



Kathleen Jones White Writing Center  
Annual Report  
Academic Year 2019-2020

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# Executive Summary

**IUP's Strategic Plan and the KJW Writing Center.** The KJW Writing Center meets the IUP Strategic plan Goal 2 (preparation for work and life) by focusing on undergraduate and graduate retention and success with tutorials, resources, workshops and training, including in writing-adjacent life skills. We also meet IUP's Strategic Plan Goal 4 (Strengthen IUP's value to local, state, and global partners) through the development and support of communicative professional competencies for all IUP students as well as interpersonal skill training for student tutors.

**Writing Center Student Usage.** In Summer 2019 - Spring 2020, the Jones White Writing Center had approximately 4848 contacts with IUP students. This included 2292 one-on-one tutorials, 1100 writing center workshop participants, 1100 College Undergraduate Success Program (CUSP) Early Entrance Experience Workshop Participants, 300 National Day on Writing Participants, and 56 Graduate Editing Service Edits.

## Major Initiatives and Accomplishments for 2019-2020

As writing and help-seeking behaviors are *high impact practices* that support *retention and time to graduation*, we have focused on offering support to the IUP campus community in a wide variety of ways in the 2019-2020 Academic Year:

- **Retention and Academically Underprepared Writers Initiative.** Aligning with IUP's overall vision and mission, the KJW Writing Center focused efforts on supporting retention of at-risk undergraduate writers. This included dedicated training to tutors on at-risk students, supporting developmental writers, referrals to other campus services, developing new workshops and resources, and reaching students through CUSP and orientation activities.
- **Collegiate Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) Training Certification Application.** Pursuing writing center certification (similar to accreditation) for our center and training (application under review).
- **Appointment Scheduling Pilot.** In January 2020, we piloted an appointment scheduling system that was used effectively in addition to our walk-in services.
- **International Student Support and Training.** We focused on supporting International student writers, both undergraduate and graduate, through workshops, training for our tutors, writing center assessment, and one-on-one tutorials.
- **Graduate Student Support and Training.** We offered a range of services for graduate writers including one-on-one tutorials, workshops for advanced writers, a Graduate Editing Service for theses and dissertations, extended appointments, and appointment scheduling. We also provided additional support for new doctoral programs at IUP and at branch campuses.
- **National Day on Writing Event.** In November 2020, we partnered with the Liberal Studies English program and the Writing Across the Curriculum program to offer a "Writing Tips Tree" as part of the National Day on Writing. Over 300 IUP students participated.
- **COVID-19 Response.** We moved all tutoring operations online as of March 23, 2020 and provided extensive support, referral, and connection for IUP students during the crisis. We also developed and provided additional resources for supporting online learning.

### Major Initiatives for 2020-2021

- **Retention Initiative.** We will continue to work to reach all at-risk writers and provide them key support to increase retention and graduation rates. See Appendix B for more details.
- **Jones White Writing Center 50th Anniversary.** The KJW Writing Center will be celebrating our 50th anniversary in Summer 2021. We intend on having a symposium event for current students, faculty, and alumni.
- **Writing Center Assessments and Needs Assessments.** We will be conducting several assessments of Writing Center services in 2020-2021 AY including our Graduate Editing Service, assessing our workshops, and tutorials and performing a needs assessment for our international student writers.
- **Expanded Workshops for Diverse Populations.** Continued development of workshops targeting international students, at-risk writers, undergraduate writers, advanced writers, and graduate student populations.
- **Graduate Writing Group Pilot.** We are piloting and assessing graduate writing groups for thesis and dissertation writers in Summer 2020 and plan to make these a regular service that we offer.
- **Appointments and Scheduling.** After a successful pilot of our appointment scheduling system in Spring 2020 we will fully integrate appointment scheduling into our operations.
- **Expanded Online Materials for Online and Distance Education.** Given the increase in distance education and online courses, particularly at the graduate level, in Summer 2020 and beyond, we will be revamping our existing materials online and developing additional online materials for our website including recorded workshops and materials.
- **Implementing CRLA Training and Certification.** Pending the success of our CRLA Certification application, we will begin the first year of our new tutor training programs. All tutors will be trained under our new program, assuring consistency, and high quality among all tutorials we offer.
- **SWCA-Care Certification.** We have submitted an intent to apply for a second accreditation for the KJW Writing Center through the Southern Writing Center Association. We will be submitting our application in Fall 2020.
- **Community Writing Center and Community Service.** Community Writing Center events will be offered to the greater Indiana Community to promote literacy, strengthen the community's ties to IUP, and offer reading and writing support to our community.
- **Undergraduate Research and Writing.** Collaboration with *The Hatchery*: Undergraduate Open Access Research Journal, offering workshops and one-on-one tutorials students looking to submit and will support the publication process of the journal.
- **Collaboration with the Department of Art for Art/Writing Events.** Pending the status of the pandemic in the fall, we are collaborating with the Department of Art to offer a once-a-semester student art exhibit and specific writing-related workshops for art students.
- **Ongoing support for COVID-19** for the campus community including online tutorials, online workshops, and online resources for student support.

Thank you for your continued support of the Kathleen Jones White Writing Center.

# IUP Strategic Plan and Writing Center Mission

The KJW Writing Center is committed to supporting the PASSHE redesign, IUP's mission, and IUP's strategic plan. This section offers our work for IUP's strategic plan and our broader mission.

## IUP Strategic Plan and Writing Center Initiatives

In the 2019-2020 academic year we have focused our efforts on supporting IUP's 2015-2020 strategic plan as follows:

**Strategic Plan Goal 2: Prepare all of IUP's students for success in work and life, in addition to academic success.** The Jones White Writing Center supports the writing and communication development of all campus writers. As writing is one of the core skills for professional competency and success, we support students' future endeavors by tutoring for long-term writing development.

- **Undergraduate success and retention.** In the 2019-2020 academic year, the KJW Writing Center continued to provide high-quality workshops and one-on-one tutoring sessions to all undergraduate writers. With additional targeted training in retention and developmental writers' needs, we have also focused on supporting the success of undergraduate students' writing-related life skills such as time management, goal setting, and handling emotions surrounding writing. Additionally, the KJW Writing Center developed new resources on these retention and student success issues during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Graduate success and support.** At the graduate level, we continue to provide high-quality one-on-one tutoring, a new workshop series, and the Graduate Editing Service. Our new graduate writer workshop series in 2019-2020 have helped support advanced writers' needs as well as writing-adjacent life skills such as scheduling and time management, collaborations, and goal setting.

### **Goal 4: Strengthen IUP's value to our local, state, and global partners.**

The KJW Writing Center supports not only college writing success but encourages the transfer of skills and knowledge beyond the writing center.

- **Writing Competency for Global Employment.** The KJW Writing Center supports the writing and communication development of all campus writers. As writing is one of the core skills for professional competency and success, we support students' future endeavors by tutoring for long-term development.
- **Communication and Interpersonal Skill training.** The KJW Writing Center provides critical job training for 30+ tutors per year. Our tutors graduate and move into local and regional positions where their communication and interpersonal skills are indispensable.

## Mission and Vision of the Jones White Writing Center

Since its establishment in 1971 by Prof. Lorrie J. Bright, known then as the Composition Clinic, the Kathleen Jones White Writing Center's mission has been to help students become better and more self-sufficient writers. The Kathleen Jones White Writing Center recognizes the critical importance of writing and literacy skills to IUP students' academic, professional, social, and personal lives. As such, we are committed to student success through offering one-on-one tutorials, whole-class workshops, writing resources, a comfortable place to write, and broader initiatives. Learning to write is a life-long process, and writers of any level can benefit from collaboration and conversation about their work. We support IUP's mission through encouraging student success and student retention, preparing students for success in work and life, and providing innovative educational programming.

Our mission is reflected in our core practices and values.

*One-on-One tutoring for all writers to support student success.* Tutoring and conversations about writing are at the heart of what we do. We offer tutorials on all kinds of writing at any stage of the process, offering feedback, support, and encouragement. We help with brainstorming topic ideas, adding in-text citations, focusing and organizing ideas, and making ideas flow smoothly. We support all student writers on campus including international and multilingual, developmental, disciplinary, graduate, and first-year.

*Supporting writers' processes and long-term learning.* We recognize that effective writing requires knowledge of rhetorical situations (audience, context, purpose, genre) as well as effective engagement with a body of disciplinary knowledge. We also recognize that additional skills such as time management, goal setting, and emotional management are critical to writers' success. We seek to provide tutoring that supports both the immediate writing assignments, but also, tutor to support writing adjacent skills, cultivate long-term writing development and the transfer of writing skills to diverse contexts.

*Access and equity for all students.* The Writing Center is dedicated to creating a welcoming space and providing support to increase educational access for all students of all disciplines, backgrounds, and abilities.

*Building writing knowledge and offering writing instruction.* The Writing Center is dedicated to offering writing workshops and other initiatives to the campus community. Our workshops are tailored to meet the needs of specific courses and disciplines. At both the undergraduate and graduate level we offer initiatives to strengthen students writing processes, knowledge, and practices.

*Research on Writing Pedagogy,* The Writing Center has a 50-year history in producing research on writing, writing pedagogy, and writing centers. We encourage our graduate and undergraduate tutors to develop, present, and publish original research to support best practices in tutoring and build our research-supported best practices. We also serve as a site for research projects, theses, and dissertations focusing on writing and one-on-one interaction. Our graduates have gone on to publish books, direct writing centers, and support writing in a variety of contexts.

*Community engagement.* As part of IUP's mission of public service, we recognize the importance of supporting community literacy locally and globally. Thus, we engage in regular

initiatives to reach our local and broader communities including offering free online resources and a local community writing center.

*Tutor Professional development and long-term success.* The Writing Center supports the ongoing professional development of tutors as part of IUP's mission to engage students as learners and leaders with strong interpersonal and communication skills.

*Evidence-based practices.* The writing center is committed to engaging in research-supported best practices for tutoring and writing instruction and the regular assessment of our practices. We train our tutors regularly based on research and also engage in regular assessment to ensure the efficacy of our practices. We are currently pursuing CRLA and the SWCA-CARE certifications for our work.

## Writing Center Usage: Tutorials

One-on-one tutoring and conversations about writing are at the heart of what we do in the KJW Writing Center. We offer tutorials on all kinds of writing at any stage of the process, offering feedback, support, and encouragement. We help with brainstorming topic ideas, adding in-text citations, focusing and organizing ideas, and making ideas flow smoothly. We support all student writers on campus including international and multilingual, developmental, disciplinary, graduate, and first-year. The following offers our yearly summary for the tutorials we conducted.

| Tutorial Category                     |   | Total for AY |         | Total for COVID-19<br>(3/16/20 thru 5/08/20) |         |
|---------------------------------------|---|--------------|---------|--|---------|
|                                       |   | #            | %       | #  | %       |
| <b>Total Tutorials</b>                |   | 2,292        | 100.00% | 282  | 100.00% |
| <b>Tutorials by College (Non-LSE)</b> | <i>Health &amp; Human Services</i>      | 519          | 22.64%  | 63   | 22.34%  |
|                                       | <i>Humanities and Social Sciences</i>   | 535          | 23.34%  | 57   | 20.21%  |
|                                       | <i>Natural Sciences and Mathematics</i> | 74           | 3.23%   | 9  | 3.19%   |
|                                       | <i>Fine Arts</i>                        | 47           | 2.05%   | 3  | 1.06%   |
|                                       | <i>Eberly College of Business</i>       | 77           | 3.36%   | 8  | 2.84%   |
|                                       | <i>Education and Communications</i>     | 372          | 16.23%  | 60   | 21.28%  |
| <b>LSE Tutorials</b>                  |   | 617          | 27.02%  | 81   | 28.72%  |
| <b>Graduate Tutorials</b>             |   | 767          | 33.46%  | 136  | 48.23%  |
| <b>Undergraduate Tutorials</b>        |   | 1,525        | 66.54%  | 146  | 51.77%  |
| <b>First Time Visitors</b>            | <i>Yes</i>                              | 591          | ---     | 75   | 26.60%  |
|                                       | <i>No</i>                               | 1,681        | ---     | 207  | 73.40%  |

\* AY (Academic Year) is Summer 2019, Fall 2019, and Spring 2020.

\* First Time Visitor data was not collected until Summer 2019 had already begun.

### Turnaways

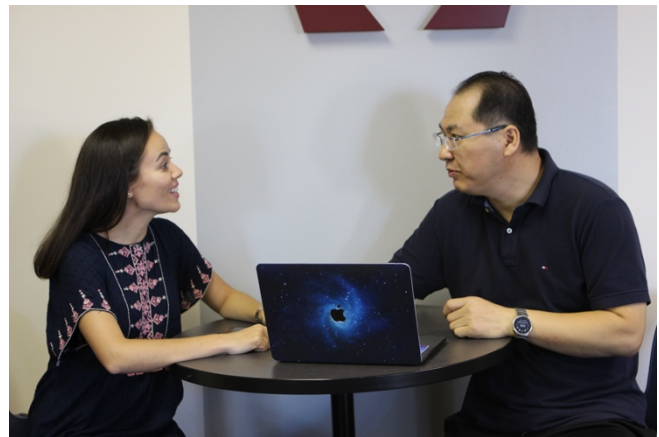
Faculty demand for online tutorials has regularly exceeded our capacity pre COVID-19. For example, in October 2019, Dr. Merlo requested online tutorials for all students in CRIM 601. We were unable to meet 50% of this demand due to the limited online tutorials we were able to



offer. During the Fall 2019 semester we had approximately 75 students come to the writing center who were not able to work with a tutor due to wait time; this has been a common problem at the KJW Writing Center. Thus, in Spring 2020, we piloted our online scheduling program which has allowed us to meet tutoring demand.

### **Feedback on KJW Writing Center Tutorials**

We engage in ongoing assessment of our tutorials with students. This includes collecting post-session feedback on all of our sessions (as well as regular professional development and observations of our tutors). Here is some of the feedback we received this year from students about our tutorials:



*Image 1: Tutoring at the KJW Writing Center*

- “Amazing! My tutor was very patient with me and helped me understand what I needed to do for my paper.”
- “First time at the writing center and I’ll for sure be back!! Jacie is the best!!!”
- “My tutor was extremely helpful and helped me understand what mistakes I made and how to correct them in the future.”
- “Amber was very helpful and taught me how to create a reference page in APA format. I will definitely return to the Writing Center in the future if I need any additional assistance.”
- “I found this session very helpful in the sense of strengthening my abilities as a writer.”
- “Coming to the Writing center was very helpful. I got very helpful feedback on how to structure my paper and advice on how to end my paper.”
- “My tutor was great. She was very kind and provided a lot of feedback without altering the idea I wanted to get across in my paper.”
- “The center is real helpful, it opened up my eyes on the things that I need to be careful with while writing my papers. The instructor was real friendly and resourceful.”
- “Very helpful, felt great working on the paper with someone. Truly enjoyed his feedback and feel as though I am on the right track.”
- “My experience was exceptional. I will definitely come again!”

## **Writing Center Usage: Workshops**

The KWJ Writing Center provides tutor-led or director-led writing workshops for courses at IUP based on specific requests from the faculty. These workshops reach a broad population of students at IUP and serve to support faculty’s writing-related instruction. Workshops can be offered for any course, discipline, or level (first-year writer, undergraduate, masters, Ph.D.). Some of the current workshops offered are: APA, MLA, How to Communicate Effectively with Professors, Transitions, An Introduction to the Writing Center, Cover Letters, Resume Writing, etc. We offer information on specific workshops developed this year in later sections of this report (International Students, Graduate Students, and At-Risk Writers). This year, we saw a

considerable upsurge in the number of workshops being requested by faculty in new graduate programs as well as new requests for advanced undergraduate writing workshops.

During the 2019-2020 AY the KJW Writing Center conducted 55 full class workshops which reached approximately 1,100 IUP students.

- Summer 2019 - 1 workshop
- Fall 2019 - 35 workshops
- Spring 2020 - 19 workshops, including one workshop conducted virtually during COVID-19

Students who attended these workshops provided overwhelmingly positive feedback. Some comments students provided are listed below.

- “Very well presented and it was a great refresher about how to cite in MLA. Thank you!”
- “I didn’t know much about the writing center before this workshop. I’m glad I know [sic] have this information and I will definitely come back.”
- “It made the writing center less intimidating which was nice.”
- “It was very informative and will definitely be helping in my further writings.”

The KJW Writing Center computer lab is also available for professors to use without having a workshop. This allows their students to become familiar with the writing center and have easy access to its resources while the professor is still able to conduct a regular class. During the 19/20 AY the writing center hosted 30 classes for No Workshops which served approximately 600 students.

- Summer 2019 - 4
- Fall 2019 - 21
- Spring 2020 - 5

**Workshop Development in AY 2019-2020:** The KJW Writing Center developed a large number of custom workshops for specific populations within the IUP community. These included

- American Academic Conventions for International Writers (Undergraduate, Graduate)
- Introduction to the Writing Center for Business Majors (Undergraduate, At-Risk Students)
- Writing a Successful Literature Review for Geography and Regional Planning (Advanced Undergraduate)
- Peer Review Practices and Editing Your Own Work for Geography and Regional Planning (Advanced Undergraduate)
- Completing Your Dissertation Successfully (Graduate)
- Common Writing Challenges for Graduate Students (Graduate)



*Image 2: Workshops at the KJW Writing Center*

- Introduction to the Writing Center and Graduate Editing Service (Graduate)
- Writing Your Literature Review Successfully for Counselor Education and Supervision PhD students (Graduate)
- Introduction to Literature Reviews in the Social Sciences (Graduate, Psychology MA and PhD students)
- Common Writing Challenges and Introduction to the Writing Center for Safety Science PhD students (Graduate)

## Summary of 2019-2020 Writing Center Initiatives and Accomplishments

The following is a list of the KJW Writing Center's Accomplishments from June 2019 - May 2020. Accomplishments for specific demographic groups (at-risk writers, international writers, and graduate writers) are listed in more detail under each of those sections.

### Retention Initiative

Aligning with IUP's overall vision and mission, the KJW Writing Center began a retention training and outreach initiative to provide dedicated training to tutors on at-risk students, supporting developmental writers, referrals to other campus services, and developing new workshops and resources. Please see "Academically Underprepared Writer and Retention Initiatives" on page 14 for more information.

### Collegiate Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) Training Certification Application

Accreditation and evidence-based practices form an important part of the work we do in the KJW Writing Center. In September 2019 - December 2019, we prepared and submitted an application to the Collegiate Reading and Learning Association to be certified through the CRLA Tutor Certification program. This program, the equivalent of a writing center accreditation, recognizes excellence in tutoring centers. The application, which comprised over 100 pages of documents and materials, is currently under review and we should have a response in late Summer 2020.

### Appointment Scheduling Pilot

Prior to January 2020, the KJW operated on a walk-in only basis in our two physical locations: Eicher Hall and the Library Satellite. This led to long wait times and student frustration at peak times during the semester and complaints from international and graduate students who wanted to work with specific tutors. Thus, in Fall 2019, we researched options for software for scheduling. In January 2020, we piloted appointments at our Eicher location with a writing center specific piece of software called WCOOnline. This software proved invaluable during the advent of the COVID-19 crisis, allowing us to quickly shift our operations fully online. With the

successful pilot in Spring 2020, scheduling will be a regular part of Writing Center operations moving forward.

## International Student Support and Training

We are continuing our emphasis on supporting International student writers, both undergraduate and graduate. See “International Student Initiatives” on page 16 for more details.

## Graduate Student Support and Training

We are developing a number of new initiatives for graduate writers in 2019 and beyond. Please see “Graduate Student Initiatives” on page 18 for more details.

## National Day on Writing Event

In collaboration with the Liberal Studies English and Writing Across the Curriculum program, we developed a “Writing Tips Tree” to celebrate the National Day on Writing in October 2019. Over 300 students, faculty, and staff visited and added a writing tip to our tree and over 30 campus community members came to our tips tree viewing party, hosted in the KJW Writing Center. Our tree was well-publicized on social media and shared nationally through the National Council of Teachers of English.



*Image 3: Writing Tips Tree at the KJW Writing Center for the National Day on Writing*

## 2020-2021 Writing Center Initiatives and Events

The following are initiatives and events that we are planning for the 2020-2021 Academic year. Our main focus in the coming year is to continue to strengthen our services and continued initiatives and to develop more extensive campus partners. Details about these plans can be found under key sections of this report as noted.

### Expanded Presence at Fall Orientation

The KJW Writing Center has continued to offer 50+ workshops for the College Undergraduate Success Program (CUSP) Early Entrance Experience. In addition to these workshops, the KJW Writing Center is planning a new presence at the new fall “Welcome Week” event.

## Jones White Writing Center 50th Anniversary

The KJW Writing Center will be celebrating our 50th anniversary in Summer 2021. We intend on having an event for current students, faculty, and alumni that will feature a symposium of alumni scholars presenting on the impact of the IUP writing center and looking towards the next 50 years. We are partnering with the IUP Libraries to create a 50th-anniversary archive as well as Alumni Relations to plan our event.

## Appointments and Scheduling

After a successful pilot of our appointment scheduling system in Spring 2020 (and its usefulness for shifting online for the 2nd half of the spring term), we will fully integrate WOnline into all operations.

## Expanded Online Materials

Given the increase in distance education and online courses, particularly at the graduate level, in Summer 2020 and beyond, we will be revamping our existing materials online and developing additional online materials for our website including recorded workshops and materials.

## Implementing CRLA Training and Certification

Pending the success of our CRLA Certification application, we will begin the first year of our new tutor training programs. All tutors will be trained under our new program, assuring consistency, and high quality among all tutorials we offer.

## SWCA-Care Certification

We have submitted an intent to apply for a second accreditation for the KJW Writing Center through the Southern Writing Center Association. We will be submitting our application in Fall 2020.

## Community Writing Center and Community Service

Due to COVID-19, we were unable to offer our planned inaugural Community Writing Center Event in April 2020, a free tutoring event staffed by writing center volunteers for the Indiana community. Post-pandemic, we will reschedule our event at the Indiana Free Library. It is our long-term goal to host at least once-a-semester Community Writing Center events to the greater Indiana Community to promote literacy, strengthen the community's ties to IUP, and offer reading and writing support to our community.

## Collaboration with *The Hatchery*: Undergraduate Open Access Research Journal



Image 4: *Hatchery Journal Logo*

In the 2020-2021 year, the KJW Writing Center will partner with *The Hatchery*, a new undergraduate research journal at IUP (<https://www.iup.edu/library/the-hatchery/>). The KJW Writing Center will be offering workshops and one-on-one tutorials for students looking to submit to the journal and will support the publication process of the journal.

## Collaboration with the Department of Art for Art/Writing Events

Pending the status of the pandemic in the fall, we are collaborating with the Department of Art to offer a once-a-semester student art exhibit in the Writing Center on themes related to writing, collaboration, and literacy. This collaboration will also include developing writing-specific workshops for the art students on campus.

## Academically Underprepared Writer and Retention Initiatives

At IUP's Kathleen Jones White Writing Center, we conduct thousands of tutorials a year for students of all majors and levels. These tutorials not only help writers, but also **retain students** and **contribute to student success**. Nationally, writing center visits lead to higher retention and graduation rates. On average nationally, a student who visits a writing center is *2-7% more likely to be retained into their second year and achieve a 5-9% higher graduation rate* in 4-6 years. For more research on writing centers and retention, please see Appendix B.

### Tutorials and Training for Retention and At-Risk Writers

- **Tutorials.** One-on-one tutorials support a wide range of at-risk writers at IUP. Our one-on-one tutoring allows for students to get dedicated support, ask questions, and work with peers who can be role models of successful student practices.
- **Hours, locations, and scheduling.** To address the needs of a diverse student population, we offer online, evening, and weekend hours, and, starting in Spring 2020, the ability to schedule appointments in advance.
- **Training in tutoring for retention.** Our Fall 2019 training focused in part on students success and retention. This training included: statistics and information on IUP's undergraduate population, discussion of key aspects of retention (including a sense of

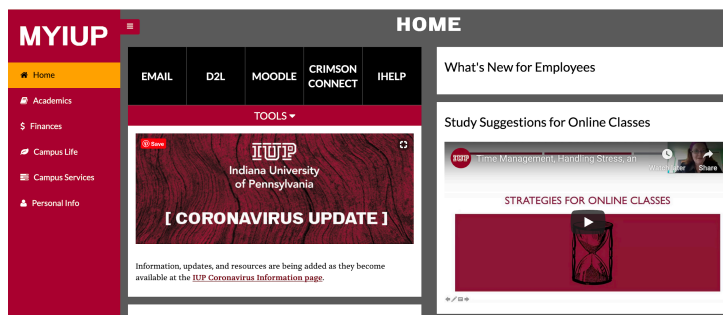


belonging) and how to address belonging in tutorials, tutoring various study skills, modeling successful behaviors, and using metacognitive tutoring strategies.

- **Training in tutoring at-risk students.** Our Fall 2019 training also included material on at-risk populations and how to best meet students' needs: minority students, differently abled students, multilingual students, and non-traditional students.

## Resources, Handouts, and Workshops for At-Risk Writers

- **Workshops.** Many of our undergraduate workshops were designed to assist students with a successful transition to IUP, including our popular “Welcome to the Writing Center” workshop. This workshop introduces students not only to the Writing Center and services, but also provides key writing-related study skills and material.
- **Additional resources and help sheets.** We developed several new resources this year based on self-reported student needs in our tutorials including materials on study habits and time management. Many of our existing resources in the Writing Center are designed with retention and student success in mind.
- **COVID-19 Study Skills.** A video was created addressing study skills during COVID-19 for struggling students. See “COVID-19 Response” on page 24.



*Image 5: Writing Center's Study Suggestions Resource featured on the MyIUP Homepage during COVID-19 Crisis*

## Orientations and New Student Outreach

- **CUSP Early Entrance Experience.** The Jones White Writing Center offers engaging, writing focused workshops as part of the CUSP Early Entrance Experience program. These workshops, offered by a peer tutor, introduce students to college-level writing, share strategies that can help students achieve academic success, and connect new students with an experienced college student role model. Last year, we offered 50 workshops to approximately 1,100 students.
- **Liberal Studies English Orientation.** Dr. Driscoll offered a workshop and information on Writing Center services at the Fall 2020 LSE orientation to LSE faculty (full time, temporary, and TA). Dr. Driscoll gave a presentation on “Teaching for Retention” that included information on how to support at-risk writers, create a sense of belonging, and refer students to other campus services.
- **New Faculty Orientation.** In collaboration with the Writing Across the Curriculum initiative, the Writing Center Director offered a workshop to new faculty that introduced our services, WAC services, and offered best suggestions to help underprepared writers on IUP's campus including best writing practices, pedagogy, and tutoring referrals.

## Retention and Underprepared Writer Initiatives for 2020-2021

- **Welcome Week.** This upcoming academic year, we are exploring collaborations with other retention-focused programs, offering key workshops, and continuing to reach the most at-risk writers on campus through campus partnerships.
- **Seeking campus partnerships.** In the 2020-2021 year, we will continue to seek campus partnerships to support our at-risk and diverse writers on campus through joint programming and tutorial support.
- **Continued retention training.** Retention-based tutor education will be a regular part of our tutor training for new tutors and part of our conversations with our experienced tutoring staff. We will continue to develop new resources to support our tutors as they work one-on-one with IUP's writers.
- **Implementation of CRLA-Certified Tutoring** which places an emphasis on tutoring at-risk and diverse writers, working to support students of every level, and understanding how help-seeking behaviors like writing center tutorials and support can support retention and time to graduation.

## International Student Initiatives

International students represent a core constituency of writing center users, particularly repeat users. The KJW Writing Center has a long-established specialization in working with international students, supporting multilingual writers, and leading the field in developing research-focused practices for international students.

### Training and Assessment for Working with International Student Writers

- Offered four hours of training to our staff that emphasized the unique needs of International Students, including COVID-19 specific training for international students. This included training on: multilingual writer needs at the sentence, content, and organizational levels; engaging in respectful communication, cultural ambassadorship, common writing challenges for multilingual writers, and meeting international graduate students' needs.
- Designed and secured IRB approval for a needs assessment survey for international students to develop additional training and programming (originally scheduled to be sent out in Spring 2020, but delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic until Fall 2020)
- Continued hiring of multilingual and international student tutors (graduate and undergraduate) to ensure a linguistically and culturally diverse tutoring staff and to make the writing center a welcome place for diverse individuals

### Tutorials and Workshops for International Student Writers

- In Fall 2019, we developed and offered a new workshop targeted towards international graduate writers, "Avoiding Plagiarism for Graduate Writers"



- At the request of many international graduate students who wanted to work with the same tutor over time, we developed and piloted a new scheduling system in Spring 2020 so international students can make appointments and get consistent support without long wait times during peak hours
- Expanded the materials library for tutors on working with multilingual writers that includes additional online training modules and readings in our Tutor D2L site
- Continued to offer one-on-one tutoring to all international students through our online and in-person tutorials, including during the COVID-19 pandemic (without a gap in our services)
- Continued to offer graduate editing support for dissertation and thesis writers; approximately 50% of the writers who use this service are international

## 2020-2021 International Student Initiatives

- **Needs assessment survey.** Send out International Student Needs assessment survey in Fall 2020; from this survey we will be developing a new set of tailored experiences, workshops, and tutoring for international students
- **New Workshops.** Development of at least one International student focused workshop per term. The Fall 2020 workshop will focus on adapting to American Academic conventions for international students and the spring workshop topic will come out of our Fall needs assessment.
- **Assessment of GES for international students.** Assessing the efficacy of the Graduate Editing Service for international students (Fall 2020).
- **Scheduling and messaging.** Continue to refine scheduling and messaging about scheduling appointments to serve international student needs
- **Continued training to support international writers.** As described in this report (page 16), the Writing Center is seeking certification for our training program (under review as of Spring, 2020). Our new training program has expanded training modules and opportunities to have tutors learn how to support international writers.
- **Graduate International Students.** We also note that all of the initiatives “Graduate student initiatives” in the next section apply to international graduate students (which is our largest constituency of international students using the KJW Writing Center at present).

We thank the Office of International Education for their ongoing support for writing center tutorials and workshops.

# Graduate Student Initiatives

We recognize the critical challenges that graduate student writers face, transitioning to graduate-level writing, entering the conversation in an academic field, and writing a thesis or dissertation. We also recognize that IUP has a number of new doctoral programs that will have new students eager for writing support. In 2019-2020, we began a series of initiatives to increase our services to graduate-level writers through targeted workshops and activities. These are in part a response to the growing number of graduate and professional programs at IUP as increased requests for graduate-specific support. The following are initiatives for graduate students for the Fall 2019-Spring 2020 terms.



*Image 6: Graduate Students at the KJW Writing Center*

## Tutorials and Workshops for Graduate Writers

- **Graduate tutorials, appointment length, and scheduling.** Because of the requests of many international graduate students for the ability to schedule appointments in Fall 2019, we piloted a scheduling system in Spring 2020 that allowed graduate students to have the opportunity to schedule back-to-back tutorials for longer documents and work with specific graduate tutors over a period of time. Scheduled tutorials will be a regular part of our operations moving forward.
- **Graduate Tutors.** We continue to hire and train graduate student tutors to work with our graduate student population.
- **Graduate writing workshops.** In Fall 2019 and Spring 2020, we piloted graduate student-focused workshops, available in person and via Zoom (in Fall 2019) and completely online based on graduate student feedback in Spring 2020).
- These workshops were all new for 2019 and 2020 and included:
  - **Completing Your Dissertation Successfully.** New workshop for 2019-2020. Research supported practices to support dissertation writing including time management, goal setting, revision, managing feedback, and more
  - **Plagiarism for graduate writers.** Offered previously by the Graduate School, once a semester for graduate-level writers.
  - **Top Challenges for Graduate Writers.** Overview of writing center services and discussion of writing challenges and how to overcome them. New workshop for 2019-2020.
  - **Writing Your Literature Review in the Social Sciences.** New workshop for 2019-2020.

- **Specific doctoral program workshop support.** Starting in Summer 2020, we have been getting requests for advanced graduate-level workshops for doctoral classes, especially from newer Ph.D. programs at IUP.
  - Thus, this year we have expanded our partnerships with multiple graduate programs to offer workshops for the following programs: Safety Science (Ph.D.), Counselor Education and Supervision (Ph.D.), Psychology (M.A. and Ph.D.), Business: Accounting (Ph.D.), Administration and leadership studies (Ph.D., Ed.D.).

## Graduate Editing Service

The KJW Writing Center, in partnership with the School of Graduate Studies and Research, offers free editing of theses, dissertations, and proposals through the Graduate Editing Service (GES). This critical service provides graduate students with needed editorial support at the dissertation completion stage. It represents a value-added aspect to any graduate degree, worth approximately \$750 per student, and is a very unique offering among writing centers. Graduate students submit their documents online and receive an edited copy in 4-7 days. The GES has edited over 150 theses and dissertations since its inception. Graduate editors receive extensive initial training and regular ongoing feedback on their editing from the KJW Director. The GES is currently undergoing an assessment (IRB approval Spring 2020, to conclude in Spring 2021).

During AY 19/20 the Graduate Editing Service edited 59 dissertations and theses. Each edit takes approximately 5-8 hours of editor time and includes an iThenticate report in addition to the edits made by the editor. The GES has operated at full capacity throughout AY 2019-2020 and has demand beyond what we can offer. This year, five students have been turned away from the GES due to budget constraints in the Spring 2020 term. These students were provided with information for hiring a private editor as well as given information for working with graduate tutors at the KJW Writing Center.

## Graduate Student Initiatives for 2020-2021

We will continue to develop additional resources and workshops for graduate writers in the 2020-2021 year. These initiatives include:

- **Starting to develop a video library** of our existing workshops and resources that can be viewed remotely by students, embedded into courses by faculty, and shared with the broader community. We intend on releasing at least 2-3 new videos per term.
- **Graduate writing groups** offer support for small groups of dissertation and thesis writers. These groups will be led by advanced doctoral graduate student tutors who are trained in graduate writing support. Dissertation writing groups will run for a period of six weeks and offer goal setting, check-ins, and instruction. We are piloting and assessing eight graduate groups in Summer 2020.
- **Ongoing strategic hiring and training.** We continue to strategically hire graduate students from a range of disciplines and train all tutors in how to effectively support graduate student writers.

- **Additional graduate-level workshops** on a variety of topics for graduate-level writers.
- **Ongoing collaboration** with graduate programs for thesis and dissertation support, writing literature reviews, and more.
- **Assessment of the Graduate Editing Service and Pilot Graduate Writing Groups** to improve our services in these areas.
- **Research** on best practices for tutoring and supporting graduate-level writers.

We thank the Graduate School for their ongoing funding of graduate student support.

## Tutor Education and Staff Training

The success of our tutorials, workshops, and other services depend in large part on the training provided to tutors. While tutors hired at the KJW Writing Center are all knowledgeable in writing and ready to support writers, tutors need the training to learn how to effectively work one-on-one, navigate a wide variety of genres and student needs, and develop key tutoring competencies. At the KJW Writing Center, we recognize the importance of aligning with IUP's strategic mission, offering tutors evidence-based tutoring pedagogy and practices, and offering lifelong learning opportunities for our tutors so that they can take their writing center experience beyond college.

The following describes this year's tutor education procedures:

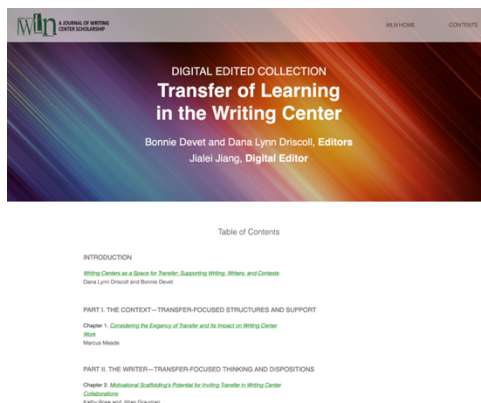
- **Piloted training for certification.** Piloted most aspects of our upcoming certified training program (submitted for Collegiate Learning and Reading Association Accreditation in December 2019).
- **Fall and spring staff meetings.** We hold two four-hour staff training sessions at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters. Meetings include workshops and presentations by the director, assistant director, and experienced tutors on a variety of topics and offer collaborative activities for tutors to improve their skills.
- **Monthly Staff Meetings.** In Fall, 2019, our lead tutors met once a month to cover topics to share with their tutoring groups. In Spring 2020, we converted these to all staff meetings once a month. During the COVID-19 Crisis, we met every two weeks for additional training.
- **New Tutors: Training, individual mentoring, and observation.** In 2019-2020, new tutors had 2 hours of extra training at our Fall staff meeting and also were required to complete a set of training modules and exercises on D2L that take approximately 8-10 hours to complete. All new tutors meet regularly with their lead tutor as well as the director/assistant director and also undergo observation of their tutoring practice in the first semester of tutoring.
- **Training Topics for 2019-2020:**
  - **Core tutoring and writing practices:** Tutoring for retention, interpersonal communication and listening skills, questioning and paraphrasing, rhetorical situation, genre theory, audience awareness, APA 7th edition, supporting learning development

- **Tutoring key student groups: graduate students, international students, at-risk writers, first year and developmental writers.** We provide specific and ongoing training to address the needs of specific writers that come into the Writing Center.
- **Online tutoring pedagogy:** Training included building rapport, commenting and feedback suggestions, referral services for COVID-19, online pedagogy, online workshop facilitation
- **Tutor projects.** Most tutors are assigned specific projects to work on during the course of the semester that help improve their knowledge of writing and that support the ongoing efforts of the writing center. These projects include: updating workshops, doing research on varied topics, recording videos, keeping up with our social media presence, assisting with National Day on Writing events, and more.
- **COVID-19 Additional training** is covered under the COVID-19 section of this report.

## Staffing at the KJW Writing Center

*Staffing.* The writing center has a director (Dr. Dana Driscoll, Professor of English), a Secretary (Ms. Melissa Lutz), and an Assistant Director (a Graduate Student in the Composition and Applied Linguistics Ph.D. program, in Fall 2019 this was Karen Rheardon and in Spring 2020 this was Jing Zhang). In 2019-2020, we had five lead tutors (Jared, Nick, Maddie, Jacie, and Larry) who provided support to our tutoring staff, and an additional sixteen student tutors (within varied programs: undergrad, masters, and Ph.D.). We also had four volunteer tutors in Fall 2019 and nine volunteer tutors in Spring 2020.

## Research in the KJW Writing Center



*Image 7: Edited Collection on Transfer of Learning in the Writing Center*

The KJW Writing Center has a longstanding international reputation as being a leader in research-supported best practices for writing center work. The KJW Writing Center focuses not only on engaging in evidence-supported best practices but also being a leader in publishing and presenting and publishing on best practices in writing centers and composition studies. The following is a summary of this year's awards, presentations, and publications on tutoring practices and/or the core constituent groups served by the KJW Writing Center.

The following list presents the research presentations, articles, awards, and keynotes from our Director and tutoring staff. The KJW Writing Center had a strong presence at this year's International Writing Center Association conference in Pittsburgh, PA in October 2019.

Donations to the KJW Writing Center Professional Development fund and the Jones White Endowment help support conference travel and fund research projects in the center.

### **Awards and Honors**

Dr. Dana Driscoll, KJW Writing Center Director, was honored with the 2020 University Senate Distinguished Faculty Award for Research. This acknowledgement included for her research on writing centers and long-term writing development as well as her offering multiple keynote addresses globally on writing center practices.

### **Keynote Address**

Driscoll, D. L. (19 February 2020, Keynote Speaker). Come here and you will grow: Supporting Writing Development and Long-Term learning in Writing Centers. Keynote Speaker. Southeastern Writing Center Association, Birmingham, AL.

### **Edited Collections**

Devet, B. and Driscoll, D. L. (2020). Transfer of Learning in the Writing Center (digital edited collection). Open access publication, published February 2020 by WLN Digital Collections. <https://wlnjournal.org/digitaleditedcollection2/index.html>

### **Research on Writing Center Practices**

Cui, W. (2019). Review of Writing Program and Writing Center Collaborations. *Praxis*, 16(3), 48-50.

Cui, W. A (2020) Multilingual Writing Tutor Constructs Identities in Tutoring Sessions. *The Peer Review*, 3(2). <http://thepeerreview-iwca.org/issues/issue-3-2/>

Sarraf, K.S. (2019). Training tutors to respond: The potential violence of addressing sexual violence disclosures in the writing center. In S. Gage & K. Fleckenstein (Eds). *Violence in the Work of Composition*. Logan, UT: Utah State University Press.

Zhang, J. (2019). Innovating English literacy instruction: A Chinese writing center model. In B. Reynolds & M. Teng (Eds.), *English literacy instruction for Chinese speakers* (pp. 229-243). London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Zhang, J., Zorluel Ozer, H., & Bayazeed, B. (2020). Grammarly vs. Face-to-face Tutoring at the Writing Center: ESL Student Writers' Perceptions. *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal*.

### **Research on Graduate Writers**

Driscoll, D. L. & Powell, R. (Forthcoming, 2020). How mindsets shape response and learning transfer: A case of two graduate writers. *Journal of Response to Writing*.

Driscoll, D. L., Leigh, R. S. & Zamin, N. (2020) "Self Care as Ethical Professionalization: A Case of Doctoral Education in Composition Studies." *College Composition and Communication (CCC)*, Vol 71(3) 453-480.

### **Research on International Student Writers**

Cui, W. (2019). Teaching for Transfer to First-year L2 Writers. *Journal of International Students*, 9(4). <https://doi.org/10.32674/jis.v9i4.755>

Cui, W. (2019). L2 Writers Negotiate Identity through Academic Writing Socialization. *The Journal of English as an International Language*, 14(1), 20-39.



### Presentations on Writing Centers

- Driscoll, D. L. & Cui, W. (2019 17 Oct). Visible and Invisible Transfer: Using Longitudinal Transfer Research to Support Tutoring Practices. International Writing Center Association. Columbus, OH.
- Sarraf, K.S. (2019, October). Freedom to debate: Encouraging dissent to maximize writers' creative thinking. Workshop presented at the meeting of the International Writing Centers Association and National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, Columbus, OH.
- Williams-Monardes, C. (2019, October). "The neurodiverse artist: Confronting neurotypical ableism in the writing center." International Writing Centers Association. Columbus, OH.
- Zorluel Ozer, H., & Zhang, J. (2019, October). "Grammarly vs. Face-to-face Tutoring at the Writing Center: ESL Student Writers' Perceptions." NCPTW-IWCA Conference, Columbus, OH, USA.
- Zhang, J. (2019, June). "Shuttling between Writer Centers: Critical Reflections of a Transnational Multilingual Writer Center Practitioner." International Symposium of English Writing Center in Chinese Universities 2019, Hangzhou, Zhejiang, China.

## Honoring the Legacy of Dr. Ben Rafoth



In his 32-year career at IUP, Dr. Ben Rafoth has made numerous contributions to the Kathleen Jones White Writing Center at IUP and to the international writing center community. Ben was a leader and co-chair for three International Writing Centers Association (IWCA) Summer Institutes; he served on the IWCA's executive board for six years. Ben has given keynote addresses for national and international conferences, including the IWCA-NCPTW conference in Pittsburgh in 2015 and the Latin-American Association of Writing Centers and Programs in 2019. He has been a mentor to many in his field and has consulted for writing centers at universities in Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the U.S. Ben chaired the first joint conference of the IWCA and the National Conference on Peer Tutoring in Writing, held in Hershey, Pennsylvania. He is a recipient of the prestigious Ron Maxwell Award for his contributions to peer tutoring. He has published numerous journal articles and

five books, including *Multilingual Writers and Writing Centers*; *Tutoring Second Language Writers*; *A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One*; *The Social Construction of Written Communication*; and *ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors*, which won the IWCA's annual Book Award. As a faculty member in the Composition and Applied Linguistics graduate program, Ben directed over thirty doctoral students' dissertations on tutoring, writing centers, and writing studies. In 2010, Ben was named IUP's Distinguished University Professor, a lifetime title and the highest award for faculty at IUP.

# COVID-19 Pandemic Response and Online Instruction

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as of March 23, all Writing Center operations moved fully online and will remain online for Summer 2020. The KJW Writing Center provided stability and support during this challenging time to all students on campus.

## Tutorials and Connectivity

To address issues of connectivity and internet access, we transitioned to offering two kinds of 45 minute tutorials.

- **Online tutorials** are synchronous online sessions via Zoom or WCOOnline, that function similar to the online tutorials the Writing Center has offered for a number of years. These were recommended for most students.
- **eTutoring** are asynchronous online sessions for those who have limited internet connections. eTutoring sessions allow students to submit their work for commentary from a peer tutor, and these can be accessed without a high speed internet connection.

## Workshops and Groups to Support Distance Education

We did not host our regular Wednesday Workshops for the second half of the Spring 2020 semester, so we could instead turn our attention towards developing COVID-19 related resources. These workshops included:

- **Graduate Workshops.** A recorded “Writing Your Literature Review” workshop that has been shared with four different graduate level courses in Spring 2020. This workshop at the end of the Spring 2020 term has 78 views.
- **Online Student Success Workshop:** As we transitioned to online tutoring for the second half of the Spring 2020 term, tutors reported that students were struggling with the transition to online learning. Thus, we developed a 12-minute video workshop that could be embedded into faculty’s courses and that offered students information for online class success including time management, writing strategies, goal setting, and more. Our resource was featured on the MY IUP homepage and, as of the end of the Spring 2020 term, has had 247 views.
- **Graduate Writing Groups.** Due to the needs expressed by graduate students in our tutorials, we are piloting 8 graduate writing groups to support dissertation writers at a distance (see more in Graduate Student Initiatives).

## Graduate Editing Service

The **Graduate Editing Service** continued to operate at full capacity during the Spring 2020 term.



## Staff Training for COVID-19

We engaged in ongoing staff training for online tutoring pedagogy, online writing support, and supporting students with resources and referrals to other campus services. Our staff met every other week to engage in additional training, share experiences, and provide feedback to student needs.

## Broader Writing Center Leadership During the Crisis

The IUP Writing Center has provided support to other Writing Center Professionals during the ongoing crisis.

- Dr. Driscoll led a workshop on “Self Care for Writing Center Professionals” on April 7, 2020 for the International Writing Center Association. It was attended by 38 writing center personnel from all around the world.
- Dr. Driscoll has shared training resources for staff developed for our tutors with 13 different writing centers of the writing center community to help them transition to online spaces.
- Dr. Driscoll is engaged in ongoing conversations with writing center professionals globally to map out potential scenarios and resources for Fall 2020 for best practices in writing centers.

# Appendix A: Wednesday Workshops and Dates

## Fall 2019 Workshops

September 11th, 2019 – Writing your Resume (all levels, in person)

September 18th, 2019 - Writing your Cover Letter (all levels, in person)

September 25th, 2019 - Introduction to APA Formatting (all levels, in person)

October 2nd, 2019 - Introduction to MLA Formatting (all levels, in person)

October 9, 2019 – Microsoft Word: Beyond the Basics (all levels, in person)

October 16 – Avoiding Plagiarism for Graduate Writers (graduate, online and in person)

October 23 – Introduction to MLA Formatting (all levels, in person)

October 30 – Introduction to APA Formatting (all levels, in person)

November 6 – How to Complete Your Thesis or Dissertation Successfully (graduate, online and in person)

November 13 – Proofreading Your Writing (all levels, in person)

## Spring 2020 Workshops

February 5th - Proofreading Your Writing (all levels, in person)

February 12th – Writing a Literature Review in the Social Sciences (Advanced Undergraduate and Graduate) (Zoom)

February 19th - Introduction to APA 7th Edition (Undergraduate and Graduate)

February 26th - Avoiding Plagiarism for Graduate Writers (Zoom)

March 3rd – Introduction to MLA formatting (all levels, in person)

\*All remaining Wednesday Workshops were cancelled due to the COVID-19 Outbreak for the Spring 2020 term.\*

# Appendix B: Research on Retention in Writing Centers

**Nationally, writing center visits lead to higher retention and graduation rates.** On average, a student who visits a writing center is 2-7% more likely to be retained into their second year and achieve a 5-9% higher graduation rate in 4-6 years.

- Purdue university found that there was a 5% difference in retention in their first-year cohort for those that visited the Writing Center vs. those that did not .
- Undeclared students who received tutoring were 2.75 times more likely retained than those that were not tutored at a medium sized Pennsylvania PASSHE university (Reinheimer & McKenzie, 2011)
- UC Boulder found that freshmen who visited the writing center had higher retention rates (2-3%) and a 5% higher rate for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> year graduation rates (Sailor, 2016)
- Bell and Frost found that graduation rates were 5% higher for developmental writers who frequently visited their writing center than those who did not (Bell and Frost, 2012)
- Student retention expert Tinto's (2012) notes, "Nothing is more important to student retention than academic support, especially during the critical first year of college, when student retention is still very responsive to institutional intervention" (25).

**Writing Center Visits support Diverse and Underprepared writers.** Writing center visits can considerably support academically underprepared and diverse students. Salem's (2016) research explored that students who are "most likely" to use the writing center are linguistically diverse, non-white, and women. This research bears out in our own writing center data.

**Writing Center visits support student learning.** Specifically, writing center visits are tied to:

- Higher grades and better course performance (Sailor, 2016)
- Increased self-efficacy (Williams and Takaku, 2011)
- Reduction of procrastination (Fritzsche, Young, & Hickson, 2003).
- Intellectual, social, and emotional development (Tinto, 2012)

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