

# **Texas A&M International University**

## **Annual Institutional Effectiveness Review (AIER)**

**Date Submitted** 31 May 2007 - (2007 Report)

**Assessment Period Covered (2006)**

**Academic Program/AES Unit** Writing Center

**Person(s) Preparing Review** Randy Koch, Kimberly Thomas

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

Outcome 1: In Spring and Fall 2006, 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 during 2006, efforts to increase the number of "Requests for Writing Center Tutoring Services" forms completed by faculty was discontinued.

Outcome 2: 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 and were hung on campus lampposts during Spring 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: In January 2006, Writing Center tutors participated in a training session called "Using the Socratic Method to Teach Writing," which was presented by Mr. Koch. 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.

## 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)?**

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

#### **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. Compare grades earned for DENG0370 by students who did not receive tutoring assistance at the Writing Center with grades earned for DENG0370 by students who did receive tutoring assistance at the Writing Center.
2. Compare grades earned for ENGL1301 by students who did not receive tutoring assistance at the Writing Center with grades earned for ENGL1301 by students who received tutoring assistance 1-3 times and 4 times or more.
3. Compare grades earned for ENGL1302 by students who did not receive tutoring assistance at the Writing Center with grades earned for ENGL1302 by students who received tutoring assistance 1-3 times and 4 times or more.

### **Indicate when assessment will take place**

Annual

### **Criteria/Benchmark**

1. During Fall 2005, of 37 students in 3 sections of DENG0370 (Developmental English), 25 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 1.24 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 12 who got help one or more times earned an average grade of 1.67. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance earned grades 35% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance.

Goal: 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.

2. During Fall 2005, of 167 students in 8 sections of ENGL1301 (Freshman Composition), 113 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 2.062 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 40 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.175, and 14 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.929. On average, students who came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 5.5% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 42% higher than those who did not receive tutoring assistance.

Goal: 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.

3. During Fall 2005, of 65 students in 3 sections of ENGL1302 (Freshman Composition), 34 who did not get tutoring help at the Writing Center earned an average grade of 1.735 (on a 4 pt. scale) for the course while 16 who got assistance 1-3 times earned an average grade of 2.375, and 15 who got assistance 4 times or more earned an average grade of 2.867. On average, students who

came to the Writing Center for assistance 1-3 times earned grades 36.9% higher than those who did not get tutoring assistance, and students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more earned grades 65% higher than those who did not see a tutor for help.

Goal: 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.

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**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 2007, Summer 2007, and Fall 2007 and compare the average number of student visits per week and tutoring sessions per week for each semester with the same period during 2006.
2. Keep records of student requests for tutor assistance by e-mail, by fax, and on the Helpline during 2007 and compare to the number of student requests for those same services during 2006.
3. Check the hit counter on the Writing Center website and keep track of the number of hits per month during 2007 and compare the annual total with that for 2006.

**Indicate when assessment will take place**

Annual

**Criteria/Benchmark**

1. During Spring 2006 (1/13/06-5/12/06—17 weeks) 3,421 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and 2,163 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 201.2 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and of those 127.2 students/week received tutor assistance.

During Summer 2006 (6/5/06-8/10/06—9.5 weeks) 663 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and 523 of those students received tutor assistance. On average, 69.8 visits/week were made to the Writing Center for writing-related services, and of those 56 students/week received tutor assistance.

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 services, and of those 167.3 students/week received tutor assistance.

Goal: 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.

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

Goal: 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.

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

Goal: During 2007, the number of hits on the Writing Center website will increase by 5% to 6,299.

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### **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 2007 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 2007 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 2006, tutors were evaluated by 2,758 students. On those evaluations 2,411 (87.42%) ranked the “overall effectiveness of your tutor” as “excellent” and 271 (9.83%) as “very good” for a total of 97.25%.

Goal: During 2007, over 90% of students who complete evaluation forms will continue to rate “overall effectiveness of your tutor” as “excellent” or “very good.”

2. During 2006, tutors were evaluated by 2,758 students. On those evaluations 2,255 (81.76%) ranked tutors’ ability to “ask...questions that stimulated my thinking” as “excellent.”

Goal: 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%.

## Section II: Analysis of Results

### **When (term/date) was assessment conducted?**

#### **Outcome 1**

1. Jan. 16, 2007-May 11, 2007; June 4, 2007-Aug. 9, 2007; and Aug. 27, 2007-Dec. 14, 2007.
2. Jan. 16, 2007-May 11, 2007; June 4, 2007-Aug. 9, 2007; and Aug. 27, 2007-Dec. 14, 2007.
3. Jan. 16, 2007-May 11, 2007; June 4, 2007-Aug. 9, 2007; and Aug. 27, 2007-Dec. 14, 2007.

#### **Outcome 2**

1. Jan. 16, 2007-May 11, 2007; June 4, 2007-Aug. 9, 2007; and Aug. 27, 2007-Dec. 14, 2007.
2. Jan. 1, 2006-Dec. 31, 2006
3. Jan. 1, 2006-Dec. 31, 2006

#### **Outcome 3**

1. Jan. 16, 2007-May 11, 2007; June 4, 2007-Aug. 9, 2007; and Aug. 27, 2007-Dec. 14, 2007.
  2. Jan. 16, 2007-May 11, 2007; June 4, 2007-Aug. 9, 2007; and Aug. 27, 2007-Dec. 14, 2007.
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### **What were the results attained (raw data)?**

#### **Outcome 1**

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.

The goal was met since the average grade earned for DENG0370 by students who received tutoring assistance at the Writing Center was 20% higher than that earned by students who did 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.

The goal was met since the average grade earned for ENGL1301 by students who received tutoring assistance 1-3 times at the Writing Center was 19% higher than that earned by students

who did not receive tutoring assistance, and the average grade earned for ENGL1301 by students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more was 16.1% higher than that earned by students who did 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.

The goal was met since the average grade earned for ENGL1302 by students who received tutoring assistance 1-3 times at the Writing Center was 21.1% higher than that earned by students who did not receive tutoring assistance, and the average grade earned for ENGL1302 by students who received tutoring assistance 4 times or more was 6.7% higher than that earned by students who did not receive tutoring assistance.

## **Outcome 2**

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.

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 16.85%; the second goal also was not met since the number of students per week who received tutor assistance decreased by 7.86%.

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.

The first goal was not met since the average number of students per week who came to the Writing Center for writing-related service decreased by 8.89%; the second goal also was not met since the number of students per week who received tutor assistance in/decreased by 30.5%.

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.

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 12.2%; the second goal was not met since the number of students per week who received tutor assistance decreased by 43.7%.



During 2006, 8,843 students came to the Writing Center for writing-related service, but during 2007, this decreased by 14.7% to students. However, during 2007, 4271 students received tutor assistance compared to 5,363 who received tutor assistance during 2006, a 25.6% decrease.

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.

The goal (increase other requests for tutor assistance by 10%) was not met since other requests for assistance decreased by 40.9%.

3. During 2007, the number of hits recorded on the Writing Center website was 6801. (Cumulative total: 30,303).

The goal (increase total hits by 10%) was met since the number of hits increased by 13.36%.

### **Outcome 3**

1. During Spring 2007, tutors were evaluated by 882 students. On those evaluations 778 (88.21%) ranked the "overall effectiveness of your tutor" as "excellent" and 73 (8.28%) as "very good" for a total of 96.48%.

The goal was met since more than 90% of students who completed the evaluation form rated "overall effectiveness of your tutor" as "excellent" or "very good."

2. During Spring 2007, tutors were evaluated by 884 students. On those evaluations 734 (83.03%) 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 3%) was not met since "excellent" rankings on this item increased by 0.53%, rather than 3%.

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### **Who (specify names) conducted analysis of data?**

#### **Outcome 1**

Randy Koch, Kimberly Thomas, Destine Holmgreen, and Taryn Shehab

#### **Outcome 2**

Randy Koch, Kimberly Thomas, Destine Holmgreen, and Taryn Shehab

#### **Outcome 3**

Randy Koch, Kimberly Thomas, Destine Holmgreen, and Taryn Shehab

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**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](mailto: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 1/28/08.

**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:**

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

Students enrolled in DENG, ENGL 1301, and ENGL 1302 who visited the Writing Center demonstrated an overall average grade improvement of 35.7% when compared to students who did not receive assistance from the Writing Center, thereby proving that outcome 1 was successfully met. 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.

**Outcome 2**

Met    Not Met

**Provide narrative:**

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

During 2007, there was a 14.7% decrease in the number of visits made to the Writing Center for writing-related services when compared to 2006. There was also a 25.6% decrease in the number of students who received tutor assistance when compared to 2006. Additionally, the 2007 requests for assistance via website or e-mail, fax or Helpline also decreased by 40% when compared to 2007. Therefore, outcome 2 was not successfully met.

**Outcome 3**

Met    Not Met

**Provide narrative:**

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

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.

In order to improve this goal, the Writing Center is changing the wording on the tutee evaluation form. This will help clarify any confusion the previous questions may have caused and increase the students' satisfaction of services. The new wording will be:

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?

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

Students who seek assistance at the Writing Center continue to earn higher grades than students who do not visit the Writing Center. 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 7 new tutors during Spring 2007 and 4 new tutors during Fall 2007.

Additionally, during the Fall 2007 semester, the Writing Center also implemented bi-weekly meetings and in-service trainings, which include presentations from TAMIU faculty to enhance professional development and growth.

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:

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

<b>Identify proposed outcomes for the next assessment cycle:</b>
Continuation of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for continuation): Outcome 2: Student use of Writing Center services will increase. This was the first full year the Writing Center was not located in the Killam Library; thus, more time is needed to re-build campus awareness of the new Writing Center location and promote services.
Outcome 3: Student satisfaction with Writing Center services will remain at the present high levels or increase. The wording on the tutee evaluations will be changed for the next assessment cycle. Thus, this outcome will need to be continued and re-evaluated in order to accurately assess.
Both outcomes provide measures our ability to meet goals central to the mission of the Writing Center, which need to be evaluated continuously.
New Outcome(s) – (List outcomes below): Participants who attend Writing Center THEA prep workshops will improve their initial TCOMP or THEA score by a minimum of 3%.
Modification of present outcome(s) – (Indicate reason for modification):

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

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

Yes    No

**Comments:**

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