

Colorado State University – Pueblo
Program Assessment Report for AY 2015-2016
Date: July 14, 2016

Program Name: Writing Room

Department: Center for Academic Enrichment

Report Completed By: Chad Pickering (Writing Room and CHASS GET Coordinator)

Assessment Contributors (other faculty involved in this program's assessment): N/A

PART I. Program student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessed in this cycle, processes, results, and recommendations.

SLO #1

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.

SLO 1: Students will feel welcomed in the Writing Room and inclined to recommend the Writing Room and its services to peers.

B. When was this SLO last assessed? Please indicate the semester and year.

Spring 2015.

C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? Please include a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process.

Questions 3 and 6 of the Writing Room student survey, administered online via Campus Labs throughout the fall and spring semesters of AY 2015-2016, were used to assess SLO 1.

D. Who was assessed? Please fully describe the student group(s) and the number of students or artifacts involved.

A total of **210** and **208** responses were given to the two survey questions directly pertaining to this SLO during the fall and spring semesters of AY 2015-2016. The respondents were CSU-Pueblo students, both undergraduate and graduate, who visited the Writing Room and participated in face-to-face tutorial sessions during the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters.

E. What is the expected achievement level, and how many or what proportion of students should be at it?

Students will indicate, at a rate of 75% or higher, that they felt welcomed in the Writing Room. They will then indicate, at a rate of 75% or higher, that they “definitely would” or “probably would” recommend the Writing Room and its services to others.

F. What were the results of the assessment?

Of 210 responses received, **207 (98.57%)** answered positively, indicating that students felt welcomed in the Writing Room. Interestingly, of the **3** negative (“No”) responses, respondents provided notably *positive* comments. One, for instance, simply declared “yes” in the explanation field. Another “No” responses was followed by the comment “you had a Polynesian guy here and im Polynesian so it was nice.” Furthermore, **193 (92.78%)** of 208 responses stated that students “definitely would” recommend the Writing Room to others, while **15 (7.21%)** stated they “probably would” do so.

G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?

The results of the survey indicate that tutoring and reception staff are doing a fine job of ensuring that students who enter the Writing Room are greeted appropriately, provided with service, and generally made to feel welcome.

H. What changes/improvements to the program are planned based on this assessment?

Writing Room staff, both tutors and receptionists, will be further encouraged to greet all incoming students in a friendly and inviting manner, grant them full attention, and make every sincere effort to provide them with (or direct them to)

the services they're seeking. The goal would simply be to ensure that students feel consistently welcomed in the Writing Room and inclined to recommend it to their peers.

SLO #2

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.

SLO 2: Students will gain a deeper understanding of the particular writing-related matters identified and focused upon during tutoring sessions.

B. When was this SLO last assessed? Please indicate the semester and year.

Spring 2015.

C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? Please include a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process.

Questions 4 and 5 of the Writing Room student survey, administered online via Campus Labs throughout the fall and spring semesters of AY 2015-2016, were used to assess SLO 2.

D. Who was assessed? Please fully describe the student group(s) and the number of students or artifacts involved.

A total of **571** and **210** responses were given to the two survey questions directly pertaining to this SLO during the fall and spring semesters of AY 2015-2016. The respondents were CSU-Pueblo students, both undergraduate and graduate, who visited the Writing Room and participated in face-to-face tutorial sessions during the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters.

E. What is the expected achievement level, and how many or what proportion of students should be at it?

Students will identify at least one specific writing-related matter most focused upon during preceding tutoring sessions. Students will then indicate, at a rate of 75% or higher, that their understanding of the identified writing-related matter has improved as a result of participating in tutoring sessions.

F. What were the results of the assessment?

Some **571** individual responses were gathered from the survey, indicating a wide variety of writing-related matters that were focused upon during tutoring sessions throughout the academic year. The category focused upon the most in tutoring sessions was "Organization (structure, transitions, flow, etc.)," which accounted for **114 (19.96%)** of the responses. "Grammar (syntax, sentence structure, verb tense, agreement, etc.);" accounted for **102 (17.86%)** of the responses, while "Format (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.);" accounted for **91 (15.93%)** of the responses. "Development (ideas, paragraphs, etc.);" and "Punctuation (commas, semicolons, run-on sentences, etc.);" accounted for the fourth- and fifth-most-selected categories (**10.85%** and **10.68%**, respectively). Furthermore, **209 (99.52%)** of 210 responses indicated that students' understanding of the identified writing-related matters improved as a result of participating in tutoring sessions. The 209 positive responses were accompanied by brief written comments that provided some justification for respondents' choices. These comments frequently praised the amount and quality of the services rendered by tutors.

G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?

These results indicate that tutors' efforts to enhance and improve students' understanding of various writing-related concerns or issues are thus far largely effective. The written comments accompanying the responses were particularly encouraging and indicative of the good pedagogical work carried out by tutors.

H. What changes/improvements to the program are planned based on this assessment?

Through observations, discussions, and regular training sessions, Writing Room tutors will continually be encouraged to enhance their understanding of writing conventions in a multidisciplinary university-level setting, improve their familiarity

with writing-related resources, and refine their approaches to individualized writing instruction so that students may be better served during tutoring sessions.

SLO #3

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.

SLO 3: Students will acquire greater skill in composing texts effectively for academic, professional, or creative purposes and will gain a deeper understanding of the writing and revision process.

B. When was this SLO last assessed? Please indicate the semester and year.

Spring 2015.

C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? Please include a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process.

Questions 7 and 8 of the Writing Room student survey, administered online via Campus Labs throughout the fall and spring semesters of AY 2015-2016, were used to assess SLO 3.

D. Who was assessed? Please fully describe the student group(s) and the number of students or artifacts involved.

A total of **208** and **208** responses were given to the two survey questions directly pertaining to this SLO during the fall and spring semesters of AY 2015-2016. The respondents were CSU-Pueblo students, both undergraduate and graduate, who visited the Writing Room and participated in face-to-face tutorial sessions during the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters.

E. What is the expected achievement level, and how many or what proportion of students should be at it?

Students will “strongly agree” or “moderately agree,” at a rate of 75% or higher, that their writing skills and their understanding of the writing and revision process have improved as a result of participating in tutoring sessions.

F. What were the results of the assessment?

With regard to the improvement of writing skills, **135 (64.9%)** of the 208 responses indicated “Strongly agree” while **53 (25.48%)** indicated that they “Moderately agree” that writing skills were improved as a result of participating in tutoring sessions. With regard to the improvement of students’ understanding of the writing and revision process, **149 (71.63%)** of the 208 responses indicated “Strongly agree” while **49 (23.55%)** indicated that they “Moderately agree” that their understanding of the writing and revision process improved as a result of participating in tutoring sessions.

G. What were the department’s conclusions about student performance?

Again, these results indicate that tutors’ efforts to enhance and improve students’ writing skills and their understanding of the writing and revision process are thus far largely effective but also show some room for further growth and development.

H. What changes/improvements to the program are planned based on this assessment?

As with the results of the previous SLO assessment, Writing Room tutors will continue to be encouraged to develop their knowledge of writing conventions at the university level and expand their repertoires of writing-related resources (e.g., print and online references, etc.) for the purpose of more effectively serving the diverse needs and levels of experience of students who participate in tutoring sessions. Training sessions in the upcoming academic year may also further emphasize the pedagogical value of reflecting upon writing processes as well as effectively intervening in the writing processes of students to promote good writing habits.

SLO #4

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim

from the assessment plan.

SLO 4: Students will be able to identify and elaborate upon areas of the Writing Room's services that may be strengthened, modified, or otherwise improved upon.

B. When was this SLO last assessed? Please indicate the semester and year.

Spring 2015.

C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? Please include a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process.

Question 9 of the Writing Room student survey, administered online via Campus Labs throughout the fall and spring semesters of AY 2015-2016, was used to assess SLO 4.

D. Who was assessed? Please fully describe the student group(s) and the number of students or artifacts involved.

A total of **124** responses were given to the survey question directly pertaining to this SLO during the fall and spring semesters of AY 2015-2016. The respondents were CSU-Pueblo students, both undergraduate and graduate, who visited the Writing Room and participated in face-to-face tutorial sessions during the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters.

E. What is the expected achievement level, and how many or what proportion of students should be at it?

At least 50% of all students who take the survey will, in writing, identify and elaborate upon at least one area of the Writing Room's services that they feel can be improved in some way.

F. What were the results of the assessment?

Of the 210 total respondents, **124 (59.04%)** offered written responses concerning how to improve the Writing Room's services. Written responses varied greatly, of course, and many responses stand out as worthy of consideration. Some **66 (53.22%)** of the 124 responses state clearly that satisfaction with the Writing Room's services is high and that no changes or improvements are needed or recommended. Also, **4 (3.22%)** responses pointed out concerns with technology (computers that weren't working properly, a malfunctioning OWL submission page, etc.), and **3 (2.41%)** responses provided suggestions regarding the program's outreach, indicating the need for increased awareness of the Writing Room's presence and services. Another **3 (2.41%)** responses suggested that privacy was a concern—that is, the need to be able to discuss a piece of writing with a tutor in a way that doesn't allow for others in the area to hear the conversation.

G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?

The results indicate that students who use the Writing Room's services have, at least to some extent, considered ways to make those services more satisfactory or to address perceived problems. The suggestions about increasing the outreach efforts of the Writing Room are particularly interesting because Writing Room staff are always interested in making the program's presence better known throughout the campus. Expressed concerns about technology-related problems are of interest as well, and the suggestions regarding the need for increased privacy during tutoring sessions ought to be considered in order to enhance student satisfaction.

H. What changes/improvements to the program are planned based on this assessment?

Though the majority of responses received suggest that the Writing Room's services are largely satisfactory and in no need of improvement, Writing Room staff will attempt to address the concerns expressed by students most often—namely, concerns about outreach efforts, malfunctioning technology, and privacy during tutoring sessions. As usual, efforts to reach out to faculty across the disciplines and to advertise the Writing Room in various venues will continue throughout the next academic year. The program coordinator will continue contacting IT staff to address and possibly prevent further technology-related problems. Finally, Writing Room staff will begin considering more seriously the needs of students who prefer to work with tutors in ways that minimize privacy concerns.

SLO #5

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.

SLO 5: Students will use the Writing Room's services in increasing numbers and will also return for subsequent visits (or make use of a service at least once more) in increasing numbers.

B. When was this SLO last assessed? Please indicate the semester and year.

Spring 2015.

C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? Please include a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process.

Data gathered from AIS was used to assess SLO 5.

D. Who was assessed? Please fully describe the student group(s) and the number of students or artifacts involved.

Both CSU-Pueblo students and students attending other institutions (e.g., local high schools or community colleges) who used the Writing Room's services (face-to-face tutoring, the OWL, or simply in-room independent studying) during AY 2015-2016 (and Summer 2015, whose figures were not included in the previous assessment report) were included in the assessment of SLO 5. *Note: Figures for Summer 2016 will be included in the assessment report for AY 2016-2017.*

E. What is the expected achievement level, and how many or what proportion of students should be at it?

Data collected from the Writing Room logs in AIS Student Tracking will show that the number of returning students and the total number of individual (unduplicated) students who used the Writing Room during this academic year exceeds the corresponding numbers from the preceding academic year by any amount.

F. What were the results of the assessment?

In Fall 2015, the Writing Room served **369** unique (unduplicated) students. Of those 369, **150 (40.65%)** returned to make use of the Writing Room again at least once. In contrast, the Writing Room served **385** unique students in Fall 2014, and of those 385, **132 (34.28%)** returned for subsequent visits. Although there were slightly fewer unique students who used the Writing Room in Fall 2015, there were, notably, more students who used the Writing Room *more than once* (returning students) in Fall 2015 than in Fall 2014. Furthermore, despite the lower number of unique students, data show that there were more documented sessions that took place in the Writing Room in Fall 2015 than in Fall 2014. In Fall 2014, there were **714** sessions (documented uses of Writing Room services, including face-to-face sessions, OWL sessions, and uses of the Writing Room as a study location), but in Fall 2015, there were **792** sessions—an increase of **10.92%**.

In Spring 2016, the Writing Room served **256** unique (unduplicated) students. Of those 256, **102 (39.84%)** returned to make use of the Writing Room again at least once. In contrast, the Writing Room served **341** unique students in Spring 2015, and of those 341, **137 (40.17%)** returned for subsequent visits. Spring 2016 also saw a drop in the number of sessions that took place in the Writing Room: There were **746** sessions in Spring 2015, but only **565** sessions in Spring 2016.

With regard to Summer 2015, the Writing Room served **66** unique students, **16 (24.61%)** of whom returned for subsequent visits. There were **109** sessions that took place in the Writing Room during Summer 2015. Data gathered for the current summer (Summer 2016) will establish a comparison that will be described in the next assessment report.

G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?

The results continue to demonstrate that the Writing Room tends to serve a higher amount of unique students and sees a higher proportion of returning students during the fall semesters (in comparison to the spring semesters). Use of the Writing Room generally appears to be lower during spring semesters. Also, it is pleasing to see an increase in the number of sessions taking place in the Writing Room from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016; this figure indicates that a higher number of students are returning for additional services in greater numbers. The comparison of figures between Spring

2015 and Spring 2016, however, is less encouraging, and we wonder if the lower numbers are connected in any way to larger trends in enrollment and retention.

H. What changes/improvements to the program are planned based on this assessment?

By way of communication with faculty and visits to classrooms, efforts to conduct outreach to students in various courses across campus and to increase awareness of the services offered to students by the Writing Room will continue throughout the next academic year. Such efforts will also continue to include advertising the Writing Room via various venues, such as the “Howl” newsletter, the CSU-Pueblo E-mail Digest, the Rev89 radio station, *CSU-Pueblo Today* magazine, etc. In addition, Writing Room tutors will be further encouraged to invite students to additional tutoring sessions after students have spent time revising their work or applying suggestions offered by tutors. Discussions and training sessions will highlight the need for tutors and students to formulate workable plans or agendas for particular tutoring sessions and then to set goals for future sessions, thereby encouraging repeat visits.

PART II. Follow-up (closing the loop) on results and activities from previous assessment cycles. In this section, please describe actions taken during this cycle that were based on, or implemented to address, the results of assessment from previous cycles.

A. What SLO(s) did you address? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.

SLO 4: At least 50% of all students who take the survey will, in writing, identify and elaborate upon at least one area of the Writing Room’s services that they feel can be improved in some way.

SLO 5: Data collected from the Writing Room logs in AIS Student Tracking will show that the number of returning students and the total number of individual (unduplicated) students who used the Writing Room during this academic year exceeds the corresponding numbers from the preceding academic year by any amount.

B. When was this SLO last assessed? Please indicate the semester and year.

SLO 4 and 5: Spring 2015.

C. What were the recommendations for change from the previous assessment?

SLO 4: Revise the survey question associated with this SLO to affect the amount and quality of responses received.

SLO 5: Increase efforts to advertise the presence of the Writing Room and the services it offers throughout the campus in an attempt to increase the amount of unique (unduplicated) students and returning students who use the Writing Room’s services.

D. Were the recommendations for change acted upon? If not, why?

SLO 4: Yes. The pertinent survey question was revised to encourage survey takers to offer a written response regarding how best to improve the Writing Room’s services.

SLO 5: Yes. Efforts to further make the Writing Room and its services better known throughout the campus increased over the past academic year. Especially during the Spring 2016 semester, appropriate ads were placed in venues such as the “Howl” newsletter, the CSU-Pueblo E-mail Digest, and even the Rev89 radio station. Notably, though, the Writing Room received fewer requests for classroom visits by faculty members in Spring 2016 than it did in Fall 2015.

E. What were the results of the changes? If the changes were not effective, what are the next steps or the new recommendations?

SLO 4: The change proved effective. After the pertinent survey question was revised, more than 50% of survey takers offered a written response to the question (regarding suggestions for improving the Writing Room’s services), thereby offering Writing Room staff a much-improved idea of how students feel about the quality of services.

SLO 5: Efforts to increase the presence of the Writing Room on campus proved mostly effective for the Fall 2015 semester, but somewhat ineffective for the Spring 2016 semester. In Fall 2015, the Writing Room provided more actual sessions to students and saw a higher proportion of returning students than in Fall 2014 (although in Fall 2015, there were slightly fewer unique students who visited the Writing Room). In Spring 2016, however, there were fewer unique students than in Spring 2015, as well as slightly fewer returning students and fewer total sessions that took place. To

address the lower numbers of spring semesters, efforts to advertise the Writing Room and its services will have to be significantly increased during spring semesters—although, as mentioned previously, we wonder if lower overall spring-semester numbers are in anyway related to larger trends in university enrollment and retention.