to clear my thoughts and clarify what my assignment was asking!”
- “It was extremely useful and boosted my confidence tremendously for my first essay as a university student.”
- “I have great respect for these representatives because they are very easy to interact with and have great patience for so many questions. My tutor for this session was very attentive and devoted. I was very satisfied.”
- “Good to have someone impartial to my topic to discuss my essay with.”
- “It helped clarify my main focuses and helped me see what writing skills I’m stronger at and what I need to work on.”

Comments that identified areas needing improvement were as follows:

- “I would rather have tutors that were educated in different fields, that way they know what the student is required to do, and the student doesn’t spend all the time explaining the topic.”
- “It would be helpful if they were more refreshed with formats.”
- “Felt a little rushed.”
- “I think it would be good for planning and direction, however, I needed help with editing and sentence structure and more so received feedback on the focus of my paper.”
- “Focus too much on minor grammar instead of overall paper organization.”

Winter 2011

A total of 2051 report forms were completed in the Winter 2011 semester. The compiled statistics demonstrate an increased level of client satisfaction from Fall 2010 (last year’s percentages in parenthesis).

- 84% of clients found their session very useful (83%)
- 87% of clients felt their tutor explained concepts very clearly (86%)
- 92% of clients would very likely return to the C4W (89%)
- 90% of clients would very likely recommend the C4W to other clients (89%)

Positive comments included:

- “You can have someone here to discuss with you on your writing. Just like you are discussing with an academic colleague or friend on a useful topic.”
- “Very helpful information about how to put my professor’s comments in perspective.”
- “Great help, clear, concise, quick and to the point.”
- “The tutor was very good at providing specific advice that I can easily incorporate, rather than just broad, theoretical concepts.”
- “Great help in all stages of the writing process, thanks!”
- “This is a very accommodating centre. I was in desperate need to find a good instructor to help me with my paper.”
- “The session demonstrated effective time management, and although it was only half-an-hour, the tutor was able to address my chief concern of the appointment.”

Comments that identified areas needing improvement were as follows:

- “I came with a nearly finished paper so some of the time spent going over different and less than related details was a little tedious. However, the tutor was insightful and helpful overall.”
- “Spent a little bit too much time showing online resources, otherwise showed me great writing skills.”
- “Would have liked to have gotten through more of the paper. Otherwise, good advice.”
- “Maybe have tutors that specialize in other areas for different papers (e.g., English vs. Science).”
- “Too rushed, too busy.”

Online tutoring feedback

From students

- “I found the comments and [the tutor's] review really helpful. I agreed with what he suggested, and really appreciated the critique. He was very specific in his comments, and offered really helpful suggestions. I was able to understand exactly how what he was suggesting by reading his suggested re-work of what I had written. I think that having this available for students use is really a fantastic tool.”
- “It is a great service for a student like me. [The tutor] provided good and timely suggestions to improve the final assignment. My section 3 instructor also gave good feedback on all of the assignments. I learned a lot from the course and from the instructors. I will be glad if this service is available for the spring session. I like to take this opportunity to thank you [all] for being a great example of professionalism in a course that teaches that.”

From instructors

- “I am totally in favour of posting this information [about the C4W service]. Some students really need the help. If they don’t learn to improve their writing skills, they won’t go far despite any knowledge they might acquire.”
- “Absolutely, we need to post this information for students. This is surely an asset to those people who can use some guidance with writing in an academic environment. I feel this is beneficial to both students and instructors alike.”

Professor feedback  (cf. Appendix E for other letters from faculty members)

From Dr. Edward Bishop, Department of English and Film Studies

“Dear Lucie - I don't know what you're doing over there but don't stop!
My two students from English 121 had arrived from China only weeks before the term started and, though they were obviously very bright, they had serious problems with written English, and had never encountered our essay format before. By the end of the course their work had improved enormously (one received a B-, the other a C+) and they also had more confidence. They spoke warmly of the Centre and it was clear that you’re not just providing an editing service but establishing a rapport that helps students in larger, less definable ways.

The students from my 300-level Shakespeare class were a different case: they had long since mastered the basics of English but were hopelessly long-winded and vague in their arguments. Here too the Centre made a significant difference – their work returned with new concision and precision. I will be urging my students at all levels to make use of your services. I think the idea of semester-long writing groups is a good one, and would benefit not just first-year students but upper-level undergraduates and graduate students.

The C4W does more than fix problems, it provides a space where students can find direction for their projects, from crafting a one-sentence thesis statement to shaping a complex research statement. You are contributing much to the intellectual life of the university.

In 25 years this is the best experience I’ve had with writing tutorial services. I hope the C4W will live long and prosper.

Thank you so much.

all best,

Ted.”

From Dr. Siobhan Byrnes, Department of Political Science

“I wanted to thank you for the fabulous workshop you provided for my POLS 459 class in March. My students spoke enthusiastically about the tutorial, remarking on the valuable writing techniques you outlined and commenting on your engaging teaching style. I have now had the opportunity to meet one-on-one with most of my students regarding their draft term papers and it is clear that they are applying many of the tips they learned in your tutorial.

Given the success of this exercise, I would like to continue organizing writing workshops for all of my senior undergraduate courses.

Siobhan.”
6. **Promotion and advertising**

Since Fall 2008, the C4W has been placing two sandwich boards outside Assiniboia Hall during open hours. They serve the C4W well, both as an advertising tool and as directional signage. The C4W pens and postcards ordered in 2008 continue to be excellent advertising tools as well.

Beginning in Winter 2010, students were asked how they heard about the C4W on their client feedback forms. The breakdown for the Fall 2010 and Winter 2011 semesters is as follows (*last year's percentages in parenthesis)*:

- 31% Profs/TAs (22%)
- 22.5% Word of mouth (26%)
- 14% In-class presentations (24%)
- 13.5% Website/Internet (10%)
- 7% Outside signage (5%)
- 7% Other (Libraries, SU handbook, International Centre, CAPS, Academic Support Centre, InfoLinks) (12%)
- 5% Orientation (1%)

### III. CHANGES

A number of new rules have been created and implemented this year, many due to an increase in client demand and budget constraints.

1. **Administrative duties for tutors**

Because the C4W staff was reduced to one full time Administrative Assistant, tutors have been trained to work reception for the C4W. This involved greeting clients, matching them with their tutors, answering the phone, assisting clients in the creation of user accounts, scheduling appointments, and photocopying resources.

2. **In-service training**

All tutors were required to attend a 3-hour mandatory training session on September 11, 2010. In the past, this training session was 6 hours long; however, because no new tutors were hired that semester and in order to reduce the number of tutors’ paid hours, 3 hours was deemed sufficient. Topics of discussion involved Writing Centre philosophy, daily operations (including new administrative tasks for tutors), working with multilingual clients and tutoring practices. Unlike in Winter 2010, there was no training session at the beginning of the Winter 2011 semester.

3. **Change in use of C4W2**

Because there were fewer tutors than anticipated in the Fall 2010 semester, the C4W2 was not used for one-on-one tutoring. Also, given that there were no new WRS 301/603
students in the Winter 2011 semester, as well as no 301/603 class, the C4W2 was neither used as a classroom, nor for one-on-one tutoring. However, the space was used extensively in both semesters for group tutoring, staff education meetings, administrative work, as well as WAC TA office hours, research hours, workshops, and as classroom space for WRS 301/603 in Fall 2010.

The Winter 2011 semester was quite different than Fall 2010. With no new staff and no new WRS 301/603 students, all tutors were trained and knew exactly what to do, creating a more relaxed office environment.

4. Staff education meetings

In the Fall 2010 semester, six 1-hour long staff education meetings were held. Tutors were required to attend at least three. There was a strong focus on grammar for multilingual clients and tutoring strategies. Dr. Roger Graves came to speak about student writing in the Faculty of Nursing.

In the Winter 2011 semester, eight 1-hour long staff education meetings were held, with tutors being required to attend at least three. A number of guest speakers were invited to these meetings:

- Carla Starchuk from the Department of Biological Sciences discussed Biology 107 and 108 lab report assignments.
- Dr. Rob Brazeau from the Department of English and Film Studies helped tutors maximize their ability to assist clients with creative writing assignments.
- Dr. Stephen Kuntz from Academic Writing Support, as well as Christina Grant and five of her ESL/EAL Writing Studies 101 students joined a staff education meeting for an innovative session on working with ESL/EAL clients. The ESL/EAL students themselves were able to tell the tutors what they found useful in tutoring sessions and where tutors could improve to help them better.
- Dr. Moira Glerum from the Department of Cell Biology discussed scientific writing at the graduate level.

5. Evaluations

In Fall 2010, tutors were evaluated by (1) their clients, (2) the Administrative Assistant, and (3) Dr. Moussu, and they regularly received this feedback.

1) The responses (comments and statistics) from the client feedback forms were compiled and distributed to each tutor at midterm and at the end of the semester (cf. Appendix H for an example of the tutor performance statistics of three different tutors).

Starting in the Winter 2011 semester, the feedback from clients was accessible to tutors approximately every two weeks rather than at the midterm and end of the semester only, allowing the tutors to keep track of their positive or negative trends. With statistics broken down this way, tutors were more aware of what was going well, and what they where to
improve. They were encouraged to discuss their results with Dr. Moussu at any time throughout the semester.

2) At the end of each semester, the Administrative Assistant, who worked with the tutors on a daily basis, also filled out a form (cf. Appendix I for this form) about each tutor regarding his/her overall professionalism and performance as members of the C4W community.

3) All of the tutors were evaluated at the end of the Fall 2010 semester according to Writing Centre standards (cf. Appendix J for tutorial observation checklist). After observing a 30-minute tutoring session with each tutor, Dr. Moussu wrote individual reports; follow-up interviews took place to discuss strengths and necessary improvements.

In the Winter 2011 semester, Dr. Moussu piloted a new evaluation method. Rather than observe a session, she booked a half-hour session with each tutor, brought in various papers from her undergraduate and graduate careers, and had a tutoring session with each tutor. She recorded these sessions on an iPhone and posted them online for each tutor to listen to. The tutors were required to listen to their session and write a reflection on how they felt the session went (cf. Appendix K for an example of a student self-evaluation from Winter 2011). They then sent this report to Dr. Moussu, who attached this self-reflection to her own evaluation of each tutor. The tutors’ final evaluation consisted of the tutors’ self-evaluation of their session with Dr. Moussu, Dr. Moussu’s evaluation of her tutoring session with the tutors, the Administrative Assistant’s evaluation, as well as client feedback.

6. “Express tutoring”

While working the front desk, tutors were also able to offer “express tutoring.” If clients came in with questions or issues and all tutors were booked up, the tutor working reception was able to help clients with their questions, which were generally small in scope. These sessions lasted 10 to 15 minutes. This option has been popular with clients as demonstrated in the numbers of express tutoring sessions throughout the year (cf. Section II.1 for details).

7. Changes in client rules

Due to increased demand, it was decided in the Fall 2010 semester that clients could book two appointments per week and have unlimited walk-in appointments, provided there was space in the schedule when they arrived. In the past, only one walk-in was allowed after their two weekly scheduled appointments.

Also, the C4W instituted changes in its lateness policy. Previously, clients were allowed to be 10 minutes late for their 30 minute session and 15 minutes late for an hour-long session. Because of an increase in complaints and walk-ins during the Fall 2010 semester, the rule was changed for the Winter 2011 semester. Clients were given only a 5-minute grace period if there was another client waiting for a walk-in appointment. If after 5 minutes, the tardy client had not arrived, their tutor would start tutoring the walk-in client. If the tardy
client had an hour-long session, he or she would be able to fully retain the second portion of the session. This change in policy proved successful, particularly when the C4W was very busy. It allowed tutors to maximize their time, and assist as many clients as possible without shortening the walk-in clients’ sessions too much.

IV. CHALLENGES

The C4W faced a variety of challenges throughout 2010-11:

1. Number of tutors

In Fall 2010, the C4W was unable to hire six new staff members due to budget constraints. Coupled with opening the C4W three weeks into the semester (instead of the usual two weeks), the C4W was immediately very busy. Although practicum hours for WRS 301/603 students helped in terms of manpower, it was not sufficient for the demand exerted on the C4W by clients in the Fall 2010 semester.

During the Winter 2011 semester, there were no 301/603 student-tutors, as the class was not offered. This will pose a challenge for Fall 2011, as the C4W has no base from which to hire new staff. The recruitment of potential new tutors who have not taken the course is underway. Because many current tutors are graduating this year, the C4W has only 8 confirmed returning tutors for Fall 2011.

2. Administrative staff

With budget constraints in Fall 2010 and Winter 2011, the C4W was only able to have one full time administrative staff. To combat this, all tutors were trained in basic reception duties and worked shifts covering the front desk. One tutor, Celine LePage, specifically assisted Maren with such tasks as inputting tutor statistics and creating statistical reports.

3. No-shows

From Spring 2010 through Winter 2011, 646 30-minute appointments were missed (i.e., marked as “no-shows”). Warning emails were sent to the clients who missed appointments, and when more than three 30-minute appointments were missed in a semester, the hooligan’s account was suspended for the rest of the semester.

However, our changed policy on walk-ins helped to combat this problem. When a client was more than 5 minutes late for a 30-minute session and there was a walk-in, the walk-in client automatically received the appointment. As word spread about this policy, many walk-in clients were able to get appointments even when the schedule was seemingly full.

The C4W had 374 walk-in clients in Fall 2010 and Winter 2011, along with 81 clients for express tutoring. When these figures are taken into account, the number of unfilled appointments (i.e., when tutors are not helping a client) drops to 191 out of 6372 available 30-minute slots.
4. **Being busy**

Opening a week later than usual in the Fall 2010 had a ripple effect in the schedule for clients, tutors and 301/603 students:

- The C4W started the semester at over 95% capacity.
- The daily waiting list in Fall 2010 topped at 91 people at the end of September.
- The WRS 301/603 students began their practical tutoring experience one week later than usual and were only able to tutor for 7 weeks, as opposed to the usual 8.

The result of this overbooking situation in Fall 2010 was that the reputation of the C4W was tarnished. The C4W heard and received a number of complaints from faculty, staff and students. Tutors also felt extremely overwhelmed. The statistics reflect this difficult situation with only 76% of the Fall 2010 clients finding their sessions very useful, as opposed to 84% in the Winter 2011 semester.

As a result, it was decided that the C4W will open during the second week of class in the Fall 2011 semester.

5. **Reconciliation of clients’ expectations and the C4W’s purpose**

The C4W offers a wide variety of resources and assistance to clients. Although tutors are trained to handle different kinds of writing, there are occasions when clients have expectations that the C4W is not prepared or able to meet. Often with ESL/EAL clients there is a mismatch of expectations between the tutor and client. At a staff education meeting in the Winter 2011 semester, a number of ESL/EAL clients offered their insights into this, and with tutors, were able to discuss potential solutions to remedy this situation.

Furthermore, some clients come to the C4W wanting their papers edited or to work on take-home exams. The C4W does not advertise itself as an editing service – tutors will gladly assist clients in the process of editing papers, providing techniques and methods to help the client, but will not edit clients’ papers. For academic integrity reasons, tutors also will not help clients with take-home exams.

V. **COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, FACULTIES, AND UNIVERSITIES**

The most significant collaboration effort that was undertaken this year involved the three other University of Alberta’s writing centres and their directors:

- Dr. Stephen Kuntz, Director of Writing Resources in the Student Success Centre (Student Services)
- Dr. Sheena Wilson, Director of the Bilingual Writing Centre on Campus Saint Jean
- Dr. Craig Peterson, Director of the Writing Centre on the Augustana Campus
A number of meetings were organized throughout the year, first with the support of the University Writing Committee and then just the four directors. Starting in January 2011, the four directors met every other week (and sometimes more) to discuss their practices and responses to different issues, create promotional material, brainstorm collaborative research projects, and prepare a conference presentation. Dr. Moussu, together with the three other writing centre directors, also submitted a proposal for a round-table presentation called Collaboration, Competition, Coordination, Compromise: The 4Cs of Multi-campus Writing Centres to the International Conference on College Composition and Communication. The proposal was accepted and the four papers were presented in Atlanta in April 2011.

In September 2010, the Writing Initiative Team invited Dr. Olson, Director of the Center for Excellence in Writing at the Pennsylvania State University, in University Park, PA, to visit and evaluate the Centre for Writers. Dr. Olson spent one full day discussing C4W practices with Dr. Moussu and observing the daily routine of the Centre for Writers, talking with tutors and clients, observing tutoring sessions, etc. (cf. Appendix B for Dr. Olson’s report). Dr. Olson also taught the 90-minute WRS 301/603 course that evening. Tutors, student-tutors, and directors from the university’s three other writing centres were invited to attend the lecture. Following Dr. Olson’s visit, the WRS 301/603 students were invited to submit a short article to the Writing Initiatives Newsletter. Six students chose to do so and extracts of their articles were published in the Winter 2011 Newsletter.

In October 2010, Dr. Moussu was invited by Dr. Tracey Derwing (from the Department of Educational Psychology, in the Faculty of Education) to give a 1-hour presentation to the TESL professors and graduate students about ESL/EAL writing and the Centre for Writers.

Also in October 2010, Dr. Moussu was invited by Dr. Marian Rossiter (Coordinator of the TESL Program in the Department of Educational Psychology, in the Faculty of Education) to give a 90-minute presentation to her Teaching English for Academic Purposes students about ESL/EAL writing and the Centre for Writers. As a result:

- WRS 301/603 (Introduction to Writing Centre Practice) and WRS 605 (Issues in Second Language Writing) were included in the TESL Program’s schedule of approved TESL courses for 2011-2012;
- A number of students from the Faculty of Education have registered in the WRS 301/603 course for Fall 2011 and in the WRS 605 course for Winter 2012;
- Dr. Moussu was invited by Dr. Robin Everall, Dr. Derwing, Dr. Rossiter, and Dr. Abbott to become an Adjunct Professor in the Teaching English as a Second Language Program, Department of Educational Psychology (cf. Appendix L for letter of invitation).

Lastly, in October 2010, Dr. Moussu was invited by Kim Murray (Coordinator of the University of Central Florida’s Writing Center) to give a 50-minute lecture (through Skype) to their writing Center tutors and staff on tutoring ESL/EAL students (cf. Appendix M for letter of thanks).
In the Fall 2010 semester, Dr. Moussu tried to collaborate with Specialized Support and Disabilities Services on campus to better serve students with physical and mental disabilities. Unfortunately, due to the unit’s restructuring, this collaborative effort was discontinued in the Winter 2011 semester.

In March 2011, Dr. Moussu was invited by Dr. Brad Bucknell and Dr. Katherine Binhammer to teach a 90-minute course on ESL/EAL writing to the Graduate Pro-Seminar taught in the English and Film Studies Department.

Dr. Moussu’s involvement with different committees and discussion groups, such as the Second Language Research Group (with Dr. Tracey Derwing, Dr. Kim Noels, Dr. Marian Rossiter, Dr. Martin Guardado and Dr. Leila Ranta, among others), circulated additional information about the Centre for Writers to a number of students and faculty members.

VI. RESEARCH AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Moussu actively participated in national and international professional organizations such as the Canadian Writing Centers Association, the International Writing Centres Association, the International Conference on College Composition and Communication Association, and the International Teachers of English as a Second Language Association.

In July 2010, Dr. Moussu attended the International Writing Centers Association’s Summer Institute, an intensive one-week course for writing centre directors held in Oklahoma, OK. Topics studied that week included:

- Writing centre philosophies, missions, theories, and literature
- Leadership in an academic culture
- Diversity and writing centres
- Tutoring pedagogy and tutor education
- Planning, growing, developing, and re-imagining a writing centre
- Writing centre assessment
- Research and publishing
- Writing centre politics and administration
- Technology and writing centres
- Working with multilingual writers
- Facilities and space
- WAC/WID and writing fellows programs
- Writing centre support for graduate-level writers
- Community writing centres
- Funding, budgeting, fundraising, endowments

In November 2010, Dr. Moussu attended the International Writing Centers Association’s conference in Baltimore, MD, and presented Collaboration, Competition, Coordination, and Compromise in Multi-campus Writing Centres. The trip to this conference was partially funded by the Professional Enhancement Fund offered by the Department of English and
Film Studies. At this conference, Dr. Moussu was able to connect with a number of writing centre directors from the US and other countries.

In March 2011, Dr. Moussu attended the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) conference in New Orleans, LA, and presented *ESL Students’ Needs vs. Writing Centres’ Philosophy*. She also attended several sessions on Second Language Writing theories and pedagogy that continue to influence her pedagogical approach to tutoring ESL/EAL students.

In April 2011, Dr. Moussu attended the International Conference on College Composition and Communication, and presented *New Kid on the Block* (part of *Collaboration, Competition, Coordination, Compromise: The 4Cs of Multi-campus Writing Centres*) with Dr. Wilson, Dr. Kuntz, and Dr. Peterson.

During the Winter 2011 semester, Dr. Moussu started a research project involving the Centre for Writers’ clients. Writing centres from the following universities also participated in the project:

- Saint Mary’s University (Halifax, NS)
- Laurentian University (Sudbury, ON)
- Nipissing University (North Bay, ON)
- University of Saskatchewan (Saskatoon, SK)

In April 2011, Dr. Moussu applied for and was awarded a Faculty of Arts SAS (Support for the Advancement of Scholarship) grant. The title of the research project is: *Writing Centre Philosophy vs. English as a Second Language Student Needs*.

Throughout 2010-11, Dr. Moussu also attended a number of writing-related meetings, such as the *Writing Initiatives Team* committee meetings, the *University Writing Committee* meetings and the *Second Language Research Group* meetings.

**VII. GOALS FOR THE CENTRE FOR WRITERS**

1. **Goals for 2010-2011 and results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals for 2010-2011</th>
<th>Results</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To increase the number of ESL/EAL students.</td>
<td>The International Centre was contacted but did not respond to our invitations for collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49% of students making appointments self-identified as non-native English speakers over the course of the year (last year, 48% of students self-identified as non-native English speakers).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Outcome</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To work closely with WAC in order to meet students' and profs' expectations.</td>
<td>• Dr. Graves and Dr. Moussu collaborated on helping a few faculty members with their course projects and ESL/EAL students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • To diversify the academic backgrounds of tutors to reflect our clients' fields of study. | • Five students from the Faculty of Science took WRS 301 in Fall 2010 and three of them were subsequently hired as tutors in Winter 2011.  
• Current tutors were asked to talk about the C4W to their friends, classmates, and profs. |
| • To extend and expand the types of services and resources available for clients (writing groups, ESL/EAL word games, etc.). | • The number of writing sessions and individualized tutoring services (especially for graduate students) increased. |
| • To involve the tutors in decision-making and the general administration of the C4W. | • Tutors' opinions were often sought out regarding administrative and pedagogical decisions.  
• Tutors were asked to participate in the administrative life of the C4W. Their shift often included time at the front desk where they performed diverse administrative tasks and offered express tutoring to walk-in clients. |
| • To create desk manuals for each of the tutoring stations, containing tutoring resources and information about the C4W. | • Specific handouts on APA, MLA, IEEE, scientific writing, and other topics were created and posted in each tutoring station.  
• The *Guiding Principles for the Centre for Writers* were printed and posted in each tutoring station (cf. Appendix C for this document). |
| • To communicate clearly our purposes and goals to the University of Alberta community. | • Overall student satisfaction rose from 74% (Fall 2009) to 76% (Fall 2010) and from 83% (Winter 2010) to 84% (Winter 2011). In Winter 2011, 92% of the clients said that they were very likely to come back to the C4W. |
2. **Goals for 2011-2012**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals for 2011-2012</th>
<th>Possible Methods</th>
<th>Measures</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• To continue increasing the number of ESL/EAL clients.</td>
<td>• Conduct more classroom visits to reach a greater number of ESL/EAL students.</td>
<td>• Results will be visible via statistics and client feedback forms.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ask current C4W ESL/EAL clients for ideas.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Create focus groups with professors, tutors and clients.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To increase the number of students from Faculties that are not well represented in the client list.</td>
<td>• Contact faculty members in these Faculties through tutors.</td>
<td>• Results will be visible via statistics. collected through our client database.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Send promotional information to Admin Assistants in these Faculties.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• To invite more professors and instructors from a variety of Faculties and departments to staff education meetings.</td>
<td>• Find ways to connect with pros in other Faculties.</td>
<td>• The number of guests at our staff education meetings will increase.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Send an invitation through the Writing Initiatives Newsletter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To continue diversifying the academic backgrounds of tutors to reflect our clients’ fields of study</td>
<td>• Conduct marketing campaigns and recruitment focused at attracting a diverse population of tutors.</td>
<td>• Statistics will show a growing numbers of tutors from different faculties and departments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask the current tutors to recruit in their classes and departments.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• To expand the types of services and resources available for clients (writing groups, workshops, discussion groups, etc.).</td>
<td>• Ask international students what would be useful for them.</td>
<td>• Ask for client feedback on C4W's resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ask faculty members for suggestions.</td>
<td>• Count attendance at writing groups and sessions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Action Plan</td>
<td>Expected Outcome</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| To start reaching out to the community. | Contact Lorraine Woollard, Administrative Director of Community Service Learning.  
• Start thinking about creating a tutoring program with local high schools through WRS 301/603. | Increased knowledge about the C4W outside the university walls.  
• Increased sense of connection. |
| To collaborate more closely with individual classes. | Start working with WRS 101 students on a regular basis.  
• If successfully, present idea to other faculty members. | Results will be visible in the number of classes we provide support to and student/professor feedback. |
| To provide some “express tutoring” to clients in the Library. | Contact Mary-Jo Romaniuk, Chief Librarian, and discuss what options are available. | Results will be visible via our client database. |
| To increase the C4W’s online presence. | Work more closely with the Faculty of Extension to provide online writing support to their Distance Ed Student.  
• Pilot tutoring through Skype.  
• Evaluate and improve the C4W’s website. | Results will be visible via client feedback and statistics. |
| To communicate clearly our purposes and goals to the University of Alberta community. | Encouraging tutor involvement in promoting the C4W’s principles to the University of Alberta community at large. | Better understanding of the C4W’s mission and practices throughout the university. |
APPENDIX A

Tutor tests 1 and 2

Tutor test 1

This student had to write a “language autobiography” for a first-year writing course. You have received this paper in an email. Please respond to this student by explaining how to improve his paper (as if you were going to send your respond back to the student, by email). You have 30 minutes. Save your response ON THE DESKTOP as a document named with your last name (like moussu.doc).

English or Chinese

I have been raised in a place where everyone knew at least 3 different languages and several dialects. To master one language in writing, one has to focus and try to never get mixed up between different languages.

I remember vaguely when I was about 5 years old; I was taught the fundamental of English, which is the ABC. I still remember the song that we sang in kindergarten—“ABCDEFG HIJKLMNOP... Now I know my ABC who would like to play with me.” From that song, I learned all the alphabets of English. After that, we used the alphabets to form words into different group, for example words into colors, vegetables, fruits and etc. After mastering the spelling, we proceeded to form sentences. In addition, we learned the basics of grammar, the present, the future and past tenses. From forming a simple sentence like “My name is Hansheung, my favorite food is potato-made dishes and I was studying yesterday”; I managed to construct my first essay which was my own autobiography. The first essay that I wrote was a simple one, using simple sentences that I learned. This became my starting point in writing in English, at least properly.

At the age of five, I had to learn two other languages. One of it was Chinese and the other was Malay language. The Malay language has somewhat huge similarity with English language. On the contrary, Chinese language is a totally different from English. Firstly, we learned to write instead of pronouncing the words. As I recalled, we learned to write more than we sang. I still remember that time when we had to learn the proper writing style of each Chinese character. Every stroke of a Chinese character has to be written correctly. The teachers were very strict about our writing. If we would make any mistake, we would be punished to write our names. I pitied those who had difficulty in writing their own name. Twenty to thirty strokes for each character multiplied by 50 isn’t a joke especially for a 5 years old kid. Moreover, we have like 3 characters per Chinese name. I remember once I was punished to write my name for hundred times and my hand went numb after finishing the task. Coming back on how we learnt to write, we learned the meaning of each characters. Well, Chinese is again a totally different from English whereby each character has multiple meaning depending on where you put it in a sentence. Every character in a Chinese word has its’ own origin. There are no alphabets for us to remember and no song for us to sing. We have to learn its’ origin and why it is being used in a certain manner. For example, the letter “One” in Chinese is just a horizontal stroke. The character is written in this way because it represents only a stroke of something, which is one. Furthermore, two in Chinese is an additional stroke to one, which represents two things. We had to memorize
most of the characters. I would say my learning in Chinese was rather boring and tedious. Like every other language, upon learning simple words, we proceeded into forming sentences. We make simple sentences and then we proceeded to write our very first simple essay which is also our own autobiography. In my opinion, to learn Chinese was much harder task than learning English.

The writing process continued from my elementary school till my high school. English is considered as a second language in my country. Knowing that English is an important language, my parents hired 3 tutors to make me master the language. The teachers were very strict towards me. I was a rascal when I was being told to write.

During those times, I never enjoyed writing or learned to enjoy it. The teachers that I had will always ask me to write on some topics that they might think will come out on in the exam. I was trained to write for a grade and not for what I liked. When the teachers say that this paper will be graded, I will be so reluctant in class that even the teacher felt guilty for giving us the homework. Furthermore, most of my teachers do not like to praise any student if one managed to write a beautiful essay. I think most of my teachers are sadistic; they enjoy punishing the students rather than rewarding them. As I recalled, if I were to make any mistake in my essays, marks will be deducted and I have to rewrite the whole essay again and again until the teacher felt that I will not repeat the same mistake again. I was cursing and swearing about the teacher when I had to rewrite the whole essay. Eventually, I lost touch with my writing.

Therefore, I switched to Chinese. Maybe it was because I had only one teacher to deal with. The Chinese teacher that I had was not so strict but too kind in fact. He does not give a lot of work to us. As a consequence, I wrote less in Chinese as well. Again, we were not thought to write freely in Chinese and all my essays were again written to be graded. As time goes by, I lost touch with my writing, even in Chinese! I became very lazy and reluctant in writing. I would only write if being asked by the teachers or required by my class. I had no longer interest in writing.

Then one day, I realized that I had a lot of ideas flowing through my brain. I thought of a way to write them down. I started to keep a journal. I started to write all the ideas and cool stuff that I encountered in a day. In the beginning, I will write non stop and let all the sentences flow freely in my journal. I remembered that there was one time I wrote till my pen ran dry. This situation could never happened in my previous days of writing. I began to fall in love with writing again.

Nowadays, I will write my journal before I retire. I will write in English as well as in Chinese. I am also trying to catch up on my writing skills. Not only I will write about my daily routine but I will also try to construct nice quotes, for example: abiding by the past will provide us nostalgic illusion; perception in life is usually the otherwise. My journal became an inspiration to me. Sometimes when I read my journals and found the things that I have written down, I felt very good about myself. Therefore, by keeping the journal I really felt in love with writing again.

Last but not least, I am lucky that I have the opportunity to learn three different types of languages. Given a chance I would say that everyday is still a learning day for me. I have learned so many things a long the way in becoming a better writer. Therefore, I cherish the moment that I have now and will try my very best to improve my writing skills—English or Chinese.
Tutor test 2

Grammar test: you have 30 minutes to find **ONE mistake in each of the following sentences**, write the correction, and explain the grammar/punctuation rule to the “student” who made these mistakes. You get 1 point for identifying the mistake, 1 point for giving the correct form, and 1 point for explaining the rule.

1. Martin, who hopes to sing professionally some day but can’t get beyond the do-re-mi level.
2. Post-modern architecture in North America and Europe have been changing urban skylines.
3. A true happiness is found within us and not in external objects, circumstances, or relationships.
4. Which member of the opposition party is the more ambitious of all?
5. She accepted neither the first or the second job offer.
6. The coach advised Anwar and I not to miss any more practices.
7. Everybody is free to express their opinion.
8. The dictator’s statue stood for almost thirty years however it was toppled in less than an hour.
9. **Life of Pi** written by Yann Martel is about a boy and a tiger in a lifeboat.
10. The ad offered six weeks old kittens for sale.
11. If it is to perform it’s functions properly, the committee’s agenda needs to undergo numerous changes.
12. A poll taken by the agencies seem to indicate the election results will be close.
13. Dr. Hasberger and me have been colleagues at this university for 20 years.
14. Unable to walk because of a stroke, the portable laptop computer helped the elderly man recover his will to live.
15. The **Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms** calls for freedom of expression, communication, and to assemble.
16. An author of two books, with a third coming out soon, his office was always full of printed material.
17. The things we took with us were: a tent, a camp stove, some food, and sleeping bags.
18. This book by Jane Austen is different than the other books she wrote.
19. We postponed to make any decision at the last meeting.
20. The immune system detects pathogens ranging from viruses to parasitic works and distinguishes them of the organism’s normal cells and tissues.
APPENDIX B

Dr. Jon Olson's report

20 December 2010

Lucie Moussu, Director
Centre for Writers
University of Alberta
Electronic Transmission to moussu@ualberta.ca

Dear Dr. Moussu:

I enjoyed meeting you nearly three months ago on the evening of September 24th, then spending the day on the 27th talking with you in the Centre for Writers (C4W), observing your tutors, teaching your class, and meeting writing centre tutors and professionals from the region. Thank you for your gracious hospitality. Thank you also for generously extending the time I could take to prepare this report of my observations and suggestions for strengthening the C4W.

Continuing and widening my observations on September 28th, I gained a broader perspective of the writing culture in which your work is situated. I worked that day with a cross-disciplinary selection of graduate students writing dissertations, met with an Academic Support Centre representative, attended a writing-across-the-curriculum workshop for faculty, and, at an evening reception, spoke with Writing Studies faculty, higher administrators, and others who have a stake in writing pedagogy at U of A.

What I Looked For

Throughout those two days, I tried to observe the C4W’s place within the institution, in terms of both physical space and academic culture; the Centre’s needs; its mission, goals, and objectives; the population of writers it serves; how its services are used; its staffing arrangements; training; technology; data collection; research and scholarship opportunities; outreach within U of A; outreach beyond U of A; marketing; and evaluation protocols. My observations did not include budgetary matters; after all, I was charged to make casual observations during a brief visit, not plumb the depths and details of your program.

What I Saw

I came away deeply impressed by the Centre’s progress in only its third year and by your success in only your second year as director. Of course, every program in a university will struggle with constraints. Yet, as I looked for the items on my list of observational criteria, I saw no glaring omissions, deficits, or strategic errors. I saw a Centre established with great care and preparation. I saw you building on a strong foundation.

Let me describe some particular strengths I observed and suggest ones on which I think you could build as you continue following and adjusting your excellent five-year plan.

College of the Liberal Arts

An Equal Opportunity University
Situating the C4W’s Work within the Institution

Space
The C4W’s central location on campus supports its central role in U of A teaching and learning. Not surprisingly, the C4W appears to have outgrown its space. The C4W2, a second room down the hall at the other end of Assiniboia Hall, is not an ideal solution because the separate rooms require duplications in staff support. However, your way of dealing with the separation issue illustrates a collaborative problem-solving strategy that is one of your core strengths: you enlist the tutors’ help in addressing the need. You stationed a tutor at the front desk when the administrative assistant is in the other room. Now when a student writer enters the C4W and is greeted by a writing tutor taking a turn behind the reception desk, that tutor’s administrative involvement reinforces the C4W’s pedagogical objective of peer-to-peer collaboration. Your tutors’ versatility and multi-faceted professionalism impressed me.

Rules
As I prepared for my visit by reading about the C4W, I noticed your rules of conduct—all good ones. I was curious to see how rules, such as the one prohibiting using cell phone use or the one protecting clients and tutors who have scent allergies, would be conveyed. Would signage of prohibition set a negative tone of *thou shalt not* in the space as I had seen happen in other writing centres? Happily, I found signs to be sparse, discrete, and tasteful when stating what the C4W does not allow. I had to look around to find the no-cell-phone sign arranged in artful geometry with other notices behind the main desk. I remember one prominent sign (about tutors not being allowed to assist with take-home exams) for its invitational, respectful tone, not for its negation: “Dear Clients: Due to academic integrity, we are not able to . . . . Thank you for understanding.”

Marketing
I noticed right away the C4W had thoroughly marketed itself to U of A students, using creative methods from pens and posters to presentations and short films. A personal favorite was the flyer featuring a pterosaur: “Let your imagination ‘saur.” Another favorite was the film on YouTube *GramWow*: “The GramWow [not to be confused with the ShamWow] is the answer to all your writing needs—or not.” While observing a tutorial in the C4W, I heard the student writer refer to something he had heard “the ShamWow guy” say.

The WAC Connection
The “ShamWow guy,” of course, happens to be the Director of Writing Across the Curriculum, Dr. Roger Graves, who started the C4W as its Acting Director. Having the C4W so closely aligned with WAC—and, in fact, having those two programs linked to Writing Studies under the umbrella of Writing Initiatives—fosters a coherent approach to campus-wide writing instruction where success in one initiative advances the others. The student whom I observed in the tutorial illustrates the advantage of this organizational unity: he naturally associated the *GramWow* message with what the WAC Director had said in a presentation to his class, and he applied the messages from film and classroom to his intentions for his C4W tutorial. Thus, I found the C4W to be central to a unified and coherent strategy of instruction for all U of A writers. I cannot overstate the importance of that unity.
Graduate Student Support
The C4W may want to build on its cross-disciplinary profile to dedicate more writing support to graduate students, perhaps through a graduate branch of the C4W or even a Graduate Writing Centre situated separately within Writing Initiatives, whichever arrangement the local environment will sustain. I suggest this even though I observed no strong indications that the present system is not working. I did, however, ask a graduate student for her impressions of the tutorial she had just completed with an undergraduate tutor. It had been her first visit to the C4W. Without my prompting, she offered that she would like to work with a graduate tutor—a “true peer” were the words she used—so she would receive a more substantive critique on her paper. But she was quick with a counterpoint, adding that a graduate tutor might not be any better at all than the undergraduate had been. Truly, she was exceptionally pleased with the undergrad tutor. She told me she had been embarrassed to ask a tutor how to write a critical response because, in her graduate program, she was expected to write a book. It was assumed she would know how to write something as allegedly simple as a critical-response paper. But the tutor had been so helpful and nice that the client’s embarrassment quickly evaporated. The tutor had gone “right to the point.” The client felt as though she received a great deal of help in a short period of time. Yes, she would return, though she would be better prepared next time.

Academic Support Centre
Mention of increasing support for graduate student writers naturally invokes the Academic Support Centre, a centre based on a for-profit, professional-tutoring business model that could easily clash with the C4W’s student-centered model of peer tutoring based on collaborative learning. However, when I met with the Academic Support Centre’s Graduate Writing Advisor Rob Desjardins and also spoke briefly with Director Stephen Kuntz, whom I had met previously in Istanbul at a European Writing Centers Association conference, I was struck by the similarities between the goals and values of the two programs. The cooperative successes of WAC, Writing Studies, and the C4W imply that cooperation between the C4W and the Academic Support Center, too, might be more productive than competition would be. I therefore commend you, Dr. Moussa, for the cooperative relationship you maintain with the Academic Support Centre.

Influence throughout the Region

Organizing Regional Meetings
When you allowed me to teach your tutor education class the evening of September 27, I appreciated that you had invited tutors and administrators from other writing centres in Alberta (notably including personnel from U of A’s previously mentioned Academic Support Center) to attend the meeting. I noticed you have established a position of writing centre leadership in Alberta. Your leadership ethos will help you meet your staff-development goal of helping your tutors identify with a larger community of writing centres. I urge you to continue organizing small meetings of writing-centre tutors and/or directors in the region. If the gatherings meet a need, you could end up establishing a regional organization that might someday link with the International Writing Centers Association (IWCA). There has been sporadic interest in establishing a Canadian Writing Centres Association affiliate of IWCA, an interest never sustained, so far as I know, due perhaps to the distances that separate Canadian writing centres. British Columbia is currently the only province and Yukon the only territory represented in an
IWCA regional organization: the Pacific Northwest Writing Centers Association (PNWCA) joins British Columbia and Yukon with Alaska, Washington, and Oregon in the U.S. You might first consider attending the dynamic PNWCA meetings, then look in Alberta and eastward to see what interest there might be for similar meetings where writing-centred scholars could support one another’s research and scholarship. Such efforts might help your staff identify with a larger scholarly community, and it might help you advance your research agenda as well.

**Staffing and Training**

**Integrative Teaching and Learning**

Your cross-curricular tutor recruitment strategies and your blend of workshops, staff meetings, and tutor education courses (WRS 301 and 603) have produced a skillful, knowledgeable staff of undergraduate and graduate tutors. I admire the way you have integrated your undergraduate and graduate courses. Integrative tutor education must surely lead to a well-integrated staff where graduate students, undergraduate students, paid tutors, and unpaid trainees work harmoniously together. Your tutors showed that working seriously and having fun are not mutually exclusive. They showed personality and professionalism, intelligence and approachability. You create and sustain that delicate balance through your teaching and through your administrative example.

**Tutor Input**

An example from your staff meeting illustrates the unity and balance among your tutors. I had suggested that you consider creating peer leadership positions among your tutors. The lead tutors’ increased responsibilities would give them leadership experience and another item on their résumé, and these tutors would help you with the work of the Centre. When you pitched the idea in a staff meeting, the tutors rejected it, saying they would all be lead tutors. A strong, collaborative group identity such as this happens when the director regularly seeks tutors’ input, routinely depends on tutors’ creativity in solving problems, and consistently enacts such collaborations across activities in the Centre and throughout the university. For example, you set the tutors to the task of creating a C4W mission statement rather than, say, relying on the Writing Initiatives Team or the University Writing Committee. You regularly assess tutors’ needs and then respond effectively (adjusting the graduate tutors’ contracts, to give one of many examples). You regularly assess clients’ needs and then respond effectively (addressing the complaint that sessions were too short, for example). Your tutors acquire habits of asking questions, listening carefully, and responding effectively based on thorough preparation because that is how people communicate in the C4W. Your tutors not only exercise good habits of communication in their tutorials, they are likely to do so also in their classrooms and in their work after they graduate.

**Observing Tutorials**

I can generalize about your tutors’ good habits of communication because I observed them. Several tutors and their clients graciously allowed me to sit in on their session and take notes.

Glen: I watched a tutor named Glen ask good questions to find out about a writer’s assignment and her concerns. As she answered his questions, he took notes. He said back what he heard her saying. He gave clear explanations (such as the structure for writing a comparison-contrast essay), and he prompted her to do the same: “Okay, explain it for me.” He asked questions of clarification. They talked attentively about the paper, both globally and specifically, for ten
minutes before the client read anything aloud. As she read the first two paragraphs, Glen took notes. When she stopped, he complimented her voice in her writing. Then he skillfully described “what I’m seeing clearly,” as he put it, from what she had written. His description helped her see what she needed to do with her organization. For example, after she read her fifth paragraph, Glen said, “This sounds like more of an introduction.” She agreed, but she said she didn’t know how to write introductions. “Let’s talk about that right now,” Glen replied. He got her to come up with ideas and then affirmed her choices. As they continued discussing the paper, Glen found out what she really thought but helped her focus on the public position she wanted to take about the CBL. His questions helped her think about her critical perspective, her thesis, her supportive points, and her readers who will ask, “So what?” Glen stayed aware of time, saying at one point, “We have eight minutes left,” and he was happy to have her correct him by saying she had scheduled two half-hour appointments. (I had to leave after observing for forty-five minutes.)

Marianne: I joined the tutorial of a tutor named Marianne and observed for the final fifteen minutes. I was impressed by how deftly she described to me what they were doing—quickly, articulately—and then brought the client’s focus right back to what they had been discussing about the paper on how histories are contested. (This was the graduate student I mentioned earlier.) Marianne was clearly used to being observed. She also was practiced at adjusting to quickly changing circumstances. I notice in my notebook that just prior to my notes on Marianne’s tutorial, I had written something C4W Administrative Assistant Maren Bolstler had said: “I just don’t believe in panic.” Marianne had absorbed that belief. She was unflappable. She was cool, calm, and intelligent. As the session continued, I noted how Marianne balanced questions and advice. I also noticed that tutor and writer talked in equal amounts. Marianne was well organized, and she remembered the needs that her client had expressed.

Megan: I observed a tutor named Megan for only a couple minutes before I had to leave, but she demonstrated in that short time the qualities you want in your tutors: courtesy, flexibility, focused attention, a kind regard for a student in distress, and Maren’s disbelief in panic. Megan was alert to an exchange Maren was having with a student sitting on the couch who had apparently just arrived so late that his appointment time had nearly expired; however, he claimed to have arrived on time and to have been waiting. The C4W was so busy that it seemed entirely plausible to Maren that the student had been overlooked because he had gone directly to the couch rather than waiting to check in at the front desk, this being his first visit. He politely acknowledged his mistake in not going to the front desk, but he did not want to leave without being tutored. Complicating the situation and distracting his attention, his laptop’s battery was nearly dead. His paper was on the laptop. Megan walked over to him, expressed concern about the laptop’s battery life, sat down on the couch next to him to have a look, asked him what he was writing about, and solved the problem by proceeding to tutor him right there without further to-do while the remaining life ebbed from his battery. No drama developed from this situation, due to Megan’s calm, attentive interest in the concerns of a fellow writer.

Research and Scholarship

Writing Centres and Applied Linguistics
Dr. Moussu, you are a bright talent with scholarly authority who has much to offer a field that has not yet fully integrated applied linguistics and rhetoric/composition. I feel sure you will find
ways to inform writing centre scholarship with your expertise in theories and practices of teaching English as a second language. There is great potential here for important research, whether or not the TESOL field appreciates writing centres as sites for research. The writing centre field appreciates the scholarship of applied linguistics.

**Scholarship and Administration**

One worry I have has to do with your split reporting lines: I wrote in my notes that you report to the Office of Interdisciplinary Studies for your teaching and administration, but you report to the Department of English and Film Studies for your research and scholarship. I hope this does not imply a disconnection between the subjects of your teaching and administration and the subjects of your scholarship. If you ever need to make a case for writing centre administration as scholarly work, you might want to consult Muriel Harris’s chapter “Presenting Writing Center Scholarship: Issues for Faculty and Personnel Committees” in the edited collection by Richard C. Gebhardt and Barbara Genelle Smith Gebhardt, *Academic Advancement in Composition Studies: Scholarship, Publications, Promotion, Tenure* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 1997: 87-102). Harris argues that “a writing center is a particular place that must be created and given shape, and the very shaping of the place is a working out of theory. In a very real sense, a writing center is the result of someone’s research—it is the publication of the writing center director who sets it in motion, and it is revised or updated regularly by that person and by every new director who takes over later” (87).

**CONCLUSION**

I have had the privilege to visit centres for writing all over the world, from Ithaca, New York, to Athens, Greece. The University of Alberta’s Centre for Writers is as dynamic, adaptive, and well-founded, and well directed as any I have seen, especially for such a young program. Every writing centre needs to adapt to its particular setting, and the C4W does that well. Its methods of data collection and evaluation are world-class. The C4W is positioned for increased pedagogical leadership on campus and in the region. Its well-trained staff of tutors serves undergraduate and graduate writers with impressive professionalism. All the tutors appear to be compensated fairly, whether through wages or course credit, but they seem to find the richest reward in the work itself. Tutors have internalized your training and learned from your example. Congratulations on the scholarship and research you have brought to bear on sustaining the publication of this fine program. I look forward to watching the influence of the C4W and your work in the years to come. 

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Jon Olson, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, English
Scholar in Residence for Writing and Communication, Penn State Learning
Director (Summer), Bread Loaf School of English Writing Center, Santa Fe Campus
APPENDIX C
Guiding principles for the Centre for Writers

The Centre for Writers is a free, one-on-one peer tutoring service available to all students, faculty, and staff members at the University of Alberta. We tutor for every level of proficiency, for all disciplines, and have resources to assist ESL/EAL writing concerns. The Centre for Writers aims to assist every writer for any stage of the writing process.

We believe that:

1. Developing writing skills benefits writers in the long term.
2. Writing is a multi-stage and cyclical process (brainstorming, planning, writing, revising, etc).
3. Higher-order concerns (such as organization and development of ideas) should be prioritized over revisions of lower-order concerns (such as word choice, spelling, and grammar).
4. Writers provided with appropriate resources will become self-sufficient.
5. Native English-speakers as well as ESL/EAL/bilingual/multilingual writers can all benefit from help with their writing.
6. The diversity of writing contexts and styles (in different disciplines) implies that there is no one right way of writing.
7. The writer’s voice must be maintained throughout the writing process.
8. Intellectual and academic integrity must always be understood and respected.
9. Maintaining a zero-pressure environment is conducive to discussing openly the writers’ successes and challenges.
10. The strategies we suggest are applicable to all writers: all writers can always improve.

As a result of these beliefs, we implement the following practices:

1. We aim to enhance individual writing practices, not just individual pieces of writing.
2. We encourage all writers, in all faculties and at all levels (student, faculty, staff), to come or return at stage of their writing to make use of the Centre for Writers’ resources.
3. Due to time limitations, we are usually unable to address every concern and we will typically address higher order concerns over lower order concerns.
4. We promote client involvement and self-direction in the session, and incorporate resources to develop effective writing strategies.
5. We are trained to address the specific concerns of both native English and ESL/EAL/bilingual/international writers with any concern and at any proficiency level.
6. We will help writers navigate a variety of writing contexts, including assignment analysis and disciplinary writing conventions. We strive to widen our knowledge about different writing standards.
7. We are active readers and listeners and help writers make their own writing decisions through suggestions and questions.
8. Writers are the experts and must take ownership of their work. We are only guides and will not provide content or evaluate/grade a piece of writing.
9. We provide a free and safe place for writers to freely discuss their writing concerns.
10. We will constantly update our knowledge about writing and tutoring, and use this knowledge in our own writing practices.
APPENDIX D
Online tutoring forms

Centre for Writers Online Tutoring
1-23 Assiniboia Hall
University of Alberta
780.492.7322
c4wonline@ualberta.ca

What is tutoring?
Tutoring is a collaborative process in which the tutor works with you (the student) to assist in identifying problem areas (e.g. lack of thesis statement, structural issues, weak arguments, problematic or unclear wordings, etc.) in a piece of writing and to suggest strategies for developing, revising and editing your own work. The long-term goal is to help you improve your own writing skills.

Role of the student
You provide the focus for the process through your questions and concerns. You retain ownership of your work – it is our goal to create better writers rather than "fix" errors. Ultimately, the goal is for you to improve and eventually no longer require the services of a writing tutor.

Our tutors can assist with any type of writing assignment or project at any stage of the writing process. Here are some examples:
- reading over an assignment to figure out what the instructor is asking for
- brainstorming and developing ideas
- creating an outline
- forming a thesis statement or central argument
- discovering research tools and techniques
- organizing a draft
- choosing the correct word or phrase (especially useful for ESL/EAL students)
- using specific documentation and citation styles
- integrating quotations into an essay
- creating a bibliography/works cited list/reference list
- providing self-editing strategies

The tutor will not look over the following documents:
- take-home exams
- legal documents
- assignments written in a language other than English
- job applications
- resumes and cover letters
How does online tutoring work?
1. Please email your piece of writing (Microsoft Word doc files only) and focused questions to c4wonline@ualberta.ca.
2. Tutors will retrieve the email and spend 1 hour reading the assignment and responding to the provided questions. However, the tutor may decide that there are other more urgent issues to discuss and therefore your concerns may not be addressed.
3. The assignment, questions, and feedback will be returned to you, via email, within 48 hours, Monday to Thursday. Assignments sent on Fridays will be returned the following Monday.
4. Feedback will be made in a separate document – tutors will not alter/mark-up your work in any way.
5. You will also receive a “request for feedback” form. Please fill in this form based on your online tutoring experience and email it back to c4wonline@ualberta.ca.
6. You will have the option to use an extra 30 minutes of tutoring time (in the same week) in response to the feedback proposed by the tutor. For example, to clarify any of the tutors suggestions or to ask for a brief review of modifications.

Important information:
• You must send a copy of the assignment description when sending in your assignment for online tutoring. This is to ensure that the tutor is completely aware of the assignment’s parameters.
• The questions that you send to the tutors must be focused. Because you are not meeting face-to-face with a tutor, it is important that the tutor has a clear idea of what questions and/or concerns students have about their writing assignment. We request, therefore, that you provide three to five focused questions or area for the tutor to examine. For example:
  o Do I have a strong thesis statement?
  o Does my argument flow well?
  o What are the different ways I can include a source?
  o I am not sure if my references are used correctly, can you help me with this?
  o Is the use of the semi colons correct?
  o How can I strengthen my introduction and/or conclusion?
  o I am having a hard time with my introduction and/or conclusion – please help!
• The Centre for Writers is not an essay-checking service. The goal of the online tutoring session is to develop students’ writing skills and abilities.
Dear student,

Thank you for using C4W Online Tutoring! Here is my feedback regarding your assignment:

**Responses to your questions and concerns:**

**Strengths:**

**Weaknesses:**

**Overall summary:**
December 21, 2010

Dr. Lucie Mousse, Director
Centre for Writers
1-42 Assiniboia Hall
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB
T6G 2E7

Dear Lucie,

I am writing this letter to express my deepest gratitude to you and your staff at the Centre for Writers here at the University of Alberta. I truly appreciate the help and guidance you provided to my PhD student, Vikki Northrup, this past November. As you know, PhD students in the Department of Cell Biology are required to write and defend a research proposal for their Candidacy examination, without the support of their primary supervisor. The service that you and your staff provided to Vikki enabled her to completely re-write her proposal to the extent that she was able to successfully pass her Candidacy exam. The advice and tips of the C4W tutors have provided Vikki with significant insights into her challenges in writing and have hopefully now poised her for success in the writing of her doctoral thesis in a few years.

As we have discussed briefly in the past, I am often very disappointed in the quality of the writing I receive from both graduate students and 4th Year Honours students. A service such as yours seems to me to be more important than ever, in an age when communication skills in our students appear to be on the decline. I am very impressed by the improvements you have brought about in my own student and I have subsequently recommended your services to another graduate student in Cell Biology who will be preparing his Candidacy proposal this coming Spring.

Thank you again for providing a much-needed service to the U of A community. I wish you and the Centre for Writers much continued success!

Sincerely yours,

Moira Glerum
Professor and Graduate Coordinator
Dept of Cell Biology
8-33B MSB
University of Alberta
APPENDIX F

Student satisfaction form

University of Alberta Centre for Writers
ONE-ON-ONE TUTORING SESSION EVALUATION

Please fill out this form following the session with your tutor.

What Department / School are you in: ______________________________

Tutor’s name: ___________________ Date: __________________

How useful was the tutoring session?

Very useful    Somewhat useful    Not useful

Did your tutor explain concepts clearly?

Very clearly    Somewhat clearly    Not clearly

How likely are you to come back to the Centre for Writers?

Very likely    Somewhat likely    Not likely (please explain)

How likely are you to recommend the Centre for Writers to other students?

Very likely    Somewhat likely    Not likely

Do you have any other comments about the Centre for Writers?

How did you hear about the Centre for Writers?
APPENDIX G

Letter of thanks from student

Evelyn Neame
10819 41 Avenue
Edmonton, AB
T6J 2P3

November 2, 2010

Lucie Moussu
Director
Center for Writers
1-42 Assiniboia Hall
University of Alberta

Dear Lucie:

Thank you for all that you have done to make the Center for Writers a place of learning, teaching and inspiration.

I arrived at the Center for Writers late on a Friday afternoon. Devin was at the front desk and provided exceptional guidance while I was waiting to see if there would be any cancellations and also tutored me from 4 to 5 p.m., as there were people who failed to make their appointments.

I came to the Center for Writers because I knew I needed help, specifically in terms of APA guidelines for referencing online information, but also because it had been twenty-six years since I had written a formal paper. I was both anxious and desperate, but Devin took on the challenge with tremendous skill. He checked and referenced his answers to my specific questions and when it came to discussing my paper, he was able to discern my area of highest need in an instant and he patiently and firmly reinforced the importance of sticking to the scope of the assignment. Most importantly, he gave me the opportunity to simply talk about my paper. Do you have any idea what a great gift it is to be able to discuss one’s paper with someone who is intelligent, perceptive and patient? It was extremely powerful. My original paper was weak and ineffective, but the one I submitted was creative, well organized and “a joy to read” (My professor, 2010). I owe the Writing Center a great deal, not only for improving my writing skills, but also for modelling effective teaching techniques.

I am profoundly thankful for the exceptional service that I received and for the support that made such service possible.

Sincerely,

Evelyn Neame
## APPENDIX H

Example of statistics, tutor performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TUTOR 1</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Some what</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Not</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How useful was the tutoring session?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>92.86%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your tutor explain concepts clearly?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How likely are you to come back to the Centre for Writers?</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How likely are you to recommend the Centre for Writers to other students?</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>92.86%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.14%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Averages</strong></td>
<td><strong>96.43%</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.03%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0%</strong></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TUTOR 2</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Some what</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Not</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>How useful was the tutoring session?</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your tutor explain concepts clearly?</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>82.61%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How likely are you to come back to the Centre for Writers?</td>
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<td>86.96%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How likely are you to recommend the Centre for Writers to other students?</td>
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<td>86.96%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Averages</strong></td>
<td><strong>81.52%</strong></td>
<td><strong>18.48%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TUTOR 3</th>
<th>Very</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Some what</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Not</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How useful was the tutoring session?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>53.85%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did your tutor explain concepts clearly?</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>53.85%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How likely are you to come back to the Centre for Writers?</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>92.31%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7.69%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How likely are you to recommend the Centre for Writers to other students?</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>76.92%</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Averages</strong></td>
<td><strong>69.23%</strong></td>
<td><strong>30.77%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0%</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>0%</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>
APPENDIX I

Administrative assistant’s evaluation form for tutors

**Overall Professionalism and C4W Procedures:**

- Remembers to sign in and sign out
- Is readily and visibly available to clients
- Is approachable and friendly
- Missed work only when strictly necessary/manages time efficiently and gives sufficient notice if requesting time off
- Arrives on time or early
- Works whole sessions (no early departures)
- Makes a point of working on C4W-related activities or offers to help out around the C4W office when not tutoring
- Dresses professionally
- Demonstrates professionalism in manner and speech
- Interacts appropriately with other tutors and the administrator and director
- Followed regulations outlined in the tutor handbooks
- Takes initiative in telling clients about appointment-booking procedures or opportunities to come back for additional sessions
- Self-sufficient in using WCOnline, C4W website and Mac computers
- Attended the required number of staff meetings ( /3)
- Missed client report forms:

**Additional comments:**

**Response from tutor:**

Date:
Signatures (tutor and evaluator):
APPENDIX J

Tutorial observation checklist (Fall 2010)

- The tutor greets the student in a friendly manner
- The tutor is polite, patient, attentive and helpful with client
- The tutor accurately assesses drafts to determine successful or weak areas
- The tutor asks several questions to understand the purpose of the assignment
- The tutor plans the session by prioritizing issues
- The tutor addresses the student’s concerns
- The tutor engages in a comfortable discussion with the student
- The tutor knows how to focus on important tasks first (intro, thesis statement, etc.)
- The student/tutor reads the paper (sections of the paper) aloud
- The tutor lets student write on his/her paper
- The tutor does not edit
- The tutor does not get stuck on small problems
- The tutor focuses on teaching, not on fixing the paper
- The tutor answers politely to student’s requests/questions
- The tutor elicits suggestions/ideas from client
- The tutor knows basic grammar/punctuation/publication styles rules
- The tutor uses the writer’s handbook or other resources to answer style/punctuation/grammar questions
- The tutor does not make dangerous comments about the paper, the assignment, or the prof
- The tutor does not suggest content
- The tutor seems knowledgeable and competent
- The tutor explains things clearly
- The tutor managed time well during the session
- The tutor overall seemed to fulfill client’ expectations
- The tutor enabled client to become increasingly independent and a better writer overall
- The tutor was encouraging and supportive, and made the client feel confident in his/her work
- The tutor completed the satisfaction and session report forms
- The tutor represented the Centre for Writers in a professional manner

Additional comments:
APPENDIX K

Example of tutor self-reflection (Winter 2011)

In the first few minutes of the session, in trying to tease out how the student [Dr. Moussu] was using the term ‘thesis’, I referred to the student a number of times in the second person (e.g. you said...). This is a practice that I try to avoid, as I feel that using the second person can sound somewhat confrontational to the student, and this was the feeling I got in listening to myself. I would like to try to be more consistent in using more constructive language in the future, to ensure that students do not feel that they are unnecessarily “put on the spot” in the session.

I also feel that I was a bit too eager to see a problem with the location of the thesis statement in the introduction of the essay. This is likely due to the fact that I spend so much time tutoring undergraduates to be concise and explicit with thesis statements in undergraduate papers that I immediately look for a strong thesis statement in the first paragraph. As this was a graduate paper of 30 pages in length, the student has much more latitude in how they construct their argument, and I need to be more aware of this, essentially keeping a much more open mind to the range of rhetorical structures. I was admittedly confused initially with the student’s insistence that the essay “did not have an argument” and I was unsure about how to direct the session in light of this assertion by the student. In hindsight, the student may have been trying to direct the session away from ‘higher order’ concerns so that we could focus on the more minute issues in the paper, such as English colloquialisms, which is what we ended up focusing on once the session got rolling. I think that this supports my initial feeling that, as a tutor, I need to widen my focus, especially for graduate papers, and not always jump straight to the strength/location/conciseness of the thesis statement.

I feel that the session improved about 1/3 of the way through. This is likely due to me overcoming whatever anxiety I had about being assessed, but also finding some discrete areas of the paper where I felt I could impart some useful help to the student. With respect to my suggestion to the student about the proper use of footnotes and commas in APA style. I was 90% sure that I was correct, but I should have consulted the APA guide first. In the session, I turned to the guide after the student displayed some uncertainty about whether my suggestion was correct. With the time constraints of a 30-minute session, there must be some balance between being confident in your knowledge as a tutor and the willingness to look something up. In this case, it did take a significant amount of time to confirm that I was correct about the issue, but it was necessary to ensure that the student felt confident in making the requisite changes.

Overall, I would probably give myself a B for the session. While it was definitely not the smoothest session I have had, I feel that the student left with some significant feedback that would not only improve the paper she was working on, but would help with her future writing, especially with the proper use of English colloquialisms, which can only be mastered with practice, but also with the small APA issue and a tool to make long and potentially confusing sentences more easily understood.
APPENDIX L

Letter of invitation to become Adjunct Professor in the TESL Program

April 8, 2011

Dr. Lucie Moussu
Centre for Writers
1-42 Assiniboia Hall
University of Alberta
Edmonton, AB T6G 2E7

Dear Lucie:

Congratulations on your recent article in TESOL Quarterly. We were very pleased to see another University of Alberta author in one of our top-tier journals!

On behalf of my colleagues, Drs. Tracey Derwing, Leila Ranta, and Marilyn Abbott, I'm writing to invite you to become an Adjunct Professor in the Teaching English as a Second Language Program in the Department of Educational Psychology. As you know, we offer TESL Diploma, Master's, and Doctoral degrees to students with a wide range of interests, and your research and teaching are very closely aligned with the work that we do in our program.

We've been impressed with the stimulating workshops that you've conducted at the invitation of our TESL Students' Group in the past two years. Furthermore, as a direct result of your presentation in my EDPY 597 (Teaching English for Academic Purposes) class, our graduate students have expressed interest in courses that you offer. As a result, we have included both WRS 301/603 (Introduction to Writing Centre Practice) and WRS 505 (Issues in Second Language Writing) in our schedule of approved TESL options for 2011-2012. These will be valuable additions to our program.

Our TESL Master's is a course-based degree, and students conduct empirical research for EDPY 903 (capping project course) in their final year under the supervision of knowledgeable faculty. Having you as an Adjunct in our program would provide our graduate students with a wider range of TESL-related topics from which to choose. Your research interests and areas of expertise complement those of the current faculty members, and we would value your formal association with the program.

We would be very pleased if you would be willing to send your curriculum vitae and a letter indicating your willingness to become an Adjunct Professor in the TESL program beginning July 2011 to Dr. Robin Everall (robin.everall@ualberta.ca). Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Marian Rossiter, PhD
Coordinator, Teaching English as a Second Language Program

cc Dr. Robin Everall, Chair, Educational Psychology
APPENDIX M

Letter of thanks from Dr. Kim Murray

November 12, 2010

Dr. Lucie Moussu
Centre for Writers
1-42 Assiniboia Hall
University of Alberta
Edmonton AB T6G 2E7

Dear Dr. Moussu,

On behalf of our writing consultants, I am writing to express our appreciation for your lecture on October 29, 2010. Several consultants mentioned that your talk was informative and engaging. Since you spoke with us, the strategies you mentioned regarding consulting ESL students have already enhanced our sessions with international students.

In addition to the practical methods you discussed, everyone was impressed with your theoretical advice concerning tutoring methods for helping students with writing. Approaching everything as a “teachable moment”--including navigating vocabulary issues, handling typical questions, teaching verb tenses, and deciphering instructor rubrics—inspired us and helped us learn simple, yet effective means for improving our services to student writers. Overall, you demystified some of the steps in ESL tutoring for me as well as my tutors; for that, I am truly grateful.

Enclosed is a “You Rock” award from our consultants, who asked if we could give you something for taking the time to prepare such a useful, entertaining presentation via Skype.

Sincerely yours,

Kim Murray, PhD
Coordinator