

See program review website for detailed timeline and relevant request forms:  
<https://research.gwc.cccd.edu/oir/progreview/2013/index.html>

# **Golden West College**

## **INSTRUCTIONAL**

### **PROGRAM REVIEW**

#### **Spring 2013**

**Program Name:** The Writing and Reading Center

**Division Name:** Arts and Letters

#### **Overview of Program:**

The Golden West Writing and Reading Center offers a wide range of opportunities for students to establish and enhance their writing, reading, and English language skills. The center plays an important role in student success, and students in many disciplines benefit from the services provided. It is exciting to be continually modifying the program to meet the ever-growing and changing needs of our student population. As the Writing and Reading Center continues to offer students quality instruction and aid, it remains a true asset to the college.

Every year, the English and ESL faculty who teach in the Writing and Reading Center review the courses and brainstorm, developing new courses to meet the current needs of the students who use the center. English 020 continues to be our most popular course. Students are able to conference in small groups about their writing with an English or ESL faculty member. In addition to this course, we have fourteen mini-courses that offer students practice with language skills, composition, grammar, and reading. The computer based grammar courses and reading courses have proved to be very user-friendly, effective, and popular with students.

Our courses are open-entry/open-exit; they are highly accessible and individualized, varying in level and structure to meet the needs of students with a range of learning styles. Reading and writing skills are two of the most crucial determiners of college success; we offer professional, individualized instruction that gives students the support and foundation they need to move forward with their educational goals. As part of the Basic Skills Initiative, the Writing and Reading Center looks forward to the opportunity to fortify our services and continue meeting the needs of our basic skills student population. It is clear that students are learning and thriving in the Writing and Reading Center, and we appreciate the continued support from administration to maintain and increase the benefits of this important student service.

#### **Program Contact Information:**

<u>Program Contact Name</u>	<u>Phone #</u>	<u>E-mail prefix</u>
David Hudson	x58772	dhudson

<u>Program Manager</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Salary Sched/Column</u>	<u>Phone #</u>	<u>Office Location</u>	<u>E-mail prefix</u>
John Tyberg	Instructor of Record		x55242	LRC Writing Center	jtyberg

<u>Classified Staff</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Salary Sched/Column</u>	<u>Phone #</u>	<u>Office Location</u>	<u>E-mail prefix</u>
Christana Montes	Staff Assistant		x55242	LRC Writing Center	cmontes
Allen Nguyen	Lab Instructional Assistant		x58303	LRC Writing Center	acnguyen

<u>Full-Time Faculty</u>	<u>Phone #</u>	<u>Office Location</u>	<u>E-mail</u>
None at this time			

#### **Current State of the Program**

**1. What noteworthy trends do you notice in your data tables?**

1. We offer less mini-courses now than spring of 2010, when we offered 22. Currently, we offer 17.
2. Our enrollment has dropped by nearly 200 students since its high point in the fall of 2009.
3. In the last several years, our fill rate is higher (about 30%) in fall semesters.
4. Our FTES number for the fall '11 is 26 and for spring '12 is 26, its lowest number since spring '08, when it was 21.
5. Our success rates have fluctuated each semester between 60% and 72%.
6. Our enrollment numbers by age group have not fluctuated, and the largest group of students has consistently been between the ages of 20 and 24 years old.
7. Each semester we have nearly twice as many female students as males, and females are about 15% more successful than males.
8. Our Asian students are 20-30% more successful than the other categories of ethnicity.
9. Our demographic percentages by ethnicity have not changed noticeably since the last program review.

**2. What are your analyses of the causes or reasons for those trends?**

1. We have stopped offering several courses because we deemed them pedagogically ineffective. Additionally, we've had to cancel several other courses because the PLATO software was malfunctioning; for example, in two of the courses, the program stopped saving student work.
2. Our drop in enrollment is mostly due to our offering fewer courses.
3. A higher fill rate in fall semesters is typical for many programs.
4. Our lower FTES numbers is likely due to our offering fewer courses.
5. The fluctuation in success rates is erratic, so a trend is indiscernible at this time; the possible causes are many, and this is an area we should analyze more closely in the future.
6. Our "younger" (ages 20-24) population aligns with the college's overall demographic in comparison to other community colleges.
7. As a college, there are about 10% more female than male students, so the Writing Center's disparity between females and males is extreme. Perhaps, female students are more likely to seek help for their writing than males for sociocultural reasons.
8. There are many possible reasons why Asian students have been more successful than other groups.
9. Our students have likely been funneling into our Writing Center from the same places they have in the past.

**3. What does your program do well?**

- Our program offers students of all disciplines and career goals a variety of specialized mini-courses. We have a wide range of curriculum promoting writing, reading, grammar, and vocabulary skills.
- The center offers professional one-on-one instruction and/or group tutoring to every student. Our instructors and tutors are highly qualified to aid students at every level of English proficiency. Students are being tutored by English and ESL instructors, and almost all of our assistant tutors have master's degrees in English. Unlike peer-tutors who are not qualified to teach grammar, composition, and style issues at the college level, the instruction in the Writing and Reading Center is grounded in current pedagogy and practices and aligns directly with what students are

being taught in their English courses.

- The program is well-organized and student-friendly. Students receive immediate assistance from the staff. Classified staff and faculty communicate and work together to create a positive and inviting learning environment. Everyone works together for the common goal of student success.
- Not only do we review and update course outlines, we are effective in revising and updating curriculum content and frequently create new courses to meet the changing needs of our diverse student population. Several semesters ago we retired a group of outdated ESL courses. The ESL Department has created exciting new courses that address specific ESL grammar issues to replace these. Also, we have been using PLATO software in the many years now, and it is becoming obsolete. Next semester, we will be replacing those courses with innovative, web-based software by Pearson called “My Writing Lab.”
- Our program is committed to outreach. We offer a free workshop series every semester of eight workshops on writing, reading, and grammar issues. These workshops are advertised and open to all students on campus. The turn-out is exceptional with anywhere from 40 to 75 students attending each workshop. In addition, the Writing and Reading Center staff advertises our services every semester and offers orientations to any instructor who wishes to bring his or her class into the center.
- Our SLO assessment has improved since the last program review. Keisha Cosand and Sacha Moore developed SLOs for each course.

#### **4. What are the challenges to your program.**

##### **Within your program’s control**

- Students often come to the Writing Center with the idea that instructors will “fix” their essays. We are continually trying to change this perception and emphasize that instructors will conference with students to facilitate revision and critical thinking rather than edit students’ work.
- We encourage every instructor and graduate tutor to employ his or her own teaching style and method. However, we endeavor to incorporate these styles into a consistent approach that is reflected in our mission and philosophy. This is a challenge we continue to address in order to provide students with some commonality of instruction between various faculty and tutors.

##### **Beyond your program’s control**

- Students sometimes have trouble finding an open group-tutoring appointment, especially at the end of the semester when demand is highest. Thus, we need to offer 15 more instructor hours.
- During peak times, students may wait over an hour to see a graduate tutor. We have managed in the past with only one graduate tutor because when it has been busy, our classified employees have helped to check student work using answer keys. However, this is not ideal, pedagogically,

and, furthermore, it takes classified employees away from their primary responsibilities.

Therefore, we need an additional graduate-student tutor in the center during our busiest hours: 10 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday.

- In spring 2012, our course caps for our PLATO-software mini-courses were raised from 32 to 40 and then to 50 in fall 2012, which accounts for the higher enrollment numbers that semester. This semester (Spring 2013), the caps were lowered to 40. These changes in 2012 created a chaotic environment for our students who were trying to get enough instructor contacts to pass their classes and for our employees trying to meet that student demand.
- We have several courses that are computer based, and to offer students the best curriculum available, we would like to discontinue our use of PLATO for these courses. Edmentum, the company who sells and updates PLATO, no longer services our version of PLATO because it is so old. Thus, we rely solely on the college's tech support to fix bugs with the program, and these bugs often occur on a daily basis. Additionally, in a few of the PLATO courses, the program does not save student progress, which has been a mystery to our IT department. Further, we only have six user licenses for the three most popular classes (with 120-200 students per semester), so writing center staff has had to regulate how long students may work at our computers on PLATO, and this constant regulation is an inefficient use of our classified employees' time. Thus, we would like to update our software to Pearson's web-based, "My Writing Lab."
- The previous and current budget crises have caused a reduction in our staff and hours of opening since 2006. Specifically, we have cut all hours for hourly staff, cut our summer program, and we are no longer open on Saturdays. Since our center enrolls 600-900 students a semester, the reduction in staff and hours of operation has created an increased burden on faculty and staff. Our ability to effectively assist large numbers of students and maintain optimal daily functions has become very difficult.
- Because our hourly employees were cut after spring 2012, we have struggled to cover the writing center desk during all the hours the center is open. Our classified employees are off work before the center closes, so we have been using work-study employees provided by the Financial Aid office. During open hours, we need two employees at all times—not including the instructors/grad tutors, to run the center effectively.
- We would like to make fiscally realistic requests for things like graduate tutors, staffing, printing, and office supplies, but we have not been given access to our budget. This lack of knowledge about the program we are trying to run effectively leaves us guessing and prevents our progress.
- Our longtime coordinator resigned suddenly at the end of the spring 2012 semester, which was destabilizing for our program. Since then we have been without a coordinator, and our English chair, instructor of record, and classified staff have had to take on the coordinator's responsibilities. This complicated and sometimes confusing leadership structure, though allowing for the program to continue, has hindered our ability to update our course outlines and curriculum, to manage and schedule employees, to assess student learning outcomes, and to facilitate the Writing Center's day-to-day operations effectively. We request that the administration and English department officially hire a coordinator in order to simplify and strengthen our program's leadership.

## **5. What are the opportunities for your program**

- We have the opportunity to continue working with the Strategies for Student Success Committee in meeting the goals of the Basic Skills Initiative and to improve the scalability and sustainability of Writing Center programs and services.
- We will be reviewing and incorporating new and innovative curriculum to meet the needs of English, ESL, and other disciplines across campus. This includes vocational skills.
- We want to increase our visibility on campus and create awareness with other disciplines that writing and reading skills concern us all, and we want to create relationships with other disciplines that could benefit from our services.
- We will continue to implement and evaluate our self-assessment and student evaluations to augment our student success.
- We can find ways to recognize and celebrate the ethnic demographic represented by our student population.
- We can use the writing center to host readings by faculty and local authors.

## **6. Identified areas in need of improvement**

- With the addition of new course materials in the center, we need to make sure the instructors and tutors are familiar with and trained for these materials.
- We need to facilitate better communication and consensus between writing center staff and instructors regarding the most effective way to schedule instructor hours. In the past, some instructors have taken on too many hours and/or too many consecutive hours. This practice creates several problems: (1) it limits students to a very small group of possible instructors that they may conference with, and sometimes students may not feel compatible with certain instructors; (2) some instructors who work too many hours in a row may not be the most effective after working for such a long time; (3) finally, if an instructor who works many hours suddenly calls out sick, writing center staff struggle to find substitutes to cover all of the hours.
- We need to find ways to lessen the wait times for students who need assistance from graduate tutors, especially between our busiest morning hours. Additionally, we need to offer more group tutoring hours to meet the demand of students as ENGW 020 and 021 expand.
- We need to make sure that all disciplines across campus are aware of our services, so faculty from all departments can send students who need help with reading and writing to our center.
- We need to develop a more effective way for instructors/graduate tutors to comment on student writing so that students, instructors/grad tutors, and writing center staff have a record of student progress and areas students need to work on. This will help students have more focused conferences and allow for more effective assessment and improvement.

- We should have more meetings for instructor/grad tutor training and for norming sessions. There should be greater consensus among faculty about best practices for pedagogically effective writing conferences.
- A closer partnership between the English and ESL departments will ensure that we are offering clear, effective, and meaningful instruction to all levels of English students. The departments need to come together to communicate about common goals and practices.
- We must continue to fine-tune our appointment system for group tutoring.
- We need an official writing center coordinator who can take the lead in making the improvements outlined above.

**Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes (pSLOs) Assessed During 2010-12***Complete a separate page for each major and/or certificate you assessed.*

Program Name: The Writing and Reading Center Semester  Fall  Spring Year: 2013  
 Program Type:  Transfer Major Assessed:  Winter  Summer  
 Certificate of Achievement  
 Basic Skills Sequence  
 Area of Emphasis  
 Gen Ed Area

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Define the Expected Program Student Learning Outcome (pSLO).</b>	1. The successful student will be able to demonstrate successful learning strategies that include acceptance of personal responsibility in college level work.
<b>Step 2</b>	<b>What method did you use to assess the SLO?</b>	Instructors assessed ENGW 020 and 021 students using a four-point rubric: students could receive a score of 3 (Mastery), 2 (Competency), 1(Deficiency), or 0 (Severe Deficiency).
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>Describe the results of your assessment.</b>	Our instructors assessed 60 students: 30 students were given a rating of 3 (Mastery), 24 students a rating of 2 (Competency), 6 students a rating of 1 (Deficiency), and 0 students a rating of 0.
<b>Step 4</b>	<b>Describe your analysis of the data.</b>	Our data show that our instructors felt on average that the majority of the students they conferenced with demonstrated an acceptance of personal responsibility for their work and writing. This indicates that most of our students understand the expectations in ENGW 020 and 021 for taking responsibility for their work.
<b>Step 5</b>	<b>What planning and changes will or have occurred, as a result of assessment and analysis of data, to improve student learning?</b>	Although the outcome of this assessment reflects fairly favorably on our instructors and students, we want more of our students to demonstrate mastery in this important area. Thus, we will improve the clarity of our syllabi to convey expectations more directly and remind faculty to use pedagogical strategies that encourage the individual responsibility of our students.

**Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes (pSLOs) Assessed During 2010-12***Complete a separate page for each major and/or certificate you assessed.*

Program Name: The Writing and Reading Center Semester  Fall  Spring Year: 2012  
 Program Type:  Transfer Major Assessed:  Winter  Summer  
 Certificate of Achievement  
 Basic Skills Sequence  
 Area of Emphasis  
 Gen Ed Area

<b>Step 1</b>	Define the Expected Program Student Learning Outcome (pSLO).	<b>Data are missing from this semester because our writing center coordinator had recently resigned unexpectedly, so our SLO coordinator, Sacha Moore, determined that we would not assess SLOs until the program stabilized the following semester.</b>
<b>Step 2</b>	What method did you use to assess the SLO?	
<b>Step 3</b>	Describe the results of your assessment.	
<b>Step 4</b>	Describe your analysis of the data.	
<b>Step 5</b>	What planning and changes will or have occurred, as a result of assessment and analysis of data, to improve student learning?	

**Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes (pSLOs) Assessed During 2010-12***Complete a separate page for each major and/or certificate you assessed.*

Program Name: The Writing and Reading Center Semester  Fall  Spring Year: 2011  
 Program Type:  Transfer Major Assessed:  Winter  Summer  
 Certificate of Achievement  
 Basic Skills Sequence  
 Area of Emphasis  
 Gen Ed Area

Step 1	<b>Define the Expected Program Student Learning Outcome (pSLO).</b>	Students will be able to apply skills learned in ENGW 020 to writing assignments in their other courses.
Step 2	<b>What method did you use to assess the SLO?</b>	Survey
Step 3	<b>Describe the results of your assessment.</b>	The overall results of the assessment reveal that a vast majority of students learned skills in ENGW 020 that they will be able to apply to writing assignments for other courses.
Step 4	<b>Describe your analysis of the data.</b>	166 students participated in the survey. 137 students (82.5%) said “yes” they learned skills they can apply to writing in other courses; 22 students (13.3%) replied “somewhat” when asked if they will be able to apply new skills to other courses; and 7 students (4.2%) said “no” they did not learn skills that they will apply to writing in other courses.
Step 5	<b>What planning and changes will or have occurred, as a result of assessment and analysis of data, to improve student learning?</b>	The Writing and Reading Center recently switched to a “group tutoring” model which allows students to make appointments with instructors and work in small groups for longer periods of time. The goal is to give students more contact with instructors and other writing students in order to help students to more effectively engage in writing practice and processes.

**Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes for 2012-14**

(List the 3-5 most important expected student learning outcomes to be assessed over the next two years.  
Complete a separate page for each major and/or certificate you did not complete the assessment for the last 2 years.

Program Name: Writing and Reading Center Semester to be Assessed:  Fall  Spring  Winter  Summer Year: 2013  
 Program Type:  Transfer Major  Certificate of Achievement  Basic Skills Sequence  Area of Emphasis  Gen Ed Area

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Define the Expected Program Student Learning Outcome (pSLO).</b>	The successful student will be able to demonstrate successful learning strategies that include acceptance of personal responsibility in college level work.
<b>Step 2</b>	<b>What method did you plan to use to assess the SLO?</b>	A four-point rubric in which students can receive a score of 3 (Mastery), 2 (Competency), 1 (Deficiency), or 0 (Severe Deficiency).
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>When is the assessment going to be done and who is going to conduct it?</b>	The Writing Center instructors will conduct this assessment halfway through the semester.

Program Name: Writing and Reading Center Semester to be Assessed:  Fall  Spring  Winter  Summer Year: 2014  
 Program Type:  Transfer Major  Certificate of Achievement  Basic Skills Sequence  Area of Emphasis  Gen Ed Area

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Define the Expected Program Student Learning Outcome (pSLO).</b>	Students will be able to apply skills learned in ENGW 020 to writing assignments in their other courses.
<b>Step 2</b>	<b>What method did you plan to use to assess the SLO?</b>	Online student survey.
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>When is the assessment going to be done and who is going to conduct it?</b>	The Writing Coordinator will facilitate this assessment near the end of the semester, and the English and ESL instructors will assist in encouraging students to participate.

**Program Name:** Writing and Reading Center **Semester to be Assessed:**  Fall  Spring **Year:** 2014  
**Program Type:**  Transfer Major  Certificate of Achievement  Winter  Summer  
 Basic Skills Sequence  
 Area of Emphasis  
 Gen Ed Area

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Define the Expected Program Student Learning Outcome (pSLO).</b>	1. The successful student will be able to demonstrate a successful learning strategy that includes on-going self-assessment.
<b>Step 2</b>	<b>What method did you plan to use to assess the SLO?</b>	Online student survey.
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>When is the assessment going to be done and who is going to conduct it?</b>	The Writing Center coordinator will conduct this assessment the last two weeks of the semester.

**Program Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Semester to be Assessed:**  Fall  Spring **Year:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Program Type:**  Transfer Major  Certificate of Achievement  Winter  Summer  
 Basic Skills Sequence  
 Area of Emphasis  
 Gen Ed Area

<b>Step 1</b>	<b>Define the Expected Program Student Learning Outcome (pSLO).</b>	
<b>Step 2</b>	<b>What method did you plan to use to assess the SLO?</b>	
<b>Step 3</b>	<b>When is the assessment going to be done and who is going to conduct it?</b>	

## Resource Planning

**Staffing** What staff changes or additional employees does your program need to function adequately?

**Faculty:** We need a full-time official coordinator, and 15 additional instructor hours.

**Management:**

**Classified:** We need our part-time instructional assistant to be full-time and start and end work later to cover our desk.

**Hourly:** We need two, rather than one, graduate tutors to work our busiest hours, between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Thus, we need 16 additional graduate-tutor hours.

**Considering your current employees, what staff development/training does your program need?**

Four hours of paid instructor/tutor training per semester.

Note: Complete all faculty request forms in separate files and submit with your program review report as an attachment.

**Technology** What improvements, changes or additions in equipment dedicated to your program are needed to function adequately?

- **Equipment or Software** (e.g., computers, AV, lab equipment): 200 MyWritingLab access codes per semester. The center needs a copy machine so the staff can make quick copies of handouts, forms, etc. We also need toner for the laser printer in our office.
- **Technical Infrastructure** (e.g., AV or computer infrastructure, cabling): None

**Facilities** What improvements or changes to the facilities would you need to function adequately?

**Physical Concerns** (e.g. electrical, gas, water, foundation, space, ventilation). None

**Health, Safety and Security** (e.g. None

**Other** What changes or other additions need to be made to your program to function adequately? None



**Signatures, Individual Comments**

Department Chair: Abe Tarango Date: April 25, 2013  
Comments:

Division Dean: Dr. David D. Hudson Date: April 25, 2013  
Comments:

**(X) No further review necessary**

**( ) We recommend this program for Program Vitality Review**

I have read the preceding report and accept the conclusions as an accurate portrayal of the current status of the program. Signatures are on file in the division office. Type the names of the faculty.

- (X) John Tyberg
- (X) Dr. Dibakar Barua
- (X) Dr. Paul Tayyar
- (X) Sacha Moore
- (X) Elizabeth Remsburg-Shiroishi
- (X) Ryane Jones

I have read the preceding report and wish to add signed comments to the appendices.  
Signatures are on file in the division office.

- ( )
- ( )
- ( )
- ( )
- ( )

**Appendices**

- A. Data Sets
- B. Signed Comments
- C. Classified Position Requests
- D. Faculty Position Requests
- E. General Fund One-Time Funds Requests
- F. Curriculum Inventory
- G. SLO Inventory