

Writing Center

ASSESSMENT REPORT ACADEMIC YEAR 2017 – 2018 **REPORT DUE DATE: 10/26/2018**

Who should submit the report? – All majors, minors (including interdisciplinary minors), graduate and non-degree granting certificate programs of the College of Arts and Sciences. Programs can combine assessment reports for a major and a minor program into one aggregate report as long as the mission statements, program learning outcome(s) evaluated, methodology applied to each, and the results are clearly delineated.

Note: Dear Colleagues: In an effort to produce a more streamlined and less repetitive assessment report format, we are piloting this modified template for the present annual assessment cycle. We are requesting an assessment report that would not exceed eight pages of text. Supporting materials may be appended. We will be soliciting your feedback on the report as we attempt to make it more user-friendly.

Some useful contacts:

1. Prof. Alexandra Amati, FDCD, Arts – adamat@usfca.edu
2. Prof. John Lendvay, FDCD, Sciences – lendvay@usfca.edu
3. Prof. Mark Meritt, FDCD, Humanities – meritt@usfca.edu
4. Prof. Michael Jonas, FDCD, Social Sciences – mrjonas@usfca.edu
5. Prof. Suparna Chakraborty, AD Academic Effectiveness – schakraborty2@usfca.edu
6. Ms. Corie Schwabenland, Academic Data & Assessment Specialist- ceschwabenland@usfca.edu

Academic Effectiveness Annual Assessment Resource Page:

<https://myusf.usfca.edu/arts-sciences/faculty-resources/academic-effectiveness/assessment>

Email to submit the report: assessment_cas@usfca.edu

Important: Please write the name of your program or department in the subject line.

For example: FineArts_Major (if you decide to submit a separate report for major and minor);

FineArts_Aggregate (when submitting an aggregate report)

I. LOGISTICS & PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Please indicate the name and email of the program contact person to whom feedback should be sent (usually Chair, Program Director, or Faculty Assessment Coordinator).

Leslie Dennen, dennenl@usfca.edu.

2. Were any changes made to the program mission statement since the last assessment cycle in October 2017? Kindly state "Yes" or "No." Please provide the current mission statement below. If you are submitting an aggregate report, please provide the current mission statements of both the major and the minor program.
- No. The mission of the Writing Center is to provide undergraduate and graduate students opportunities to increase and improve their academic writing skills through one-on-one conferences with consultants who are trained to help them cultivate effective writing, reading, critical thinking, and learning practices.

1. Were any changes made to the program learning outcomes (PLOs) since the last assessment cycle in October 2017? Kindly state "Yes" or "No." Please provide the current PLOs below. If you are submitting an aggregate report, please provide the current PLOs for both the major and the minor programs.
- A little bit. We rephrased Goal #2 " Promote awareness of University expectations for academic writing" to align more closely to USF's institutional learning outcome #4, "Students communicate effectively in written and oral forms to interact within their personal and professional communities. (Written and Oral Communication)." Our new outcome states: "Students learn to communicate effectively in written forms to interact within their personal and professional communities."

Note: Major revisions in the program learning outcomes need to go through the College Curriculum Committee (contact: Professor Joshua Gamson, gamson@usfca.edu). Minor editorial changes are not required to go through the College Curriculum Committee.

2. Which particular Program Learning Outcome(s) did you assess for the academic year 2017-2018?

#4, "Students learn to communicate effectively in written forms to interact within their personal and professional communities. (Written and Oral Communication)"

II. METHODOLOGY

3. Describe the methodology that you used to assess the PLO(s).

For example, "the department used questions that were inputted in the final examination pertaining directly to the <said PLO>. An independent group of faculty (not teaching the course) then evaluated the responses to the questions and gave the students a grade for responses to those questions."

Important Note – WSCUC advises us to use “direct methods” which relate to a direct evaluation of a student work product. “Indirect methods” like exit interviews or student surveys can be used only as additional complements to a direct method.

For any program with fewer than 10 students: If you currently have fewer than 10 students in your program (rendering your statistical analysis biased due to too few data points), it is fine to describe a multi-year data collection strategy here. It would be important to remember that every 3 years, we would expect you to have enough data to conduct a meaningful analysis.

Important: Please attach, at the end of this report, a copy of the rubric used for assessment.

The Writing Center for Credit class offers one unit of non-graded credit for students who work with the Writing Center on a regular basis over the course of the semester. As part of their course requirement, students were instructed to upload drafts-in-progress to their Canvas course after each Writing Center session. Work products were collected from the 2017-2018 school year.

There were 8 sample sets in our assessment project, consisting of at least one preliminary draft and a final draft. In order to assess variables that can be measured across multiple types of writing projects and that reflect our Writing Center goals, we chose 2 variables from our Writing Center goals: “Development” and “Format.”

Three Writing Center summer consultants plus Mark Meritt and myself rated the sample sets. Each sample set of work products was scored by 2 raters. Raters measured improvement between the first and last drafts on the variables development and format as described below:

Improvement was measured by one or more of the following criteria:

1. **Development:** length, increase in complex or correct sentences, increase in supporting details or evidence.
2. Awareness of appropriate discipline-specific **format:** Improvement in or addition of cover sheet, heading, header, page #, paragraphing, or in-text citations.

III. RESULTS & MAJOR FINDINGS

4. What are the major takeaways from your assessment exercise?

This section is for you to highlight the results of the exercise. Pertinent information here would include:

- a. how well students mastered the outcome at the level they were intended to,
- b. any trends noticed over the past few assessment cycles, and
- c. the levels at which students mastered the outcome based on the rubric used.

To address this, among many other options, one option is to use a table showing the distribution, for example:

Showed Improvement in Development	Raters agreed 7/8 sets showed improvement
Showed Improvement in Length	7 out of 8 paper sets
Improvement in Complexity of sentences	5 out of 16 ratings
Improvement in Language/punctuation	4 out of 16 ratings
Improvement in Support	12 out of 16 ratings

Showed Improvement in Format	Raters agree 8/8 sets showed improvement
Improvement in Cover sheet	5 out of 16 ratings
Improvement in Heading/header	12 out of 16 ratings
Improvement in Paragraphing	15 out of 16 ratings
Improvement in Citations	6 out of 16 ratings

Results: The attached chart shows sample sets from Fall 17 and Spring 18. Each line shows one reader's rating of one set of papers pre-and-post writing center session as indicated by last name, paper number, and draft number. For example, R1. Chen 1.1, 1.2 would be one set. R1 is reader 1. Chen is the last name of the writer, 1.1 indicates first paper, first draft, 1.2 indicates first paper, second draft. Readers indicated **Yes** or **No** if draft 2 showed any improvement in Development or Format. Readers then indicated which specific criteria showed improvement in the second draft.

Assessment of improvement: Readers agreed there was improvement for the variables of development and format in all 8 sample sets.

Internal Validity: For the criteria of length, support, and paragraphing, both readers were in agreement for all 8 sample sets. There was disagreement in the categories of complexity of sentences (3 sample sets), language and punctuation (4 sample sets), heading (2 sample sets), header (2 sample sets), and cover sheet (1 sample set). The reason for the disagreement in scores may have been due to a different reading of the drafts. For example, one person may have considered the addition of a topic sentence as an improvement in development whereas another person may have categorized the addition as an improvement in paragraphing. I added a note to explain the discrepancy between different scores in format for one sample. The first draft had an MLA heading and the second draft had an APA cover sheet. One reader marked that as a change and the other did not, perhaps because the change was not rated as an improvement.

IV. CLOSING THE LOOP

5. **Based on your results, what changes/modifications are you planning in order to achieve the desired level of mastery in the assessed learning outcome? This section could also address more long-term planning that your department/program is considering and does not require that any changes need to be implemented in the next academic year itself.** See Interpretation below regarding recording student-tutor interactions. One thing that could be improved for assessment as well as service for next year is better facilitation of the Zoom program for distance conferences. Because of technical difficulties last year, some students became frustrated with trying to Zoom in from off campus. We are working with Salesforce to help make this process easier. Also, our recent addition of phones for the two Writing Center rooms upstairs has made communication with the front desk and with students off-campus a lot easier.
6. **What were the most important suggestions/feedback from the FDCD on your last assessment report (for academic year 2016-2017, submitted in October 2017)? How did you incorporate or address the**

suggestion(s) in this report? We modified our Writing Center goals to align more with USF's institutional learning outcomes as suggested by the feedback from Mark Meritt last year. These goals are now framed more in terms of what students themselves do rather than what the consultants should do. We also collected student samples and assessed them on two measures, development and format.

- 7. Interpretation:** Although this small sample does demonstrate students are working on development and format in their papers, this method of examining student work products is not, in my opinion, the most accurate or best way to assess what we do. According to writing center research (Hall, 2017; Harris, 2015; Mackiewicz & Thompson, 2015) writing center work is best evaluated by looking at what goes on inside a conference. Writing center consultants engage students in thinking and talking about their work so that students are empowered to make the best strategic decisions about how to proceed with their drafts. Because we see every level of student, from beginning multilingual learners to doctoral students in every discipline, the approach we take in a particular conference will vary according to the needs of the student. Some students need more direction, some need less direction. Some need to think through ideas, some need to learn how to access other resources, and some need to just have another person there to make them feel comfortable while they write. Therefore, some drafts may be longer after engaging in a writing center conference, and some might be shorter. Some drafts may be scrapped entirely so the student can start over. The conversation and subsequent plan the student follows for the draft is important writing center work. The thinking behind the revision is important for writing center work. The awareness of rhetorical decisions and the reasons behind those decisions is important writing center work. By simply looking at drafts, we cannot know whether a writing center session is responsible for those changes or not. But by listening to the talk that happens during a writing center session, we can, at least, be able to get a snapshot of what kinds of dialogs are happening and how students are able to gain a better understanding about the rhetorical choices they make in a paper.

Therefore, a better way to assess writing center work is to look at the exchange between student and consultant. The study by Mackiewicz and Thompson (2015) characterizes speech acts in writing center conferences under three main categories: direct instruction (giving information), cognitive strategies (getting students to understand concepts), and motivational strategies (encouragement, etc.). I would like to use a similar method for our Writing Center. I have started collecting recordings from one of our consultants who recorded his Zoom conferences this summer. I'd like to examine the oral feedback he gave to see if we can come up with a better way of measuring what goes on in a conference. I'd like to use Mackiewicz and Thompson as a model, but also decide if we should change any variables to assess our center. I plan to collect recordings this year of our Writing Center conferences to include in next year's assessment report.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

(Any rubrics used for assessment, relevant tables, charts and figures should be included
here)

Paper Set: _____

1. Development: YES ____ NO ____

Increase in:

length _____

complexity of sentences _____

correct language or punctuation _____

supporting details or evidence _____

2. Format: YES ____ NO ____

Improvement or addition of:

Cover sheet _____

Heading _____

Header (name and page #) _____

Paragraphing _____

In-text citations _____

Writing Center Assessment, Summer 2018

Paper Set: _____

1. Development: YES _____ NO _____

Increase in:

length _____

complexity of sentences _____

correct language or punctuation _____

supporting details or evidence _____

2. Format: YES _____ NO _____

Improvement or addition of:

Cover sheet _____

Heading _____

Header (name and page #) _____

Paragraphing _____

In-text citations _____

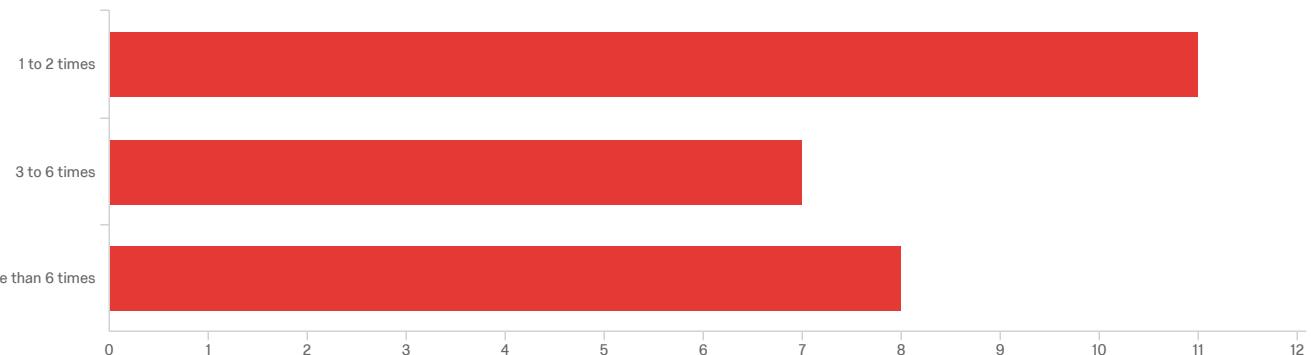
Default Report

Writing Center feedback

May 23, 2018 12:27 PM PDT

Q1 - 1. How many times have you used the Writing Center (total)? Please check the box

that applies:



#	Field	Choice Count
1	1 to 2 times	42.31% 11
2	3 to 6 times	26.92% 7
3	More than 6 times	30.77% 8
		26

Showing Rows: 1 - 4 Of 4

Q2 - Who was your Writing Center consultant?

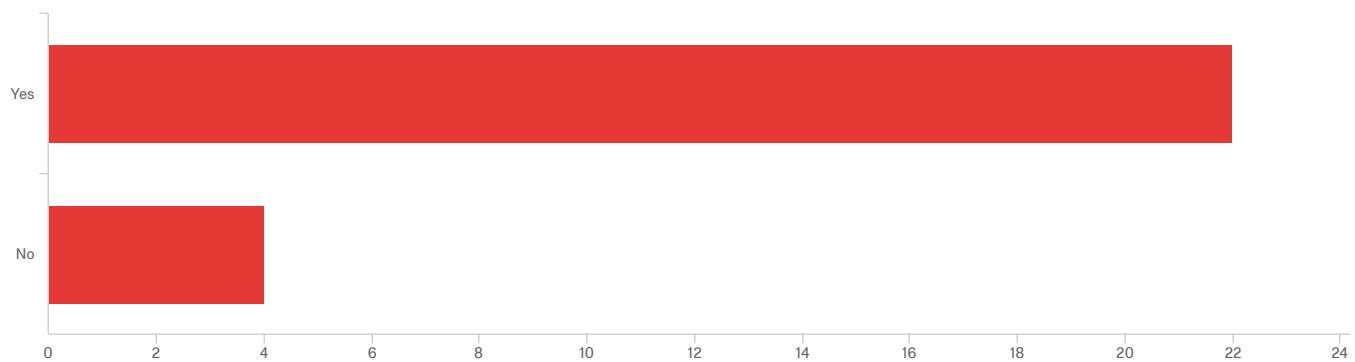
Data source misconfigured for this visualization.

1	Who was your Writing Center consultant?	0.00%	0
2	Julie Bruck	0.00%	0
3	Chris DeLorenzo	11.54%	3
4	Leslie Dennen	0.00%	0
5	Onllwyn Dixon	15.38%	4
6	Kelly Egan	11.54%	3
7	Megan Levad	11.54%	3
8	Mathew Mckinnie	11.54%	3
9	Julie Schulte	3.85%	1
10	Amy Timko	3.85%	1
11	Cynthia Schultes	3.85%	1
12	Tom Lugo	3.85%	1
13	Meredith Olson	11.54%	3
14	Kate Folk	0.00%	0
15	Dan Morgan	3.85%	1
16	Robert Boller	0.00%	0
17	Veronica Andrew	3.85%	1
18		3.85%	1

26

Showing Rows: 1 - 19 Of 19

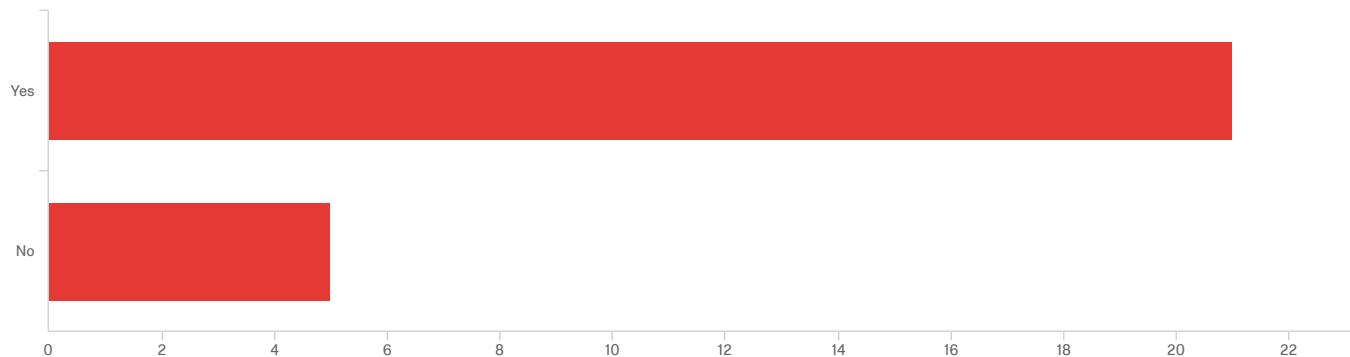
Q3 - 3. Do you feel your writing consultant addressed your concerns?



#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes	84.62% 22
2	No	15.38% 4
		26

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

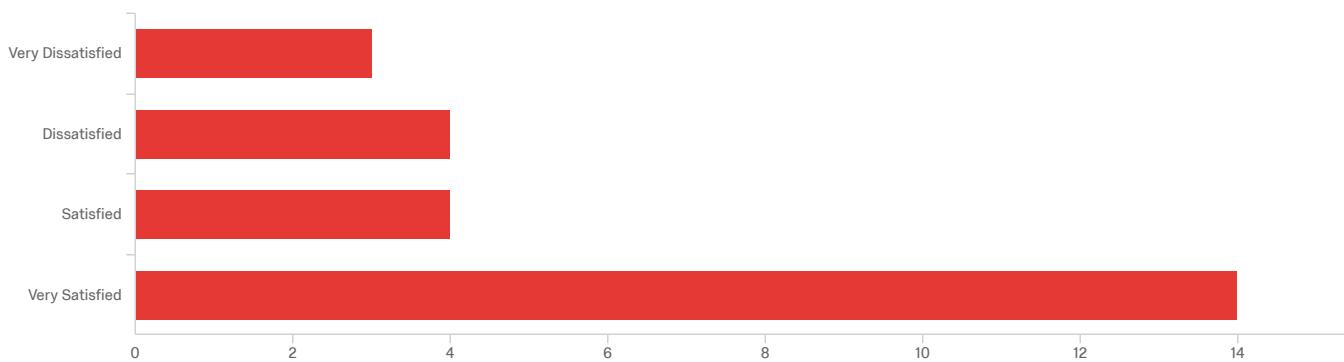
Q4 - 4. Did you have a better understanding about how to proceed with your paper after your Writing Center session?



#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes	80.77% 21
2	No	19.23% 5

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q5 - 5. Please rate how satisfied you found your Writing Center session:



#	Field	Choice Count
1	Very Dissatisfied	12.00% 3
2	Dissatisfied	16.00% 4
3	Satisfied	16.00% 4
4	Very Satisfied	56.00% 14
		25

Showing Rows: 1 - 5 Of 5

Q6 - 6. Please give us any suggestions for improvement. *Please Note: Writing Center

Sessions are designed to focus on one or two writing issues at a time. Therefore, we do not expect to get through your paper or address all of your concerns in one session.

6. Please give us any suggestions for improvement. *Please Note: Writing...

My experience was helpful, the instructor was just abrupt and short with me. Was not the best atmosphere

maybe focus on addressing ways to improve on sentence/essay structure

I scheduled an online appointment with Meredith Olson, but she didn't ever show up and join the Zoom online meeting. After calling the Learning Center twice, she still had no response.

Professor Lugo is awesome!!!!

Matthew was great and I really appreciated his intelligence and guidance. Nothing for improvement.

I came in specifically to cover APA as noted in the notes section of the tutoring appointment, and the Julie didn't know APA formatting and referred to an outdated book for reference. Was very polite and made me another tutoring appointment because she couldn't answer my questions, but I felt disappointed that my questions could not be answered.

This is was mu third visit to the writing center. Megan was very helpful in helping me locate my grammatical errors and making sure my sentences were clear for the readers to understand it.

My paper needed 30 minutes... and it only got 15 minutes to go through due to tardiness of the consultant. It felt as if she was in a rush. Please, anticipate and be on time next time!

I got more questions answered in this 30 minute session than I have in this full semester by my assigned advisor. I will definitely be coming back! Thanks!

Matthew is a really good writing tutor. Super friendly and approachable. Highly recommend him. He gives lots of suggestions, which can help you think about how to approach your paper. Thanks again for all your help Matthew!

Megan Levac is really good! Highly recommend her for anything, essay, cover letter, etc. She is super friendly and tells you what you should focus on that would ultimately help strengthen your paper. Thanks Megan! See you soon.

longer sessions

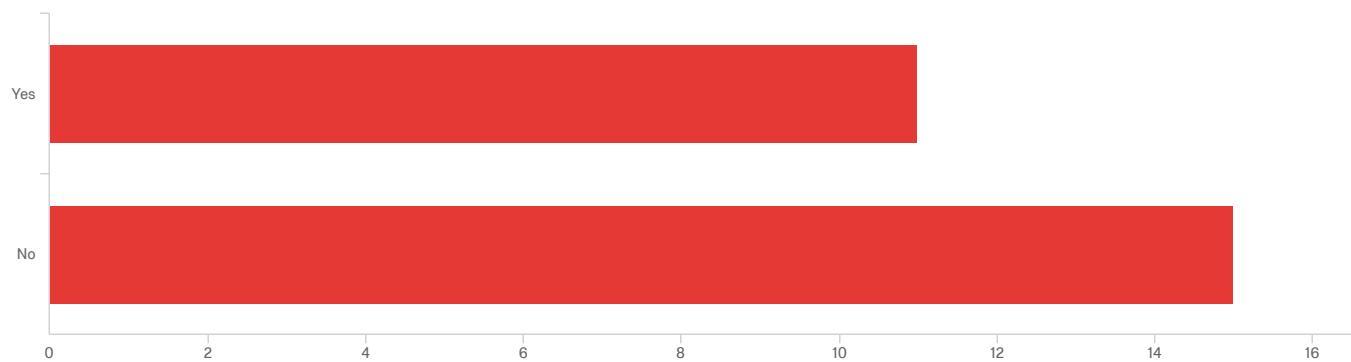
I got confirmation just 3 minutes before the zoom meeting. I spent time to find my paper and tutor had to call lower level to they can e mail my paper that I submitted with online while I booked appt. Writing center could not find that. I spend half of my time for waiting center respond tutor requested.

I was expecting to get feedback about the expressions of my sentences. We could only do 3 sentences in a paragraph. I would be more than happy to have more time and the one who is a little bit faster.

I am a graduate student. I have been visiting Writing Center for three years. Some tutors make me feel I am stupid or not smart enough. English is not my first language, but it doesn't mean I am a fool. I enjoy the tutor session with Dr. Dixon. Dr. Dixon is a very patient and knowledgeable instructor. He does not only teach me grammar but also he answers my research questions to fulfill my needs. Most of the time I feel stress before I turn in my work. After Dr. Dixon fixed my paper, my learning motivation increased. He helps me to address my idea clearly for my article, and he always encourages me and believes me that I can do better work. He is a great instructor, and I am looking forward to working with him again. There are some suggestions for Writing Center. The time of a tutoring session is too short for graduate students. I know the instructor can approve a one-hour appointment. However, sometimes the instructor's schedule is fully booked. Even I get the permission of the one-hour meeting I don't have any chance to work with him. Maybe you will suggest me to work with other tutors. But it will waste another five minutes to explain what kind of research I am doing to another tutor. Furthermore, the new location and new check-in system are inconvenient. I have to go to basement for checking in then I walk to upper floor for tutoring. Then I walk to the basement again for making another appointment for next time. It is inefficient. Every semester I have to face some issues if I visit Writing Center. I hope you can consider students' needs then make some changes. Thank you so much.

Showing Records: 1 - 15 Of 15

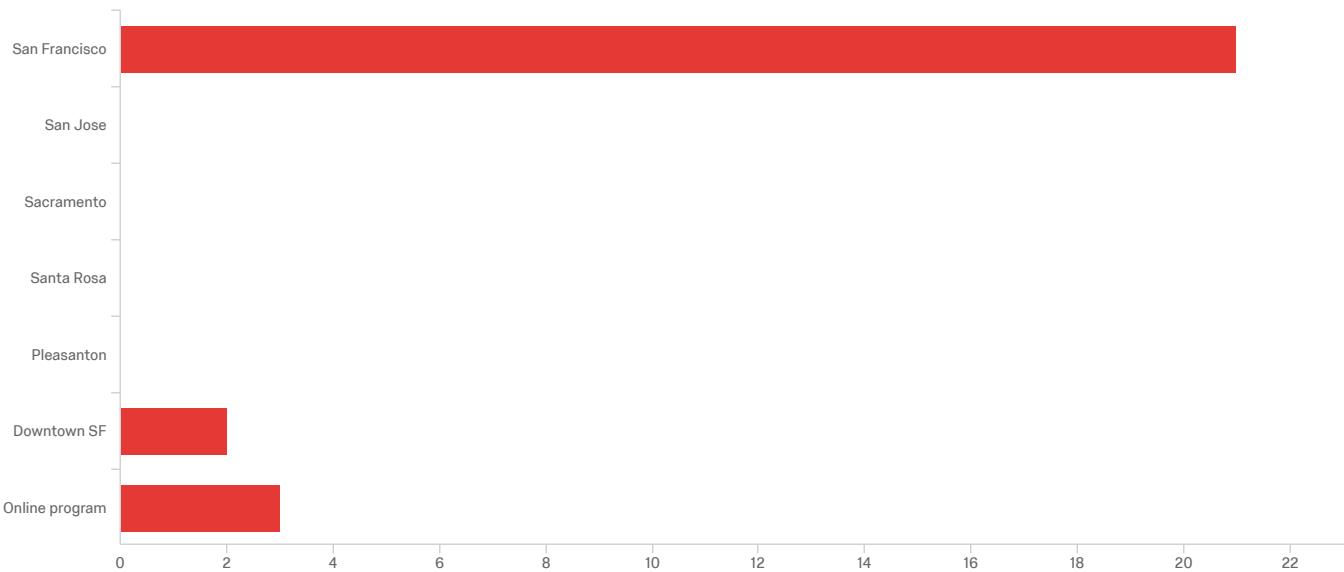
Q7 - English is my first language



#	Field	Choice Count
1	Yes	42.31% 11
2	No	57.69% 15
		26

Showing Rows: 1 - 3 Of 3

Q8 - 7. Please indicate your campus:

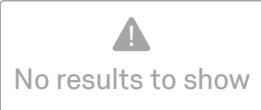
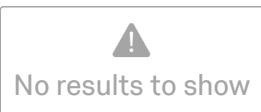


#	Field	Choice Count
1	San Francisco	80.77% 21
2	San Jose	0.00% 0
3	Sacramento	0.00% 0
4	Santa Rosa	0.00% 0
5	Pleasanton	0.00% 0
6	Downtown SF	7.69% 2
7	Online program	11.54% 3

26

Showing Rows: 1 - 8 Of 8

Q6 - Topics



End of Report

F17	DEVEL	Length	complx/sent	lang/punct	support
R1.Chen 1.1, 1.2	Yes	x			x
R2Chen 1.1, 1.2	Yes	x			x
R1 Chen 2.1, 2.2	yes	x			
R2 Chen 2.1, 2.2	yes	x			
R1 Ellis 1.1, 1.2	yes	x			x
R2 Ellis 1.1, 1.2	yes	x	x		x
R1 Healy 1.1, 1.2	yes	x			x
R2 Healy 1.2, 1.2	yes	x		x	x
Sp 18					
R1 Wu 1.1., 1.3	yes	x	x	x	x
R2 Wu 1.1, 1.3	yes	x	x		x
R1 Young 1.1, 1.3	yes	x			x
R2 Young 1.1, 1.3	yes	x	x	x	x
R1 Young 2.1, 2.2	no				
R2 Young 2.1, 2.2	no				
R1 Young 3.1, 3.2	yes	x			x
R2 Young 3.1, 3.2	yes	x	x	x	x

Format	cover sht	Heading	Header	paragraph	citation
Yes				X	
Yes				X	
yes		X		X	
yes		X			
yes				X	
yes				X	
yes			X	X	X
yes			X	X	
yes	X	X	X	X	
yes	X			X	
yes	X	X		X	X
yes	X	X	X	X	X
yes				X	X
yes				X	
yes	X	X	X	X	X
yes			X	X	X

note: For Young 3:1-2, MLA heading was changed to APA cover sheet. Reader r
not seen this change as "improvement."

Writing Center Comments Project 1

When visiting the writing center, I met with Victoria, one of their employees and writing consultant students. She and read my project aloud which helped to give a different kind of perspective to my writing. I was able to hear how it really sounded, things that were funky or made sense when I was writing but sounded confusing when read aloud. I had not been to the writing center before and was somewhat nervous because I don't like feedback on my writing. This being said, the appointment was actually very helpful. Having another pair of eyes read your work is extremely beneficial I realized. She made comments about structure and organizing my ideas that I hadn't thought about before. This is mostly what we worked on, and she helped me to solidify the points I was trying to make. I would certainly go to the writing center now that I've had this experience. (153 words)

My experience at the writing center was great. I met with Kaitlyn (she's also a politics major!), who was very welcoming and great to talk to. We read through what I've written so far for my project aloud, then took notes on what I should focus on for the rest of my essay. We went over the guidelines of the assignment and made note of what I still needed to do to fulfill those requirements. She told me I was doing a great job with communicating my main ideas and advised me to focus on three major parts of the interview for each subject to discuss in my analysis section. She also gave me tips on how to have a concise conclusion. I will definitely be going back to receive more feedback for future projects. Initially, I was nervous since I had never been to the writing center, but coming out of the session, I felt so much better about my project. Kaitlyn and I are planning to meet for a follow up meeting next week and I am looking forward to it. (183 words)

I had been to the writing center before when I was in high school. I worked on the revision part of my project. It was really helpful that I got some new ideas about my topics and some suggestion of structure organization. I think I will recheck my writing one more time before heading to the writing center. (58 words)

This was my first time at the writing center. We worked on revising my first two paragraphs. It was good to have another person look at it. The person did not give help that was helpful overall they just corrected things that I could have corrected by just reading it over another time. They just added some punctuation, deleted some words to make a sentence sound better and replaced certain words to make a sentence sound better. I would have preferred advice on how to rearrange things to make the essay overall sound better. Or have them let me know what parts of the essay they liked so I would know what I should or should not keep and change. Overall I did not have a great experience at the writing center but it is something I would like to try again but with a different person. I did specify what I wanted to work on but maybe next time should repeat myself. (162 words)

This was the first time that I been to the Writing center in the library. I think the overall experience was pretty good. The people who helped me is also our school's student. I talked

about my writing project first so that she can have a view of what I am doing. And then she read over my essay and gave some suggestions which is really helpful to me. I can improve my writing better through her suggestions. (78 words)

This is my first experience going to the writing center for my project for RHET 110N. I found the experience in the writing center really helpful. The advisor and I go over the writing together part by part. She gave me advice on which part of the writing I am lacking. I think this experience would not be very helpful if I did not prepare questions to ask them because they would not know what part of the essay to help me. In the end, there is 10 min left on the clock and we did not have anything else to discuss I just ask her tips on writing in general. I think in the next meeting, I would prepare more questions to ask the advisor and bring the most out of the 30 min appointment with them. (138 words)

I went to the writing center on 9/5 and I signed up super easily online. I went to the place that I was assigned to go to and sat down with a really nice lady who offered to help me with my writing. I pulled out my rough draft for my research project and asked her to go over it with me and help me fix the little things that were wrong with it. I had it printed out and she wrote on my paper taking note of all the grammatical things that were wrong with my paper and the other errors. She gave me good advise on what I should do in my writing in the future and how to contact her again in case I need it.

I have gone to writing center yesterday. We worked on the revision of my essay. He suggest me to separate the long paragraph into two paragraph. I will ask more questions about my topic and examples. (36 words)

This is my first time going to the Writing center and I think it's kind of helpful. But I think this helping is limited in terms of different instructor. My instructor only help to modify the grammar of my essay and didn't give me any suggestions. If instructor could give me more suggestions about which part of my part can improve that would be helpful. Next time, I would like to make an appointment with another instructor. (77 words)

It was my first time visiting the writing center on Monday 9th of September. At first, I did not expect much from the writing center because I usually do not follow feedbacks. However, the feedbacks provided by the writing center was actually helpful. The project that the writing center assisted me was on my RHET class writing project. My research topic focused the effect of writing rap lyrics on general writing. When I brought my work in, my work was near completion hence there was not much work to add on. When the supervisor read my essay, he gave constructive comments on my work, especially the parts that were lacking which is my conclusion. My conclusion was really vague. The supervisor gave me some helpful suggestion such as concluding my purpose and state it clearly in my conclusion. Moreover, he also suggested that I should consider general audience, not just my professor. He suggest that I should add more details to some research so everyone who read it can understand hence support my argument. In my opinion, I think the session was really helpful as I received helpful

feedback that can strengthened my arguments in the essay. It also helps my essay flow better. In my coming appointments, I will bring more questions regarding on my essays so that they could help clear my doubt or provide more improvements to my essay. (232 words)

I never been to the wiring center before since I do not how to made the reservation before. It is complex process to find the instructor because of the check in place is in the gourd level and the office is located in second level. For me this is a helpful. Since I bring my question to go there, so the instructor can targeting what is the problem and help me with that immediately. I asked with her to help with the organization and connection between paragraphs. After she read over my essay, she advices me to adding thesis for each paragraphs which made the essay more clearly. I actually think that preparing what is your question and your request before you go to the wiring center, because they gonna ask you what should I help you with. (138 words)