WELCOME TO THE WRITING CENTER!

The KU Writing Center is a writing support resource for KU students, faculty, and staff. Since June 2007, we have worked one-on-one with 12,635 individuals in 46,574 sessions, and many thousand more during class visits, workshops, writing groups, and events.

SUPPORT FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

Retention and graduation are important outcomes for both undergraduate and graduate students. Claire McMurray, Graduate Writing Specialist, worked with faculty and graduate students to reach those goals. The ever popular Graduate Research/Write-Ons on the Lawrence and Edwards Campuses achieved a combined attendance of 220. Graduate Studies funded five Graduate Writing Groups for Dissertation Fellowship recipients in June and July, 2014, and building on that success, Claire and Consultants Annada Hemmingsen and Aron Muci led four Groups in Fall 2014. Additionally, 17 students continued or joined groups the next semester. Workshops and events, many in collaboration with KU Graduate Studies, focused on topics including abstract writing, grant writing, and American academic writing for international graduate students. As our programming for graduate students develops, we hope to incorporate some of the same concepts in our work with undergraduates. Right: Claire McMurray consults with a graduate student during a Research/Write-In at Watson Library.

SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

SUPPORT FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

KUWC hosted two Faculty-Staff Days of Writing, one in January and one in May, in collaboration with the Provost’s Office. 2014-2015 also saw the development of two kinds of Writing Groups for faculty: “feedback” groups led by the KUWC and “accountability” groups, led by Marta Caminero-Santangelo (ENGL) and Heba Mostafa (HA). Our strategy, “Educate the Educators,” aims to support faculty members’ development as writers and to build on these relationships to reach their students via in-class workshops and Writing Fellows. Left: Undergraduate Consultant Kyle Charles and Associate Director Katie Elliott participate in a “MobileWC” event at Allen Fieldhouse.
NEW APPROACHES TO OUTREACH

This academic year, we invested time and resources into educating the KU community about our many services, led by our newly formed marketing team: Associate Director Katie Elliott, Graduate Consultant Chelsea Mardock, Graduate Intern Amanda Hemmingsen, Lead Graduate Consultant Aron Muci, and Lead Undergraduate Consultant Mikey Shaw. The team updated our social media presence on Facebook and Twitter, created a KUWC YouTube channel, and changed the look of our webpage, writing.ku.edu. They also created events such as Late Night at the Roost (right) and fun giveaways with our logo, including Frisbees and coffee mugs. One Facebook and Twitter campaign was “Writers of KU,” a series featuring KU students, faculty, and staff. “Writer of KU” Kien Nguyen (above), a graduate student in Civil Engineering from Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, talked about his experience as a KU Writing Center client. “Because I’m not a native English speaker,” Kien says of his writing process, “I just start with whatever I think in my mind, whatever works in English. Then I try to make that correct, then I try to polish the sentence. Many times, when I meet with a native speaker to help me correct a report, I learn that what I think is not natural in English and how to write more naturally in English. So I want to learn as much as I can about that.”

One way to assess the Writing Center’s impact is to compare the number of students served to the fall enrollment at the KU Lawrence and Edwards campuses. Since 2011, we have served approximately 9% of enrolled students each year. In 2014-2015, we reached nearly 30% through events such that included in-class writing workshops, class information visits, the Writing Fellows program, Graduate Writing Groups and Research/Write-ins, and other events.

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

As a founding member of the Greater Kansas City Writing Centers Project, the KU Writing Center again planned and participated in the August Tutor Retreat at Johnson County Community College. Associate Director Katie Elliott led a workshop, “Developing Research Questions and Brainstorming Topics: Helping Writers Ask Academic Questions About Their Real-Life Interests.” Administrative Intern Amanda Hemmingsen presented “Emotion and Writing: How to Use Affect to Tutor More Effectively,” collaborating with graduate consultants Kate Nygren and undergraduate consultant Ben Bolton. Graduate consultants Kristin Lockridge and Scharla Paryzek presented “So I See You Worked at the Writing Center: Identifying the Skills That Writing Consultants Bring to Non-Academic Professions.” Graduate Writing Specialist Claire McMurray and 13 more KUWC consultants completed the KU delegation to the Tutor Retreat.

Graduate consultant Charlesia McKinney attended the International Writing Centers Association Conference in Orlando, FL and presented the workshop “Tutoring Writers Is Like Playing Basketball—How??!” with colleagues from Kansas State University and Salisbury University.


Consultant Voices:

“Who used a meeting as a chance to express concerns about consultations with inattentive writers, and later went on to implement the solutions we discussed in later consultations? We did!”

“Having worked as a consultant for a few years, I realized that I have become set in many of my methods...I don’t want a limited set of tools to help writers. I want options. In order to do that, I have resolved to experiment with a new method each week.”

Left: Graduate Consultants Kristin Lockridge, Jacob Herrmann, and Danny Caine talk with KU student writers.

House in the Learning Studio, our Anschutz consulting location served 1,073 individual students in Fall 2014 and 853 during Spring 2015. Total face-to-face sessions for the year reached 3,556. First-year student users ranged from 582 in the fall to 352 in the spring, the majority working on papers and projects for ENGL 101 and 102. International students comprised 56% of total users and scheduled 49% of all sessions in this location.

Left: Graduate Consultants Kristin Lockridge, Jacob Herrmann, and Danny Caine talk with KU student writers.

Right: Graduate Consultant Chelsea Mardock leads a consultant development session at Watson Library in Fall 2014.

Above: Kate Nygren and Ben Bolton present at the Greater Kansas City Writing Centers Project Tutor Retreat.
On Individual Consultations:

“Adam is very polite, patient, and helpful. He helped me generate new ideas and explained things in detail. I enjoyed working with him!”

“I came to brainstorm ideas and to get a starting point on my paper from the topic I generated. Charlesia was extremely helpful with that and I got ideas I wouldn’t have come up with on my own.”

“Tessa definitely helped me organize what I wanted to say and pushed my paper along.”

“Giselle was so focused while working with me as if the paper were hers. She was really wonderful!”

“Kyle has eagle eyes!”

“Brittany really helped me out. My final draft is going to be amazing!”

On Graduate Writing Groups:

“Great for keeping you motivated.”

“I really liked the flexibility of the group. We switched from editing as a group to writing and reading papers during the assigned time. It always fit our needs.”

“It’s really helpful for international students—a good opportunity to practice writing and speaking.”

“The writing group is more than a writing group to me; it’s a social support network!”

On Graduate Research/Write-Ins:

“The Write-Ins provide a good learning environment.”

“It was a good motivation for me to come to the library.”

“Very informative! Very quiet and staff was friendly and helpful.”

“Events like this should be held more often!”

HELP WRITE OUR FUTURE!

$25 FUNDS...
Two hour-long sessions for a graduate writing group.

$50 FUNDS...
Six hours of one-on-one consultations with Writing Center undergraduate peer consultants.

$100 FUNDS...
Training for five Writing Fellows.

$250 FUNDS...
Materials and refreshments for All-Staff meetings.

$500 FUNDS...
One undergraduate writing consultant at six hours per week for one semester.

$1,000 FUNDS...
Replacements for current iPads used during consultations and presentations.

$5,000 FUNDS...
A Graduate Intern to organize writing groups for graduate and undergraduate writing groups.

$25,000 FUNDS...
Expansion of the Undergraduate Writing Fellows program from fifteen KU Core courses per semester to thirty.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Graduate Writing Specialist Liana Shea (2011-2015), now in Houston, TX, edits Women from Higher Edu-
cation and writes for Inside Higher Ed and Sounding Out! A Blog About Sound Studies.

Humanities-Western Civilization Graduate Writing Fellow Nick Sambaluk (Ph.D., History, 2012) is an Assist-
ant Professor at Purdue assigned to the Department of History at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, NY.

Undergraduate Consultant Julie Wood (B.A., Journalism and Political Science, 2000) is Head of Communi-
cations and External Affairs at the Cochrane Collaboration, Wolvercote, Oxfordshire, UK.

Lead Office Assistant Kelly Schrofer (B.A., Environmental Science, 2011) is Assistant Vice President and Business Consultant at Bank of America Merchant Services, Kansas City, MO.

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Send us an e-mail or follow us on Facebook or Twitter!
GRADUATING STUDENT EMPLOYEES

Amanda Hemmingsen  
M.A., English

Erica Arbaiza  
B.A., Spanish & SLH

Jay Lee  
B.A., English

Logan Isaman  
B.A., English

Eric Chase, M.A.  
Global & Int Studies

Emily Brown  
B.S., Journalism

Haley Fisher  
B.A., English

Marie Schmitz  
B.A., Biology

Ellie Regan  
B.A., English

Michael Shaw  
B.S., Journalism