

Sample Abstract 1: English

Accepted for presentation at the Southeastern Writing Center Association Annual Meeting, 2020.

"Why Don't They Come?: An Exploration of Adult Students' Perceptions of the Writing Center"

Students at colleges and universities across the country are encouraged to view the center as a place where any student can bring any type of writing at any stage of the writing process and receive assistance without judgment; however, despite our idealized approach to writing, some groups of students are still hesitant to make use of our services.

The NCWC writing center has seen significant growth over the last 2.5 years. That growth has been limited to our traditional undergraduate population. Nearly half of the students enrolled at the school are part of our Adult and Professional Studies (APS) program, but these non-traditional adult students account for less than 8% of our total appointments. The program administrators believe that this population is self-conscious about their writing abilities and embarrassed to work with undergraduate consultants. Very little input has been received directly from the students.

This fall, we are sending a survey to all students enrolled in the APS program to find out how best to serve them. Some of the questions we will be asking include the following:

- How confident are you in your writing abilities?
- Do you seek help with your writing? If so, where do you go for help?
- Have you ever visited the NCWC Writing Center? If so, how would you rate their services? If not, why haven't you used this service?
- What would you expect to accomplish in a Writing Center consultation?
- What type of consultant would you prefer to work with in the Center?

Our presentation will discuss the results of this survey and outline a plan for changes to the Center's rhetoric and policies that we hope will encourage more APS students to seek our assistance. With the growing number of working adults returning to higher education, the results from our study could be useful to other writing center administrators facing similar issues.

Sample Abstract 2: English

Accepted for presentation at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2021.

"What Does It Mean to Be Writing Intensive?: Building Tools for Success"

The Writing Intensive (WI) designation affixed to courses across the disciplines on many college and university campuses signals an agreement among faculty and administration that writing is a necessary skill all students should master, not just “something we do in English.” However, as Farris and Smith (1992) pointed out nearly 30 years ago, writing intensive guidelines can vary across campuses and tend to be vague. While this provides faculty with space to adapt writing assignments to their disciplines, it can also lead to inconsistent student experiences that call into question the effectiveness of the WI approach (Legette & Homeyer, 2015).

In this presentation, the Writing Program Administrator and Writing Center Director of a small liberal arts college will discuss the findings of an assessment of the WI course designation at their school. Building on previous studies of faculty attitudes (Salem & Jones, 2010), writing assignments, and assessment (Graves, Hyland, & Samuels, 2010; Oenbring and Jaquette, 2017), they will examine the differences, if any, between WI courses and other courses in the disciplines, integration of the writing process, and use of explicit instruction in field-specific genres. Additionally, they will present a heuristic and workshop series designed to provide outreach and support for faculty across the college as they plan future sections of WI courses.