

Texas A&M International University

Annual Institutional Effectiveness Review (AIER)

Date Submitted 31 January 2007

Assessment Period Covered (2006)

Academic Program/AES Unit Writing Center

Person(s) Preparing Review Randy Koch

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

Outcome 1: During Spring 2005, changes were made to the essay and exercise requirements for 75-hour contract students in order to address their concerns regarding being prepared to write independently for the UWA. Because the UWA was discontinued following the April 2005 exam, the 75-hour contract as a form of remediation for students who failed the UWA was discontinued at the end of Spring 2005 semester.

During the Summer 2005 semester, COBA, COE, and COAS offered to students who had taken but not passed the UWA by the end of Spring 2005 the option of completing a contract at the Writing Center to fulfill the UWA requirement. As a result, the 75-hour contract was modified and became a 45-hour contract with slightly different requirements. By the end of the Summer 2005 semester, six students signed and began work on a 45-hour contract.

Outcome 2a: Because of a drop in student visits during SS05, Mr. Koch e-mailed all department chairs and requested the opportunity to attend their department meetings at the beginning of Fall 2005 in order to discuss Writing Center services. Mr. Koch also asked COAS Dean Momayezi if he could be put on the agenda for the COAS faculty fall meeting to address similar issues. In addition, at the end of Summer 2005, two banners encouraging student use of Writing Center services were created and hung on lamp posts in the middle of campus.

Outcome 2b: Writing Center staff participated in summer 2005 orientations for transfer students, graduate students, and first-time freshmen to inform them about services available at the Writing Center. Additional publicity appeared in The Writers' Forum and on the Writing Center website.

Outcome 2c: The website address was added below the masthead of the Writing Center newsletter. To expand student and faculty use of the website, a "Resources for Professors" link was added. Plans were also made to post online during 2005-06 resources, other useful links, and materials recommended by faculty.

Outcome 2d: To increase attendance at workshops, tutor Daniela Rodriguez created, duplicated, and posted a handout on campus bulletin boards. However, because the UWA was discontinued and workshops were scheduled around the exam, no workshops were scheduled for Summer 2005. Writing Center staff continued to discuss how to schedule fall workshops and motivate students to attend. A list of available workshops was created and distributed to all departments and colleges.

Outcome 3a: During evaluations and staff meetings, tutors were encouraged to hand out more Tutor Evaluation forms to increase the percentage of students completing them. In addition, during Spring 2005, Mr. Koch proposed a system of merit raises for tutors, which went into effect in Sept. 2005. During Spring and Summer 2005, two additional tutor training activities were introduced and required for all tutors as part of their on-going training.

Outcome 3b: Because students attending Fall 2004 workshops asked for more workshops focusing on content and organization rather than on mechanics, the Spring 2005 schedule was changed to reflect this need. However, no workshops were presented during Summer 2005 because the UWA was discontinued. Plans were made to offer workshops again during Fall 2005, and all departments were encouraged to make use of our workshops or request that our tutors present them in their classes.

Outcome 3c: Training designed to improve tutors' ability to ask probing questions and understand the Socratic Method was planned for the 2005-06 academic year.

Section I: Planning and Implementation

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.

Academic Program or Administrative/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.

Identify outcomes and the relationship to Strategic Plan

Outcome 1 **Is this outcome related to writing (QEP)?**
Faculty use of Writing Center services will increase.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 1

Goal 1 Academics

Identify Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcome 1

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

Identify methods of assessment to be used

1. Keep records of faculty requests for presentations regarding Writing Center services during 2006 and compare to the number of requests for these presentations during Fall 2005.
2. Keep records of faculty requests for in-class writing workshops presented by either tutors or directors during 2006 and compare to the number of requests for these services during Fall 2005.
3. Keep records of faculty requests for Writing Center tutoring services by documenting the number of "Requests for Writing Center Tutoring Services" forms completed by faculty during Fall 2005, when the form was first used, and compare to the number of requests made during each subsequent semester during 2006.

Indicate when assessment will take place

Annual

Criteria/Benchmark

1. During Fall 2005 faculty requested 18 presentations regarding Writing Center services. During Fall 2006 faculty requests for presentations regarding Writing Center services will increase 10%, to 20 requests. In addition, we will keep records of presentations requested and given during Spring 2006 and Summer 2006 so we have a benchmark for 2007.
2. During Fall 2005 faculty requested 10 in-class writing workshops. During Fall 2006 faculty requests for in-class writing workshops will increase 10%, to 11 requests. In addition, we will keep records of writing workshops requested and given during Spring 2006 and Summer 2006 so we have a benchmark for 2007.
3. During Fall 2005, faculty requested Writing Center services 1 time by completing the "Request for Writing Center Tutoring Services" form. Faculty requests made by completing the form will increase 500% to 5 during Spring 2006, requests will increase an additional 40% to 7 during Summer Sessions I and II, and requests will increase an additional 40% to 10 during Fall 2006.

Outcome 2

Is this outcome related to writing (QEP)?

Student use of Writing Center services will increase.

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 2

Goal 1 Academics

Identify Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcome 2

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

Identify methods of assessment to be used

1. Keep records of student visits and tutoring sessions conducted during Spring 2006, Summer 2006, and Fall 2006 and compare the average number of student visits per week and tutoring sessions per week for each semester with the same period during the 2004-2005 academic year.
2. Keep records of student requests for tutor assistance through the website, by fax, and on the Helpline during 2006 and compare to the number of student requests for those same services during the 2004-2005 academic year.
3. Check the hit counter on the Writing Center website and keep track of the number of hits per month during 2006 and compare the annual total to that for the 2004-2005 academic year.

Indicate when assessment will take place

Annual

Criteria/Benchmark

1. During Fall 2004 (8/25/04-12/16/04—16 weeks) 5,603 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and 2,221 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 350.19 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and of those 138.8 students/week received tutor assistance.

During Spring 2005 (1/10/05-5/12/05—18 weeks) 4,188 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and 2,090 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 232.7 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and of those 116.1 students/week received tutor assistance.

During Summer 2005 (6/6/05-8/10/05—9.5 weeks) 1,118 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and 632 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 117.7 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and of those 66.53 students/week received tutor assistance.

The average number of visits/week to the Writing Center for writing-related services will increase by 5% during Spring 2006 to 244.3, during Summer 2006 to 123.6, and during Fall 2006 to 386.08. The average number of students who receive tutor assistance per week will increase by 5% during Spring 2006 to 121.9, during Summer 2006 to 69.8, and during Fall 2006 to 152.98.

2. During the 2004-05 academic year, we had 37 other requests for tutor assistance: 17 through the website or by e-mail, 4 by fax, and 16 on the Helpline. During 2006, the number of student requests for tutor assistance through the website, by fax, and on the Helpline will increase by 10% to 41.

3. During the 2004-05 academic year, the number of hits recorded on the Writing Center website was 4,919. (Cumulative total: 16,373). During 2006, the number of hits on the Writing Center website will increase by 10% to 5,411.

Outcome 3

Is this outcome related to writing (QEP)?

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

Identify Strategic Plan Goal related to Outcome 3

Goal 1 Academics

Identify Strategic Plan Objective related to Outcome 3

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

Identify methods of assessment to be used

1. Compare tutor evaluation forms completed by students during the 2004-05 academic year with those completed by students during 2006. Calculate and compare ratings for “overall effectiveness of your tutor” (excellent, very good, good, fair, poor) over both time periods.
2. Compare tutor evaluation forms completed by students during the 2004-05 academic year with those completed by students during 2006. Calculate and compare ratings for the item “My tutor asked questions that stimulated my thinking” (excellent, very good, good, fair, poor) over both time periods.

Indicate when assessment will take place

Annual

Criteria/Benchmark

1. During the 2004-05 academic year, tutors were evaluated by 2,728 students. On those evaluations 2,383 (87.35%) ranked the “overall effectiveness of your tutor” as “excellent” and 301 (11.03%) as “very good” for a total of 98.38%. During 2006, over 90% of students who complete evaluation forms will continue to rate “overall effectiveness of your tutor” as “excellent” or “very good.”
2. During the 2004-05 academic year, tutors were evaluated by 2,733 students. On those evaluations 2,120 (77.57%) ranked tutors’ ability to “ask...questions that stimulated my thinking” as “excellent.” During 2006, the percentage of “excellent” responses on tutor evaluation forms for the item “My tutor asked questions that stimulated my thinking” will increase by 5% to 82.57.

Section II: Analysis of Results

When (term/date) was assessment conducted?

Outcome 1

1. Jan. 13, 2006-May 11, 2006; June 5, 2006-Aug. 10, 2006; and Aug. 28, 2006-Dec. 15, 2006.
2. Jan. 13, 2006-May 11, 2006; June 5, 2006-Aug. 10, 2006; and Aug. 28, 2006-Dec. 15, 2006.
3. Jan. 13, 2006-May 11, 2006; June 5, 2006-Aug. 10, 2006; and Aug. 28, 2006-Dec. 15, 2006.

Outcome 2

1. Jan. 13, 2006-May 11, 2006; June 5, 2006-Aug. 10, 2006; and Aug. 28, 2006-Dec. 15, 2006.
2. Jan. 1, 2006-Dec. 31, 2006
3. Jan. 1, 2006-Dec. 31, 2006

Outcome 3

1. Jan. 13, 2006-May 11, 2006; June 5, 2006-Aug. 10, 2006; and Aug. 28, 2006-Dec. 15, 2006.
 2. Jan. 13, 2006-May 11, 2006; June 5, 2006-Aug. 10, 2006; and Aug. 28, 2006-Dec. 15, 2006.
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What were the results attained (raw data)?

Outcome 1

1. During 2006 faculty requested 27 presentations regarding Writing Center services: Spring 2006--4 requests, Summer 2006--2 requests, and Fall 2006--21 requests.

The goal was met since faculty requests for presentations regarding Writing Center services during Fall 2006 increased 16.7%.

2. During 2006 faculty requested and Writing Center tutors or directors presented 30 in-class writing workshops: Spring 2006--11 workshops, Summer Session I 2006--2 workshops, Summer Session II 2006--3 workshops, and Fall 2006--14 workshops.

The goal was met since faculty requests for and Writing Center staff presentations of in-class writing workshops during Fall 2006 increased 40%.

3. During 2006 faculty made 10 requests for Writing Center tutoring services by completing the "Request for Writing Center Tutoring Services" form: Spring 2006--9 requests, Summer 2006--0 requests, and Fall 2006--1 request.

The first goal was met since faculty made 9 requests for services during Spring 2006, a 900% increase over the Fall 2005. However, the second and third goals were not met since faculty made 0 requests during Summer 2006 and only 1 request during Fall 2006.

Outcome 2

1. During Spring 2006 (1/13/06-5/11/06—18 weeks) 3,421 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and 2,163 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 190.05 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and of those 120.17 students/week received tutor assistance.

The first goal was not met since the number of students per week who came to the Writing Center for writing-related service decreased by 18.3%; the second goal also was not met since the number of students per week who received tutor assistance increased by 3.49%, not the 5% that we set as our goal.

During Summer 2006 (6/5/06-8/10/06—9.5 weeks) 663 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and 523 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 69.79 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and of those 55.05 students/week received tutor assistance.

The first goal was not met since the number of students per week who came to the Writing Center for writing-related service decreased by 40.7%; the second goal also was not met since the number of students per week who received tutor assistance decreased by 17.25%.

During Fall 2006 (8/28/06-12/15/06—16 weeks) 4,759 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and 2,677 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 297.4 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related service, and of those 167.3 students/week received tutor assistance.

The first goal was not met since the number of students per week who came to the Writing Center for writing-related service decreased by 15.07%; the second goal was met since the number of students per week who received tutor assistance increased by 20.53%.

During the 2004-05 academic year, 10,909 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related service, but during 2006, this decreased by 18.94% to 8,843 students. However, during the 2004-05 academic year 4,943 students received tutor assistance compared to 5,363 who received tutor assistance during 2006, an 8.5% increase.

2. During 2006, we had 62 other requests for tutor assistance: 36 through the website or by e-mail, 3 by fax, and 23 on the Helpline.

The goal (increase other requests for tutor assistance by 10%) was met since other requests for assistance increased by 67.6%.

3. During 2006, the number of hits recorded on the Writing Center website was 5,999. (Cumulative total: 23,502).

The goal (increase total hits by 10%) was met since the number of hits increased by 21.96%.

Outcome 3

1. During 2006, tutors were evaluated by 2,894 students. On those evaluations 2,550 (88.11%) ranked the “overall effectiveness of your tutor” as “excellent” and 288 (9.95%) as “very good” for a total of 98.06%.

The goal was met since over 90% of students who completed the evaluation form continued to rate "overall effectiveness of your tutor" as "excellent" or "very good."

2. During 2006, tutors were evaluated by 2,907 students. On those evaluations 2,380 (81.87%) ranked tutors’ ability to “ask...questions that stimulated my thinking” as “excellent.”

The goal (increase "excellent" responses for the item "My tutor asked questions that stimulated my thinking" by 5%) was not met since "excellent" rankings on this item increased by 4.3%.

Who (specify names) conducted analysis of data?

Outcome 1

Randy Koch & Destine Holmgreen

Outcome 2

Randy Koch & Destine Holmgreen

Outcome 3

Randy Koch & Destine Holmgreen

When were the results and analysis shared and with whom (department chair, supervisor, staff, external stakeholders)? Submit minutes with data analysis to assessment@tamiu.edu (Please use Minutes Template located on the Project INTEGRATE web page.)

Statistics regarding student traffic and student evaluation results were provided to individual tutors during their 4-month and annual evaluations. All results were shared with PASE Executive Director Conchita Hickey on 29 Jan. 2007 via e-mail.

NOTE: Submit all assessment documentation (i.e., surveys, rubrics, course exams with embedded questions, etc.) to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning.

Use of Results: Indicate whether criteria were met/not met and what changes, if any, have been identified based on the data collected?

Outcome 1

Met Not Met

Provide narrative: Because more students are required to take GENU1300 as freshmen and because all GENU classes come to the Writing Center for an orientation regarding our services, we have given fewer orientation sessions in classrooms and have promoted such sessions less than in previous semesters. By Fall 2007 all freshmen will receive an orientation to WC services through their GENU 1300 class, which will make orientations in other classes less necessary. Associate Director Destine Holmgreen e-mailed faculty to inform them that WC staff are available to come to their classrooms to present writing workshops and presentations on APA and MLA documentation styles. The "Request for Writing Center Tutoring Services" form was posted as a MS Word document on the Writing Center website on 31 October 2005. However, because many faculty resisted using the form but continued to send classes of students to the Writing Center, efforts to increase the number of "Requests for Writing Center Tutoring Services" forms completed by faculty was discontinued.

Outcome 2

Met **Not Met**

Provide narrative: Saturday tutoring (by appointment only) between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. was made available starting January 21, 2006. Friday hours were also expanded effective the beginning of the Spring 2006 semester; instead of closing at 12:30 p.m., the Writing Center closed at 3:00 p.m. Beginning Fall 2006, the Writing Center opened on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for drop-ins, and appointments were no longer required; in addition, a tutor was available to assist students at the Residential Learning Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6-8 p.m. Directors agreed to further expand hours during Spring 2007 by opening at 8 a.m. instead of 8:30 a.m. Monday-Friday, closing at 4 p.m. instead of 3 p.m. on Saturdays, and opening at 1 p.m. instead of 2 p.m. on Sundays.

The Writer's Forum was used to promote Writing Center services and events. Starting with the July/Aug. 2006 issue, the front page featured photos of students who regularly used Writing Center services in order to encourage others to also come to the Writing Center. Two new banners reminding students of Writing Center services, hours, website, and new location in Cowart Hall were designed and submitted for approval to the Office of Public Relations, Marketing, and Information Services in December 2006; they should be hung on campus lampposts early in 2007.

During November 2006 directors drafted a written process for tutors to follow when responding by e-mail or fax to student requests for help in order to maintain consistent quality in the responses.

During Summer 2006 and Fall 2006, 39 of 44 handouts were revised, updated, and reposted on the website under "Writing Workshops."

Outcome 3

Met **Not Met**

Provide narrative: At the Friday, January 12, 2006, Writing Center staff meeting, tutors participated in a training session called "Using the Socratic Method to Teach Writing," which was presented by Mr. Koch. This tutor-training material on the Socratic Method, along with

additional materials focusing on writing skills, such as summarizing, using pronouns, and choosing prepositions, was added to the list of trainings to be completed by all tutors. Directors also incorporated small group think-alouds into the required training for all tutors; during these sessions directors and two or three tutors discuss, read, and diagnose a student paper and emphasize the importance of working from higher-order to lower-order concerns.

How have these data-based changes improved your program/unit?

Student use of all of our services--writing-related, tutoring, e-mail, Helpline, and website resources--continues to increase. At the same time, we continue to improve our tutor-training program, which has helped us maintain high quality in the delivery of tutoring services despite hiring 8 new tutors during Fall 2006; we also plan to get our training program certified through the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) during Spring 2007.

Section III: Programmatic Review

Are resources affected by the changes identified in Section II? Yes No

If so, specify the effect(s) using the chart below:

Funding	Physical	Other
<input type="checkbox"/> New resources required	<input type="checkbox"/> New or reallocated space	<input type="checkbox"/> Primarily faculty/staff time
<input type="checkbox"/> Reallocation of current funds		<input type="checkbox"/> University rule/procedure change only
		<input type="checkbox"/> Other: Enter text here

Provide a narrative description and justification for requested resources (include linkage to Strategic Plan)

Enter text here

Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle:
Continuation of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for continuation): We will continue to assess Outcome 2 (Student use of Writing Center services will increase) and Outcome 3 (Student satisfaction with Writing Center services will remain at present high levels or increase) because these are the most significant and direct measures of how well we serve TAMIU students.
New Outcome(s) – (List outcomes below): Outcome 1 will be changed--from "Faculty use of Writing Center services will increase" to "Students' academic success will be positively affected by their use of Writing Center tutoring services"--for two reasons: first, faculty resistance to using the "Request for Writing Center Tutoring Services" form did not have a negative impact on students' use of our services (with Spring 2006 being our busiest spring semester and Fall 2006 our second busiest fall semester since the Writing Center opened in Spring 2002); second, evidence that tutor assistance with writing has a positive affect on students' grades is a concrete way to determine to what extent the Writing Center provides the TAMIU community with a valuable service.
Modification of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for modification): Enter text here

****** This section to be completed by dean/director/vice-president ******

Are resources requested a priority for the academic program/AES unit?

Yes No

Comments:

Enter text here

If funding, physical or other resources were requested, what is the impact of the budget decisions on the academic program/AES unit?

Enter text here