

**Texas A&M International University  
Annual Institutional Effectiveness Review (AIER)  
for Administrative or Educational Support Units**

**Unit Name:**

**Writing Center**

**Unit Type:**

**Administrative Unit**

**Educational Support Unit**

**Assessment Period Covered:**

**January 01, 2008-December 31, 2008**

**Unit Coordinator (Preparer of Report):**

**Kimberly Thomas**

**List Other Report Contributors (if applicable):**

Destine Holmgreen, Associate Director

Taryn Shehab, Office Coordinator

**The annual review is directed at the following goals of the Texas A&M International University 2006-2010 Strategic Plan. Please list goals below:**

Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcomes 1 and 2:

1.8 Provide support services, programs, and activities that promote student learning and enhance student development

**Institutional Mission**

Texas A&M International University, a member of the Texas A&M University System, prepares students for leadership roles in their chosen profession in an increasingly complex, culturally diverse state, national, and global society ... Through instruction, faculty and student research, and public service, Texas A&M International University embodies a strategic point of delivery for well-defined programs and services that improve the quality of life for citizens of the border region, the state of Texas, and national and international communities.

**Administrative or Educational Support Unit Mission**

The primary mission of the Writing Center at Texas A&M International University is to support the instructional goals of the faculty by providing free individual and small-group tutoring sessions, peer review sessions, and writing workshops to students.... In order to develop more confident and competent writers, tutors guide students in the development, revision, and editing of their papers.... The goal of tutoring is to develop increasingly independent writers.

**Provide summary of the last cycle's use of results and changes implemented**

*This statement should specify if the outcomes addressed were a continuation of previous ones, new outcomes, or modified versions of previous outcomes. In addition, the statement should include a concise analysis of the assessment data collected during the previous year, a brief explanation of actions taken to address specific outcomes, an evaluation of how these actions contributed to the improvement of the unit, and any recommendations formulated. Assessment data must be viewed and discussed by the unit during this process.*

## 2007 Results

**Outcome 1:** Students' academic success will be positively affected by their use of Writing Center tutoring services.

**Goal 1 Met:** During 2007, the average grade earned for DENG0370 by students who receive tutoring assistance at the Writing Center will be 20% higher than that earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance.

Results: 1. During 2007, of 43 students in 3 sections of DENG0370 (Developmental English), 10 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 0.2 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 33 who got help one or more times earned an average grade of 1.91. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance earned grades 89.5% higher than those who did not.

**Goal 2 Met:** During 2007, the average grade earned for ENGL1301 by students who receive tutoring assistance 1-3 times at the Writing Center will be at least 5% higher than that earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance, and the average grade earned for ENGL1301 by students who receive tutoring assistance 4 times or more will be at least 25% higher than that earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance.

Results: 2. During 2007, of 513 students in 25 sections of ENGL1301 (Freshman Composition), 373 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 2.13 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 103 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.63, and 37 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.54. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 19% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 16.1% higher than those who did not see a tutor for help.

**Goal 3 Met:** During 2007, the average grade earned for ENGL1302 by students who receive tutoring assistance 1-3 times at the Writing Center will be at least 5% higher than that earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance, and the average grade earned for ENGL1302 by students who receive tutoring assistance 4 times or more will be at least 25% higher than that earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance.

**Results:** 3. During 2007, of 98 students in 5 sections of ENGL1302 (Freshman Composition), 59 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 2.2 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 28 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.79, and 11 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.36. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 21% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 6.7% higher than those who did not see a tutor for help.

**Use of Results:** In order to continue this academic progress, the Writing Center will continue advertising services in DENG, ENGL 1301, and ENGL 1302 course sections, as well as facilitate Writing Center presentations and orientations.

**Changes Implemented:** The Writing Center acquired certification by the College Reading and Learning Association to continue providing quality training for our staff in order to better serve the university.

**Outcome 2:** Outcome 2: Student use of Writing Center services will increase.

**Goal 1 Not Met:** The average number of visits/week to the Writing Center for writing-related services will increase by 5% during Spring 2007 to 211.3, during Summer 2007 to 73.3, and during Fall 2007 to 312.3. The average number of students who receive tutor assistance per week will increase by 5% during Spring 2007 to 133.6, during Summer 2007 to 58.8, and during Fall 2007 to 175.7.

**Results:** 1. The average number of visits/week to the Writing Center for writing-related services decreased by 16.85% during Spring 2007, decreased by 8.89% during Summer 2007, and decreased by 12.2% during Fall 2007. The average number of students who received tutor assistance per week decreased by 7.86% during Spring 2007, decreased by 30.5% during Summer 2007, and decreased by 43.7% during Fall 2007.

Goal 2 Not Met: During 2007, the number of student requests for tutor assistance by e-mail, by fax, and on the Helpline will increase by 10% to 68.

**Results:** 2. The goal was not met since other requests for assistance decreased by 40.9%.

**Use of Results:** The Writing Center developed a promotion plan to increase student awareness, faculty support, and increase comfort level.

**Changes Implemented:** The Writing Center participated in the PASE promotional fair, implemented "Coffee Thursdays," "TOEFL Tuesdays", facilitated presentations (Orientations, *Reflections*, ILI, etc.), emailed all employees and faculty, sent mass emails, posted flyers, and advertised publishing opportunities with *Reflections*, and added the Writing Center link on main webpage.

**Outcome 3:** Student satisfaction with Writing Center services will remain at the present high levels or increase.

**Goals Partially Met:** During 2007, over 90% of students who complete evaluation forms will continue to rate "overall effectiveness of your tutor" as "excellent" or "very good."

During 2007, the percentage of "excellent" responses on tutor evaluation forms for the item "My tutor asked questions that stimulated my thinking" will increase by 3% to 84.76%.

**Results:** During Spring 2007, more than 90% of students ranked the "overall effectiveness of your tutor" as "excellent" when compared to Spring 2006. However, in Spring 2007 students ranked tutors' ability to "ask...questions that stimulated my thinking" as 83.02% "excellent". Although there was a 0.53% improvement from Spring 2006 to Spring 2007, we did not achieve our goal of 3% increase, thereby partially meeting outcome 3.

**Use of Results:** The Writing Center will continue collecting the data and analyzing for an entire year and report the results during the next evaluation period.

**Changes Implemented:** In order to improve this goal, the Writing Center changed the wording on the tuttee evaluation form. This aims to clarify expectations and more closely measure the students' satisfaction of services. The new wording is:

My tutor:  
 Recommended clear goals for the session  
 Asked questions that helped me understand my areas of difficulty  
 Listened attentively to my questions and concerns  
 Explained things clearly  
 Demonstrated interest in my progress  
 Showed me specific, concrete ways to improve my writing  
 How would you rate the overall effectiveness of your tutor?

**List of unit-level outcomes**

*It is recommended that units rotate through their entire set of outcomes over a multi-year period. Units may focus on one or two outcomes each year, as deemed appropriate.*

1. Students' academic success will be positively affected by their use of Writing Center tutoring services.
2. Student use of Writing Center services will increase.
3. Student satisfaction with Writing Center services will remain at the present high levels or increase.

Section I: Planning and Implementation

**Outcome(s)** *Identify the outcome(s) that will be focused upon this year.*

1. Students' grades in DENG, ENGL 1301, and ENGL 1302 will be positively correlated to their use of Writing Center tutoring services.
2. Student use of Writing Center services will increase.

**Methods of assessment to be used:**

*Identify and describe the type of assessment(s) that will be used and how the data will be obtained. During this assessment period, has your unit used any of the following measures for assessment of outcomes? Indicate "Y" if currently being used; "N" if not currently being used but interested in using; and "NA" if not applicable.*

Type of Measure	Y	N	NA	Specify which type of measure was used and what outcome the measure was applied to:
<u>Volume of Activity:</u> (Number of clients served, circulation data, etc.)	X			Accutrack Report and Manual Sign-In Documents (Computer Use, Independent Study, Tutoring Sessions, Online Submissions, Helpline, and Fax Line), and Classroom workshops and presentations.
<u>Efficiency:</u> (Turnaround time for filling requests, timely service or prompt response, etc.)	X			Tutee Evaluation Surveys Wait list assistance time Online Submission response time Session Length
<u>Service Quality:</u> (Error rates, accuracy of information provided, etc)	X			Accutrack Report and Manual Sign-In Documents Tutee comments on Evaluation Surveys
<u>Client Satisfaction Survey</u> (Student, employer,	X			Tutee Satisfaction reported on Evaluation Surveys Workshop/Presentation Evaluation Surveys

alumni, customer, etc.)				
<u>Feedback:</u> (Suggestion box, focus groups, evaluation forms, etc.)	X			Tutee Satisfaction reported on Evaluation Surveys Workshop/Presentation Evaluation Surveys
<u>Review of existing data:</u> (Routine records or reports, institutional data, audits, etc.)	X			Compare grades earned for DENG0370, ENGL 1301, and ENGL 1302 by students who did not receive tutoring assistance at the Writing Center with grades earned for DENG0370, ENGL 1301, and ENGL 1302 by students who did receive tutoring assistance at the Writing Center.
Staff discussions or evaluations of services to clients	X			Monthly staff meetings
Standards/guidelines provided by professional associations	X			Certified by the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA)
Standards set by federal, state, county, city or system regulations			X	
External evaluations or auditors			X	
Benchmarks or comparisons with peer institutions			X	
Other				

**Criteria/Benchmark(s):**

*Specify, if deemed appropriate to assess outcome(s). Criteria/ benchmark(s) may be optional, especially if qualitative measures are used for data collection.*

**Benchmark for Outcome 1: Students' academic success will be positively affected by their use of Writing Center tutoring services.**

1. During 2007, of 43 students in 3 sections of DENG0370 (Developmental English), 10 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 0.2 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 33 who got help one or more times earned an average grade of 1.91. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance earned grades 89.5% higher than those who did not.

**Goal 1:** During 2008, the average grade earned for DENG0370 by students who receive tutoring assistance at the Writing Center will be 20% higher than the average earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance.

2. During 2007, of 513 students in 25 sections of ENGL1301 (Freshman Composition), 373 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 2.13 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 103 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.63, and 37 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.54. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 19% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 16.1% higher than those who did not see a tutor for help.

**Goal 2:** During 2008, the average grade earned for ENGL1301 by students who receive tutoring assistance 1-3 times at the Writing Center will be at least 5% higher than that earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance, and the average grade earned for ENGL1301 by students who receive tutoring assistance 4 times or more will be at least 25% higher than that earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance.

3. During 2007, of 98 students in 5 sections of ENGL1302 (Freshman Composition), 59 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 2.2 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 28 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.79, and 11 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.36. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 21% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 6.7% higher than those who did not see a tutor for help.

**Goal 3:** During 2008, the average grade earned for ENGL1302 by students who receive tutoring assistance 1-3 times at the Writing Center will be at least 5% higher than that earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance, and the average grade earned for ENGL1302 by students who receive tutoring assistance 4 times or more will be at least 25% higher than that earned by students who do not receive tutoring assistance.

**Benchmark for Outcome 2: Student use of Writing Center services will increase.**

1. During Spring 2007, (1/16/07-5/11/07—17 weeks) 2,844 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and 1,993 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 167.3 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and of those 117.2 students/week received tutor assistance.

During Summer 2007, (6/4/07-8/9/07—9.5 weeks) 609 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and 408 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 64.1 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and of those 42.9 students/week received tutor assistance.

During Fall 2007, (8/27/07-12/14/07—16 weeks) 4240 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and 1863 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 265 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and of those 116.4 students/week received tutor assistance.

2. During 2007, we had 44 other requests for tutor assistance: 30 through the website or by e-mail, 0 by fax, and 14 on the Helpline.

Goal: During 2008, all Writing Center Services will increase by 5% each semester.

## Section II: Analysis of Results

### What were the results attained?

*Describe the primary results or findings from your analysis of the information collected. Were the results used to improve the unit services or operations? Please specify:*

#### **1. Students' academic success will be positively affected by their use of Writing Center tutoring services.**

##### **Spring 2008**

**Goal 1 Met:** Of the 27 students in 2 sections of DENG0370 (Developmental English), 11 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 0.66 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 16 who got help one or more times earned an average grade of 1.20. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance earned grades 45% higher than those who did not.

**Goal 2 Met:** Of the 92 students in 5 sections of ENGL1301 (Freshman Composition), 46 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 1.5 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 25 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.28, and 21 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.95. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 34.21% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 22.71% higher than those who attended the Writing Center 1-3 times.

**Goal 3 Not Met:** Of the 527 students in 26 sections of ENGL1302 (Freshman Composition), 246 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 2.48 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 122 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.47, and 95 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.69. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 0.4% lower than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 8.18% higher than those who attended the Writing Center 1-3 times.

##### **Summer 2008 (All summer sessions combined)**

\*There were no DENG0370 courses during Summer 2008.

**Goal 1 Not Met:** Of the 171 students in 7 sections of ENGL1301 (Freshman Composition), 158 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 2.76 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 10 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.6, and 1 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.0. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 5.8% lower than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 23.08% lower than those who attended the Writing Center 1-3 times.

**Goal 2 Not Met:** Of the 85 students in 5 sections of ENGL1302 (Freshman Composition), 75 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 2.85 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 4 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.5, and 1 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.0. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 12.28% lower than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more

earned grades 20% higher than those who attended the Writing Center 1-3 times.

### **Fall 2008**

Goal 1 Met: Of the 95 students in 5 sections of DENG 0370 (Developmental English), 26 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 0.68 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 56 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 1.27, and 13 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.2. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 46.43% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 41.26% higher than those who attended the Writing Center 1-3 times.

Goal 2 Met: Of the 599 students in 27 sections of ENGL1301 (Freshman Composition), 414 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 2.2 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 154 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.87, and 31 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.77. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 22.93% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 3.33% lower than those who attended the Writing Center 1-3 times.

Goal 3 Partially Met: Of the 85 students in 4 sections of ENGL1302 (Freshman Composition), 59 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 1.63 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 20 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 1.67, and 6 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 3.40. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 2.5% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 50.98% higher than those who attended the Writing Center 1-3 times.

## **2. Student use of Writing Center services will increase 5% each semester.**

### **Spring 2008**

Goal 1 Met: During Spring 2008 (1/13/08-5/08/08—17 weeks), there were 4181 visits to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and of those, 3393 received tutor assistance.

### **Summer 2008**

Goal 2 Not Met: During Summer 2008 (6/2/08-8/7/068—9.5 weeks), there were 473 visits to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and of those, 415 received tutor assistance. This is a 37% visit decrease from Summer 2007.

### **Fall 2008**

Goal 3 Met: During Fall 2008 (8/21/08-12/12/08—16 weeks), there were 6291 visits to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and of those, 2553 received tutor assistance.

During the 2008 year, there were 4272 visits for Computer Use and Independent Study, 629 attendees for Class Presentations, 6025 Tutoring Sessions facilitated, 63 Online Submissions (43% increase), and 1 Fax response. Students utilized Writing Center services 11,638 times during 2008.



**What were the conclusions reached?**

*Include a brief description of the procedure used for reaching the conclusion(s) based on the evidence collected and describe the process used to disseminate the information to other individuals. For example, if the discussion took place during the annual retreat, include a summary from those deliberations using the Meeting Minutes template found on the Project Integrate web page at <http://www.tamtu.edu/integrate/docs/Minutes-Template.doc>. Once completed, submit the minutes to [assessment@tamtu.edu](mailto:assessment@tamtu.edu).*

**1. Students' academic success will be positively affected by their use of Writing Center tutoring services.**

Goal Met: Data concluded that Writing Center services directly influenced the grades of DENG 0370 and ENGL 1301; however, grades of students enrolled in ENGL 1302 were not positively correlated.

**2. Student use of Writing Center services will increase.**

Goal Met: Writing Center traffic increased 47% in the Spring 2008 semester and increased 48% in the Fall 2008 semester when compared to Spring and Fall 2007. There was a 28% decrease from Summer 2008 to Summer 2007.

This information was shared and discussed with Conchita Hickey, PASE Director, on January 29, 2008. Additionally, information was shared with Writing Center staff on January 8, 2009.

**Describe the action plan formulated. (The plan may be multi-year in nature.)**

*Based on the conclusion(s), describe the action plan to be implemented to improve or maintain unit services and operations, including resources needed and a timeline for implementation.*

- Continue to increase Writing Center presence.
- Facilitate WC Presentations and workshops (i.e. Plagiarism) in courses to increase student awareness and participation.
- Participate and interact more with faculty to meet individual call needs.

**Section III: Resources**

**Resource(s) to implement action plan:**

*Describe the resources that will be needed to implement the action plan. Also indicate if the resources are currently available, or if additional funds will be needed to obtain these resources.*

**Funding**

- New Resources Required- Requesting funding for additional a minimum of two tutors to assist with our increase in traffic. (\$9.48 per hour/ 19 hours per week)
- Reallocation of current funds

**Physical**

- New or reallocated space-Requesting additional space for study groups to accommodate higher traffic by utilizing suite BCH 202 after the Student Success Building is complete. This will also assist our students with disabilities who required quiet study environment with minimum outside noise or interruption.

**Other**

- Primarily faculty/staff time

- University rule/procedure change only

**Provide a narrative description and justification for requested resources (include linkage to Strategic Plan – or Compact, if relevant)**

Requesting 1-2 additional part-time tutors to assist with the increase in Writing Center traffic. These tutors would work during high traffic times, high peak tutoring times, weekends, and evenings to better accommodate students by reducing wait list time, thereby enhancing student satisfaction.

Requesting additional space for tutoring students with special needs who may work better in a quiet one-on-one setting, accommodate group study sessions, and over-flow tutoring space during high-peak times and during Writing Center presentations.

**Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle:**

Continuation of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for continuation):

Outcome 1: Students' academic success will be positive affected by their use of the Writing Center tutoring services. This objective will continue allowing the Writing Center to gauge its effectiveness and impact on students' writing.

Outcome 2: Student use of Writing Center services will increase. This outcome will continue to be evaluated to determine the use of WC services and its importance to the university.

New Outcome(s) – (List outcomes below):

N/A

Modification of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for modification):

N/A

Date Completed:

January 30, 2009

Submit completed form to [integrate@tamiu.edu](mailto:integrate@tamiu.edu).