The Writing in the Disciplines Program and the Writing Center

Annual Report, 2011-2012

Executive Summary

The Writing in the Disciplines Program serves faculty and students across the University of Vermont campus. For faculty, WID provides a range of professional development programs that support individuals and departments. For students, the Writing Center offers direct support for writing, in individual, group, and workshop settings. Within the Writing in the Disciplines Program, the Writing Center and WID exist as equal partners. This report highlights the accomplishments of the Writing Center and WID, summarizing the ways we have worked independently and together to provide support for both students and faculty (our mission statements and a brief history are found in Appendix A). This report covers the following:

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1 Since the Writing Center joined the Writing in the Disciplines (WID) Program in 2009, the name “WID Program” has referred to both the combined student support and faculty development programs and to just the original faculty development program. In this report, we use “Writing in the Disciplines Program” to refer to the combined units and “WID” to refer to the faculty development program only.
WID and the Writing Center: Highlights and Support for Institutional Priorities

In selecting highlights from this year’s report, we have featured ways that both WID and the Writing Center have contributed to core institutional priorities. Faculty development and direct student support for writing carry many inherent benefits for those who participate in them, of course, but it is also important to note the ways in which our programming helps support and develop institutional initiatives.

The Writing in the Disciplines Program and General Education

Preparing for and Supporting General Education Outcomes

Leadership for General Education

Susanmarie Harrington served as co-chair of the Faculty Senate’s ad hoc Committee on General Education. As the committee focused its work on addressing the general education outcomes in writing and information literacy, Susanmarie’s WID expertise helped guide the development of an approach that will test the feasibility of a foundational writing program at UVM, while laying the groundwork for the exploration of the ways writing in the disciplines outcomes can be defined. Her past experience with writing assessment in theory and practice was also a resource for the committee. WID’s past experiences in partnering with departments informed the planning for the next phase of general education work.

Surveying Writing and TAP

As part of an ongoing conversation with the College of Arts and Sciences regarding support for first-year writing, WID designed and coordinated a survey of writing in TAP classes. The resulting report, a profile of writing assignments in TAP, revealed the extensive writing expectations across TAP sections. TAP students write frequently throughout the semester and produce a substantial amount of writing during the semester; TAP sections are generally following the CAS suggestions for making sections writing intensive. With the participation of some TAP faculty in the general education first-year writing pilot in 2012-13, continuing conversation about writing and TAP is in the works.

Supporting first-year writing

Writing Center Support for First-Year Writing Courses

The Writing Center continued to support writing in English 1, TAP, and Honors College first-year seminars, engaging first-year students in conversations about writing through 23 in-class writing workshops, 3 semester-long projects with TAP classes, weekly open workshops in the Honors College dorm, and 451 individual tutorials.

Faculty Resource Group for Teaching First-Year Students

In conjunction with the Center for Teaching and Learning, WID offered a faculty resource group for faculty teaching courses with large proportions of first-year students. This programming grew out of Susanmarie Harrington and Jennifer Dickinson’s continuing participation on the First-Year Experience Task Force. The year-long program provided resources and ongoing discussion regarding engagement strategies appropriate for first-year students.
Supporting writing in the major

Department and College Conversations about Writing
WID facilitated workshops and/or discussions regarding writing in several departments or schools (such as a 2 day workshop for CNHS, a workshop for the Honors College faculty, a discussion for geology department faculty, and a workshop series for BCOR 103) working with faculty and GTAs to identify issues that require attention and to develop teaching strategies that are appropriate for the disciplinary context.

Writing Center Support for Upper-level Courses through Open Programming
Over a thousand tutorial sessions in the Writing Center (42% of all sessions) were with juniors, seniors, and graduate students working on papers for advanced courses.

WID Mentor Program
Through the availability of some one-time funding, the WID Mentor Program expanded its placements of writing tutors in classes for majors from 14 to 20. This increase was matched by a 42% increase in contacts with students through WID mentors, to close to 1500. WID mentors held 314 individual sessions, 105 group sessions (creating 477 student contacts), and 23 in-class workshops (creating 641 contacts).

Tutor Tips on Writing in the Major
Sue Dinitz received an Instructional Incentive Grant to support the creation of on-line resources for students, with tips from tutors on writing in a variety of majors (see the draft pages at www.uvm.edu/writingcenter/tutortips).

Scholarly Projects Related to Writing in the Major
Sue Dinitz and Susanmarie Harrington had their article exploring the effect of disciplinary expertise in writing tutorials accepted for publication in The Writing Center Journal. They pursued a second research project studying the impact of one WID mentor on writing in a political science class, presenting their findings at two national conferences. Susanmarie also gave a conference presentation on her research into the history of WAC at UVM, and Sue was part of a panel with two WID Mentors that explored how the WID Mentor Program engaged them in pushing boundaries.

Student Success and Satisfaction

Supporting Faculty who are Developing and Revising Courses
WID’s open programming, as well as the intensive WID Institute in May, offered a variety of options for faculty who are seeking to refine an existing assignment or design a whole new course. With programming ranging from 15 minute Sound Bites programming to the 4 day WID Institute, WID offered programming suited to the quick pace of campus work in terms of both workshop length and topics. Popular workshops included ones on assignment design, writing in large courses, and grading and responding; our film series was also a popular format for faculty interested in general issues of assignment design and responding. Visiting guest scholars Stephen Brookfield and Sandra Jamieson attracted large numbers of faculty to workshops on critical thinking and plagiarism, respectively.

Engaging Students through the Writing Center
The Writing Center provided students with a variety of opportunities to become more engaged with and through writing. The number of Writing Center contacts with students increased by
25% this year, to a record 4,930, with 2701 individual tutoring sessions, 1,032 contacts through 259 group tutoring sessions, and 1,297 contacts through 49 in-class writing workshops. In evaluating their individual tutoring sessions, 99.5% of the students who filled out a survey reported finding the session useful, and 100% of the students said they would recommend the Writing Center to other students.

Providing a Service-Learning Experience for 50 Peer Tutors

The Writing Center provided an opportunity for engaged learning for 50 of UVM’s outstanding students. In addition to providing individual and group tutoring, tutors gave class presentations and workshops, served as mentors for students in grades 3-12, designed new materials for our Writing Center, presented at conferences, and provided a student perspective for several WID and General Education Committee discussions. All of the tutors achieved certification through the College Reading and Learning Association at either the Advanced or Master level.

Diversity and Internationalization

Supporting English Language Learners (ELLs)

Collaboration with the ELL Coordinator

The office of the ELL Coordinator (Đana Šehović) was relocated to the WID Program space. This facilitated a wonderful collaboration between our programs. By working together we all were able to provide better ESL training for the writing tutors, easier connections between ELLs and the Writing Center, faculty development programming on ELL writers, and consultations with tutors and faculty on ELL issues.

Writing Partners Program

Through additional funding provided by the Provost’s Office, we expanded the Writing Partners Program. Over the year, there were 75 English language learners who used the Writing Center four or more times, coming for 905 sessions and comprising over 38% of our individual sessions through open programming.

Conversation Circles

The additional funding from the Provost’s Office also allowed us to expand our support for English 96, Conversation Circles. Writing Center tutors worked with students on their conversation skills in small groups of three in classes.

Summer Bridge Program for USPP students

We continued to work closely with Janet Nunziata from Continuing Education and Đana Šehović to plan writing tutor support for the USPP summer bridge program. Four writing center tutors were recruited to work for about 15 hours each week during the summer, holding required individual tutorials with each student and facilitating weekly conversation and study groups.

Integration of Perspectives Regarding Diverse Student Populations

In order to prepare for the planned increase in international students, as well as to support the diversity of students already enrolled at UVM, WID open workshops have generally begun to stress a framework influenced by the universal design for learning project. Whatever the workshop topic, we stress the importance of constructing assignments and classroom experiences with an eye toward welcoming all learners and supporting students from diverse backgrounds.
Similarly, the Writing Center strives to provide services that are welcoming to and effective for all students by systematically applying the principles of universal design to our spaces, materials, and tutoring strategies. In a survey conducted in the three-week period following spring break, 100% of the students reported that the tutoring environment was welcoming, comfortable, and respectful, with 91% strongly agreeing.

Collaborations and Connections

Collaboration with other Faculty Development Units

WID, CTL, CUPS and other faculty development units have been in regular contact regarding calendars and our mutually reinforcing missions. We co-sponsored Burack lecturer Stephen Brookfield’s visit in fall 2011 and followed up on that program with a spring semester book group on critical thinking.

Writing Center and WID consultations

Sue Dinitz consulted with staff and faculty in a variety of units, both about individual students and about writing issues more generally, including ACCESS, Athletics, the Center for Student Ethics and Standards, the ALANA Student Center, and ThinkCollege. Susanmarie Harrington consulted with 6 faculty in 5 departments, in addition to the Center for Student Ethics and Standards.

Challenges Facing WID and the Writing Center

WID and the Writing Center have worked hard to design and expand our programs in ways that address both present and future needs. Working collaboratively to coordinate faculty development and student support, we promote and enhance the development of students as writers throughout their UVM experience. At the same time, we construct our services in ways that can provide a framework for supporting current campus initiatives, such as those related to student success and satisfaction, general education, and internationalization. As we close this year, we identify a set of particular challenges we face in the future.

Waiting for General Education Writing Outcomes

The general education project is making significant progress toward defining ways in which writing and information literacy outcomes are defined and offered throughout the undergraduate experience. Meanwhile, the current decentralized nature of curricula at UVM continues to make it difficult to develop writing initiatives. A lack of a coherent writing curriculum makes it challenging both to identify where students might need writing support and to motivate faculty members and departments to engage in WID programming.

Internationalization of the Student Body

We have been very excited at the move of the ELL Coordinator into our space and at the additional funding the Writing Center has received for programming for international students. However, as the number of English language learners at UVM grows, we expect the demand for Writing Center services to continue to increase. Even if UVM develops its own ELL program, ELL writers will still need Writing Center support as they face the challenges of learning to write in their majors. We are also very concerned about the lack of a full-time ELL Coordinator. Even currently, it is critical that we have someone to provide tutor training and faculty development related to working with English language learners, someone with whom faculty and students can consult when they come to our office with
questions related to second language writing. A part-time employee should not be expected to develop and offer these crucial services, which cannot always be predicted in advance or be expected to occur within a specified 18.75 hours during the week.

Tutoring Space

When the Writing Center moved from Living/Learning to become part of the Writing in the Disciplines Program, we creatively adapted an office in 302 into a space for tutoring during the day (in addition to our small office on the first floor) and created a tutoring corner in the Fulwiler room for tutoring during the evenings, which currently also serves as the ELL Coordinator’s office. Though we love having the students and tutors be part of the WID suite, this makeshift space for tutoring does present some challenges: students have difficulty finding it and voices can be overheard by everyone working in the Writing in the Disciplines Program. Also, with tutors spread out in the library, it is more difficult to create a sense of tutor community, allowing tutors to learn from and assist each other, and to create for students a sense that they are entering a vibrant, supportive writing community.

Furthermore, we have outgrown our current space. In the fall, we had about 1400 tutoring slots available and offered 1292 sessions, and thus were operating at 90% capacity. As use is never spread out evenly over the course of the semester—students have more papers due in the second half—we end up not being able to meet the demand during busy times as we have no space for adding sessions. The expansion of the WID Mentor and Writing Partners Programs have exacerbated this problem. WID mentors and partners who schedule their own appointments with students have nowhere to meet, and currently improvise by finding open spaces at tables on the first floor of the library or somewhere else on campus.

Developing the WID Mentor Program: Financial Support for the Writing Center Director

Currently, the Writing Center director’s faculty position is funded at 100%, with 25% teaching and 62.5% administrative release from the Provost’s Office. This arrangement, an outgrowth of the historical role of the Writing Center director in the Learning Cooperative, permits the administration of Writing Center open programming. Since merging with the Writing in the Disciplines Program, the WID budget has been able to fund the remaining 12.5% of the Writing Center director position (because of savings accrued from the first semester of our operation as we moved into new space and searched for a program assistant) to support the creation of a WID Mentor Program, which attaches experienced Writing Center tutors to courses in the major. However, this funding model is not sustainable beyond the next year or two. Without additional funding from another source, the Writing Center director will not be able to continue to develop and coordinate this program.

Lack of Summer Support for the WID and Writing Center Directors

Much of the work of the Writing in the Disciplines Program continues into the summer. With the WID Institute in mid-May, the lengthy project of writing our annual report—so crucial to analyzing the current year and planning for the future—extends into June. End-of-the-year budget planning also must happen in late May/June. Some preparation for the upcoming year has to take place in the summer, such as consulting with WID mentor faculty as they develop their courses. With the USPP Program, the Writing Center Director spends summer time coordinating the writing tutoring for the summer bridge program and connecting with the USPP students so they will take advantage of the Writing Center in the fall. August is an ideal time for faculty development workshops, programming which needs to increase in connection with any general education communications outcome. We hope that increasing resources devoted to the Writing in the Disciplines Program, perhaps through funding
connected with general education, will allow us to be compensated for summer time devoted to WID/the Writing Center and to expand our programming in the summer.

**Communication**

Developing a communication strategy that gets word of our programs to busy faculty without overloading them with information is a continuing challenge. We continue to experiment with different forms of communication—annual brochures or bookmarks, presentations at department or college retreats, emails targeted at past attendees or the faculty more broadly, for example. The most effective communications seem to be emails regarding specific programs that will be held in the near future—but to send such emails before every one of our events would run the risk of annoying recipients. We have added a question about how people heard about our events to our evaluation forms in order to better understand how to reach our target audience.

Fostering communication within the WID Mentor program is also an ongoing challenge. Sue Dinitz supports the mentors with regular meetings that are in part aimed at helping the mentors devise strategies for communicating with participating faculty regarding what is happening in the mentoring sessions and how the faculty might respond. Determining how to keep information and analysis flowing in a complicated power differential is something requiring ongoing mentor training. In addition, devising ways to keep information flowing between faculty and Sue Dinitz without overloading either the faculty or Sue is another challenge. We continue to refine our procedures in order to address this.
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WID: Support for the Teaching of Writing

Establishing an Institutional Framework

In its fourth year, WID has begun to settle in on the campus. Given the evolving nature of undergraduate education at UVM, and the potential for campus-wide general education, WID has sought to remain nimble, so as best to support individual faculty, departments and programs, and the campus. By creating quality workshops for faculty, seeking departmental partnerships, offering program tailored to the needs of particular constituencies (such as faculty teaching first-year students) and participating to the fullest extent possible in the campus conversations about reshaping undergraduate education and assessment, we seek to prepare WID for expanding once the campus reaches clarity about how to institutionalize students’ writing experiences. Without such clarity, there is no external motivation for faculty or departments to work with WID, and our programs attract mainly those who are already motivated to attend to writing.

Our departmental partnerships and other programming have offered us the chance to create and revise a model for WID that is suited to a campus whose curricular structures are in flux. This model brings together expertise from WID with disciplinary expertise across campus in order to address the problems, opportunities, and challenges around writing identified by individual faculty members and/or academic units.

What has emerged from this balance is a model for WID that relies on the following assumptions:

- For now, effective WID work will grow out of faculty-identified local needs. In the absence of an institutional driver that organizes campus attention to writing, WID must be responsive to the experiences of faculty in the disciplines. Faculty who are already exploring changes to how writing works in their courses or units are ripe for collaborating with WID.
- WID workshops and departmental partnerships can be designed in order to provide resources and assistance for faculty-led curricular development, to help address problems that have emerged in the experience of teaching particular courses or challenges that emerge in the design of new ones, and to help departments assess how to proceed as they design new experiences for their students.
- The goals and design of particular advanced writing experiences emerge from faculty leadership in the disciplines. Successful WID partnerships rely on leadership within units, as both expertise from WID and expertise from the disciplines are necessary.
- Collaboration with other faculty development units (such as CUPS and CTL) is essential in order to maximize the effects of the limited resources each unit has and to assist faculty and departments with their work.

While the current campus climate means that WID must be responsive to whatever needs faculty and departments identify, it is important to acknowledge the core message at the heart of what WID brings to any activity. These fundamental assumptions about writing guide all our activities, and cannot be fully realized until an institutional framework for writing is in place:

- Serious engagement with a range of writing tasks across their experiences at UVM will position graduates to meet the personal and professional challenges of an increasingly globalized world.
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Well-designed writing experiences can help deepen students’ intellectual experiences on campus and prepare them for professional experiences in a global economy post-graduation. Writing is essential to achieving learning outcomes in every academic discipline. Writing is both a way to learn and a way to demonstrate learning, and is an important part of almost every profession.

In the past year, WID met its goals of developing more flexible programming that would attract new participants and continuing to connect with faculty and departments. Relationships between the faculty programming offered through WID and the student support offered through the Writing Center continue to thrive and develop.

**WID Programming**

A variety of WID workshops and other activities for faculty, graduate students and staff with teaching responsibilities helped expand conversations about writing. These conversations encourage reflection, pedagogical experimentation, and assessment. A total of 145 individuals (including 99 faculty members, 12 staff, and 30 graduate students) attended WID programming (see Appendix B for details). Six people from 5 different departments plus the Center for Student Ethics and Standards requested individual consultations with Susanmarie Harrington. Attendance was up by 41 individuals over last year. Given the current absence of an institutionalized emphasis on writing throughout the curriculum, we find it heartening that attendance at WID workshops is gradually on the rise. Attendance at open workshops overall increased from last year, with 91 individuals participating (some more than once), for a total of 160 contacts. Compared to 2010-11, we saw a greater representation from some schools including the College of Arts and Sciences, the Rubenstein School of the Environment and Natural Resources, the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and the College of Education and Social Services.

Our programming offers a mix of introductory and advanced sessions. Sessions like “Designing Writing Assignments that Work for Everyone” introduce fundamentals of writing across the curriculum, while our specialized programming for units or small groups of faculty pursuing more narrow interests allow participants to explore some topics in greater depth. In addition, conversations about writing within units were supported by our continuing department or unit partnerships. By promoting connections across departments as well as offering units the opportunity to have focused conversations about writing in their discipline, WID programming encourages instructors to become ever more reflective about their teaching.

**Open Programming**

Open workshops offer instructors the chance to make connections across departments; our open programs are typically one-time workshops, open to any instructor who wishes to attend. This year, 91 individuals (including 52 faculty members, 11 staff, and 24 graduate students) from 50 departments took part in WID open programming which included:

**General Principles of Teaching Writing**

Through conventional workshops and a film series, workshops explored key topics in the field of writing in the disciplines and writing across the curriculum: assignment design, the role of feedback in writing development, plagiarism and source use, writing to learn, and writing and critical thinking. The Sound Bites series, developed in conjunction with other professional development units, offered faculty the chance to get a very short introduction to key topics (such as writing course goals, saving time while grading, or running effective discussions). A successful new program for this year was our film series on teaching writing, which used films produced by the Harvard University
Expository Writing Program and Oregon State University to anchor discussions of grading, responding, writing and international students, and assignment design.

Writing and Diversity
WID’s commitment to diversity includes mounting programs with a central focus on issues of diversity in the classroom as well as on including an emphasis on diversity within most workshops we offer. Part of our general message about teaching writing is that writing offers broad opportunities for students to learn and to display what they have learned; writing assignments thus offer the opportunity to create varied opportunities for students to proceed through a course. Our work with the CTL on workshops such as “Designing Assignments that Work for Everyone” has introduced an Understanding Diverse Learners (UDL) perspective to our work. In addition, we continue to support Blackboard Jungle by offering a related workshop (this year on international students and writing in English).

GTA Programming
In collaboration with the Center for Teaching and Learning, we have supported the Graduate Teaching Certificate Program. This program provides feedback and encouragement for graduate students as they explore ways various high impact teaching practices can be useful in their teaching. WID and CTL offered a workshop on teaching in higher education specifically for graduate students and we welcome graduate student participants in other workshops that are connected to the program. Preliminary conversations with chairs of departments offering doctoral degrees have begun to explore the ways WID might help faculty support graduate students writing dissertations.

Collaborative Workshops
WID programming developed new co-sponsored workshops as well as the co-sponsored visit of Dr. Stephen Brookfield. We worked with the Center for Teaching and Learning and Bailey/Howe Library to provide team-led workshops for faculty. These collaborations resulted in programming that better emphasized information literacy, assignment design, and reflective teaching. In addition, CTL and WID joined with CUPS and other offices to sponsor the October Burack Lecture and workshop with Stephen Brookfield. This led to a very successful co-sponsored book group in the spring.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity
WID hosted visiting scholar Sandra Jamieson, Professor of English and Director of Composition at Drew University. Jamieson is co-principal investigator of the Citation Project, an empirical multi-institution research project that responds to concerns about plagiarism and the teaching of writing. The workshop she offered, one of our best-attended events of the year, gave an overview of Citation Project findings and offered faculty strategies for thinking about how students work with sources in their courses. In addition, WID offered a workshop on teaching about source use for a panel of the Academic Integrity Council.

Faculty members motivated to attend our workshops were happy with the programming and reported that it was of great value to their teaching.

At the conclusion of every workshop, we asked participants to fill out an evaluation to help us assess the effectiveness of the activities and to solicit suggestions for additional programming. The 48 evaluations collected this year showed that participants were overwhelmingly satisfied with the workshops. Virtually all respondents strongly agreed or agreed that the workshop was valuable, that discussion helped them

"Having the opportunity to discuss curriculum with colleagues... allowed for the exchange of ideas which I believe will improve my teaching."
learn, that they would use ideas from the workshop in their teaching, and that they would recommend the workshop to others. Over 90% of participants thought the workshop met their goals and balanced presentation, activities, and discussion well. We saw a slight increase this year in the number of participants who were occasionally neutral or slightly negative about some aspect of a workshop, but for the first time this year we ran workshops that faculty were required to attend. Involuntary attendance is not surprisingly linked to somewhat lower evaluations, but we note that even in those cases, participants report useful insights as a result of the workshops.

Participants were also asked open-ended questions about what element of the workshop was particularly helpful and whether there are any other activities, materials, or programs they would like WID to offer. The most common responses to the first question were that participants appreciated the chance to learn from and connect with colleagues in other departments, the opportunity to spend time talking about teaching; the chance to receive feedback from colleagues; and the chance to see examples of others’ approaches, and exposure to new ways of thinking to enhance teaching. (More detail on workshop attendance and evaluations is given in Appendix B; more detail on workshop participants and their affiliations is found in Appendix C.)

**WID Institute**

The WID Institute, a four-day program in May, supports full-time faculty developing or revising an undergraduate course with a significant writing component. Participants develop a clear plan for the role of writing in the course, create assignment materials and class activities, and create assessment tools and strategies. This year, eleven faculty from 9 different programs or departments in the Colleges of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Arts and Science, and Rubenstein participated. We were pleased to welcome Professor Char Mehrtens (Geology) for the first day of the workshop; she drew on her extensive experience with the NSF-funded project *On the Cutting Edge: Professional Development for Geoscience Faculty*, for which she has been a workshop leader on course design. Her contributions to the Institute provided a strong foundation in the construction of course goals which guided everything else participants developed. We were also pleased to welcome 3 guests from Dawson College in Montreal. Two English professors and one historian joined us to participate in the workshop and to consider ways in which the Institute might be a model for their evolving WID program. The participation of several librarians from Bailey/Howe provided all participants with the opportunity for information literacy consulting during the course development process. Follow up activities will help support faculty teaching as well as writing.

"I've discovered new and innovative ways to bring writing into my course. How I do writing in my class is forever different."

Faculty evaluation for the 2012 WID Institute was overwhelmingly positive. 9 out of 10 evaluation forms reported that the participants all strongly agreed that the Institute was valuable and that they would recommend the Institute to others (and the 10th agreed). Virtually all participants agreed or strongly agreed that the Institute balanced presentation, activities, and discussion well. Open-ended comments indicate that the Institute’s emphasis on creating course goals and the connections between course activities, course goals, and writing assignments opened up many new insights for participants. This work led participants to imagine both new kinds of assignments as well as new strategies for grading and responding. As now seems typical of Institute participants’ reports, the evaluations praised both the quality of materials provided and the quality of facilitation and noted gratitude for the chance to connect with colleagues across department lines. (More detail is given in Appendix D.)
We continued our practice of inviting Institute alumni to do brief presentations each day. These visits helped current participants see the light at the end of the tunnel, and also helped provide concrete examples of the ways the many options that are discussed at the Institute can come to fruition in a finished course.

During the year, we held Institute reunion meetings for the 2011 participants. These meetings, at the beginning of the fall and spring semester, helped participants keep in touch with each other and enhanced participants’ teaching experience. For 2012, we will experiment with Institute reunions that address particular professional development issues (like working with Zotero) in addition to serving the periodic check-in purpose that prior reunions have served.

**Special Workshops, Programs, and Activities**

**Faculty Resource Group**

The Faculty Resource Group on teaching first-year students, with 9 participants used Bette Erickson, Calvin Peters and Diane Strommer’s *Teaching First-Year College Students* (Jossey-Bass, 2006) as the basis for exploring ways to identify the particular challenges and needs for this student population, ways to shape activities and material design/presentation to meet students’ needs, and ways to address the first-year student population in both large and small classes. The group’s work was productive and participants opted to continue the group for next year. We will bring in a new group of faculty teaching first-year students and coordinate some activities or meetings with both the veteran and new members.

**New Faculty**

WID once again joined the Fleming Museum, the Center for Teaching and Learning, Community-University Partnerships and Service Learning, and the Center for Cultural Pluralism in presenting at New Faculty Orientation. The orientation presentation brings current research to the attention of new faculty and offers the opportunity for interaction with the material and with colleagues.

**Academic Integrity**

Over the past two years, the Writing Center has been approached by the Center for Student Ethics and Standards (CSES) about potential support for students facing plagiarism sanctions. Sue Dinitz and Susanmarie Harrington met several times with Lara Scott, Assistant Director of CSES, in order to work out ways in which the Writing Center and WID can provide appropriate support to students and the academic integrity panels. The Writing Center can provide limited support under certain circumstances for students working under a sanction, and Susanmarie Harrington created a workshop/discussion for the academic integrity council. As noted above, in February WID hosted Sandra Jamieson, a leading researcher in this area.

**Faculty Writing Workshops**

In conjunction with the Center for Teaching and Learning, WID began sponsoring faculty writing retreats in Summer 2011. The initial offering, Tuesdays at Twelve, was well-received. 12 faculty participated. Efforts to provide a fall faculty writing retreat provide challenging; few participants registered. However, in Summer 2012, we kicked off the summer writing program with a well-attended full-day retreat and lunchtime writing tips. The faculty writing workshop will continue through summer 2012.
**Departmental Partnerships**

We have consistently sought opportunities to work with faculty in departments, looking at the ways WID can collaborate with groups of faculty to explore the relationships among teaching practices, writing, and disciplinary and professional expectations. These collaborations encourage faculty to identify the ways writing already functions as a natural process in the discipline, and seek to build on those disciplinary experiences to strengthen attention to writing across courses in the unit. This year, we pursued two new departmental partnerships and explored new ways those partnerships might function. Beginning with local goals, connected to work that is already underway in the department, is a promising strategy for forming new relationships with units.

**Department of History**

Members of the department agreed to help recruit student participants in WID's Citation Project research. This ongoing work will help us understand how students identify and make use of sources in their advanced courses.

**BCOR**

WID developed a series of workshops for graduate teaching assistants in BCOR 103, *Molecular and Cell Biology*. Working with lab coordinator Michelle McGee and course director Professor Jim Vigoreaux, Susanmarie Harrington developed workshops intended to help the GTAs develop strategies for guiding students through the writing project and presentation at the end of the course—but more importantly, intended to help the GTAs develop a real sense of ownership regarding their roles as teachers of writing. The workshop series helped the GTAs articulate their expectations for scientific writing, as well as helped them refine the rubric in use. The final workshop focused on preparing them to respond to students’ drafts.

**The Department of Psychology**

Last year, WID prepared a department profile that enabled the Psychology faculty to review their collective approaches to writing. In fall 2011, the department constructed a set of assignment names and descriptors intended to provide students more chances to make connections across courses. These assignment names and descriptions are not intended to limit the ways in which any individual faculty member might assign writing, but to highlight some common understandings of key genres in the discipline. Members of the department also agreed to help recruit students for participation in WID’s Citation Project research. This ongoing work will help us understand how students identify and make use of sources in their advanced courses.

**The TAP Program**

The TAP Program provides first-year seminars for students in the College of Arts and Sciences. TAP worked with WID on a program profile project. The CAS Dean's office supported a survey of TAP faculty, which enabled us to collect information about the nature of writing in TAP courses. In addition, many faculty submitted syllabi for WID analysis. The resulting profile established that TAP sections are indeed writing intensive and generally in keeping with the existing TAP program guidelines for making courses writing intensive (the full report is available in Appendix E). A May workshop on writing—co-led by Nancy Welch and Susanmarie Harrington—allowed faculty to explore some of the findings from the profile as well as to develop assignments for fall 2012.
The Writing in the Disciplines Program and the Writing Center Annual Report, 2011-2012

The College of Nursing and Health Sciences
Susanmarie Harrington designed and facilitated a two-day program for CNHS faculty, held during spring break 2012. The two-day program focused on designing assignments and assessing students’ writing, and permitted faculty to work on individual course assignments as well as created time for faculty to work within departments. Some departments or programs chose to work on undergraduate outcomes; others chose to work on issues associated with graduate writing exams.

The Honors College
WID offered a workshop on grading and responding to student writing as part of the Honors College faculty development day in May.

Consultations
Tailored consulting workshops were offered with faculty who requested it. Susanmarie offered 6 personal consultations to faculty seeking advice about writing assignments or curriculum development.

WID and General Education
WID continued its involvement with general education. Susanmarie Harrington’s continued service on the general education committee changed with the creation of the Faculty Senate’s ad hoc committee on general education: she was appointed co-chair (Char Merhtens is the other co-chair). The General Education Committee focused its attention on writing and information literacy outcomes, and during the year the committee refined a set of foundational writing and information literacy outcomes, inventoried the campus capacity for addressing those outcomes via current offerings at the first-year level, and began a process of broad consultation regarding approaches to assessment. Susanmarie’s role as WID director was closely tied to the general education work: her expertise in writing program design, administration, and assessment helped information from the field flow to the committee as needed. She and other composition faculty (including Sue Dinitz) met with the committee in the fall. During the academic year, the general education committee focused most of its attention on first-year or foundational writing and information literacy experiences. A working group led by Nancy Welch will pilot a process by which faculty teaching TAP, English 1, and the Honors College first-year seminar all address common writing and information literacy outcomes. The larger committee turned its attention to exploring the use of institutional data (such as the NSSE survey) to assess writing, and laid the groundwork for next year’s work on writing and information literacy outcomes in disciplines.

The progress of general education is closely tied to the development of a firm institutional footing for WID. How the campus chooses to structure attention to writing and information literacy outcomes in the majors and across the undergraduate experience has many implications for WID’s activities and resources.
The Writing Center: Support for Student Writers

An Overview of Writing Center Services for 2011-2012

An Overview of Services Provided to Students: Opportunities for Engagement

The Writing Center offers students the opportunity to talk about their writing with a trained and experienced peer tutor at any point in the writing process. It offers services through two programs: open programming, which can be scheduled by any student or arranged by any faculty member, and the WID Mentor Program, which attaches tutors to classes and is available only to faculty who have participated in the WID faculty development program. As demonstrated by the summary data in Table 1, use of the Writing Center expanded dramatically in almost all areas this year, with the total number of student contacts with a tutor increasing by 25%, to 2,387.

- Our contacts through open programming increased by 20%, thanks in part to the extra $5000 we received from the Provost’s Office in order to (a) expand our individual tutoring through the Writing Partners Program, used by many international students; and (b) expand our group tutoring for international students through English 095, Conversation Circles. Of the 2387 individual tutoring sessions scheduled through open programming, 945 (40%) were through the Writing Partners Program.
- Our contacts through the WID Mentor Program increased by 42%, reflecting our ability to expand the number of classes working with mentors from 14 to 20 as a result of one-time funds made available through a lapse between the departure of one program assistant and the hiring of another, plus our ability to take advantage of work study funding.
- The only decrease in the number of contacts was in class workshops offered through open programming, partly because faculty wanting to work closely with the Writing Center are now able to request a WID Mentor and partly because we did less aggressive outreach, knowing that we were operating at close to capacity and were hoping to expand the Writing Partners Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of session</th>
<th>Open Programming</th>
<th>WID Mentor</th>
<th>Total Contacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual tutoring</td>
<td>2387 (+24%)</td>
<td>314 (+31%)</td>
<td>2,701 (+24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group tutoring</td>
<td>555 (+83%)</td>
<td>477 (+56%)</td>
<td>1,032 (+70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class workshops</td>
<td>556 (-19%)</td>
<td>641 (+39%)</td>
<td>1,197 (+4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Contacts</td>
<td>3498 (+20%)</td>
<td>1432 (+42%)</td>
<td>4,930 (+25%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An Overview of Services Provided to Tutors: A Service Learning Experience

All of the above services were provided by fifty Writing Center tutors—the largest number ever—ranging from sophomores to seniors, and from a variety of majors. The writing tutors are carefully chosen through an interview and application process after being recommended by a professor. Their training is framed as an academic learning experience, which begins with the two courses required of first-year tutors (English 104 and 105) and continues through regular staff development meetings for second- and third-year tutors and for tutors serving as WID mentors.

Through their training, tutors explore how every writer’s abilities and writing processes are shaped by aspects of their background, experience, and identity, and learn ways of supporting academic literacy development at all levels, with focused units on ESL writers and writers with disabilities. The tutors
develop a wide range of skills: in writing, teaching, leadership, public speaking, working in both one-on-one and group settings, time management, responsibility, and professionalism. As one tutor wrote (who was both the Outstanding Senior English Major and the Outstanding Senior Anthropology Major this year):

Of all the opportunities I have been fortunate enough to have here [at UVM], the chance to train and work at the Writing Center has been by far the one I cite as most central. From my training and work here I came to understand writing and academia, and the connections between them, more deeply than I could have ever done before, and this growth as a writer and thinker spilled into everything I came to study and do. ... The intellectual and social support system you create for us [the tutors] as we move through our work here is, in my opinion, one of the best things UVM has to offer. ... My work here with you has left me with skills and ways of thinking that I have already discovered are invaluable to whatever I do moving forward.

Tutor Highlights
In addition to providing over 2700 student contacts through individual tutorial sessions, over 1000 through group tutoring sessions, and close to 1200 through class workshops, tutors collaborated in the improvement and development of our services and participated in broader conversations within the field by presenting at conferences and creating materials for use in our Writing Center.

- All tutors earned certification through the College Reading and Learning Association at one of three levels (each level requiring a minimum of 10 additional hours of training and 25 additional hours of tutoring). For the first time, all of the tutors were able to acquire enough tutoring hours to become certified at the Advanced level or above. We had 27 tutors reach the "Advanced" level; 13 the "Master" level; and 9 complete an additional 25 hours of tutoring and 10 of training beyond the Master level (our "Grand Master" tutors).
- In March 2012, tutors Jonathan Roketenetz and Pat LaClair joined Sue Dinitz in giving a panel presentation at the Northeast Writing Centers Association Conference at St. Johns University, exploring how the WID Mentor Program involved us in pushing boundaries, both personal and professional.
- Many tutors contributed to improving our spaces and services. For example, Takeshi Horiguchi created a new poster for our first-floor space and a black-and-white flyer to post around campus. Casey Manning created a new Writing Center script that captures both the professionalism and peer-centeredness of our services. Emily Ross developed a brochure on writer's block, and Indigo James developed an activity to make tutors more aware of their various identities and how they might impact tutoring.
- Tutor Jenna Scoville served as Presentation Coordinator, organizing over 50 class presentations and workshops about the Writing Center.
- Six tutors served as mentors for the Young Writers Project (YWP), providing feedback to student writers in grades 2-12.
- Tutors Jonathan Roketenetz and Hannah Prescott served on the Advisory Committee for the First-Year (General Education) Writing Initiative.
- Jonathan Roketenetz gave a workshop for faculty at the May 2012 WID Institute on designing effective peer review of student work-in-progress.
Demographics of Students Who Used the Writing Center

Class Standing

The charts below indicate the class standing of all students who used the Writing Center this year, and show that matriculated undergraduates from each class used the Writing Center in nearly equal proportions. This pattern is very similar to last year’s: first-year students, sophomores, and seniors each accounted for from 22-24% of the sessions and students, while somewhat fewer juniors used the Writing Center. Additionally, Continuing Education accounted for 4% of the students and 8% of the sessions, while the Graduate School accounted for 3% of the students and sessions. This is a new pattern that has developed over the past few years; historically, closer to 40% of the sessions were with first-year students. The new pattern reflects the growth of the Writing Partners and WID Mentors Programs. Many of the international students who use the Partners Program matriculate as sophomores or are CE students, while the WID Mentors Program is aimed at students learning to write in their major.

Chart 1: Class Standing of Students Using the Writing Center

The data on class breaks out somewhat differently when looking just at the individual sessions scheduled through open programming. For these students, the pattern for non-partners is almost identical to the overall pattern described above, with first-year students accounting for 25% of the sessions, sophomores 22%, juniors 16%, seniors 23%, graduate students 5%, and CE students 8%. The pattern for partners, however, shows a heavier use by sophomores (33% of sessions), juniors (25%), and CE students (21%), reflecting the class standing of our international students.
**College/School Affiliation**

As in the past, students from all of the colleges and schools used the Writing Center, in numbers roughly proportional to college/school enrollments.

**Chart 2: Use of Writing Center Services by College/School**

![Chart showing use of Writing Center services by college/school.]

**Gender**

Many writing centers report that more students identifying as female take advantage of their services. This is true at UVM, though the gender gap is narrowing, and the proportion of students who identify as male who used the Writing Center is now almost equal to the proportion enrolled. While in 2009-10, 34% of the students using the Writing Center identified as male, last year that proportion increased to 37%, and this year to 41%. This year, students identifying as male made up 44% of the student body.

**Services Provided Through Open Programming**

**Individualized Writing Support (open to all students for 52 hours a week in Bailey/Howe Library)**

Table 2 gives a historical snapshot of the growth in individual sessions scheduled through our open programming over the past seven years. While previous years saw fairly steady growth at a rate of about 10%, this year tutors held nearly 25% more individual sessions, close to 2400, working with 810 students. About 40% of these sessions were scheduled through our Writing Partners Program, thanks to additional funding from the Provost’s Office.

As has been historically true at UVM and nationwide, more students take advantage of the Writing Center in the fall semester than in the spring. However, because use of the Writing Partners Program remained nearly consistent all year (487 partner sessions in the fall; 458 in the spring), the overall
increase in sessions in the spring was even more dramatic than in the fall, providing a good use of what might otherwise have been slack time in the Center.

Table 2: Number of Individual Tutoring Sessions through Open Programming

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Fall Semester</th>
<th>Spring Semester</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>1292 (+21%)</td>
<td>1095 (+28%)</td>
<td>2387 (+24%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>1071 (+11%)</td>
<td>858 (+9.7%)</td>
<td>1929 (+10.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>964 (+2%)</td>
<td>782 (+4%)</td>
<td>1746 (+6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>949 (+7%)</td>
<td>697 (+9%)</td>
<td>1646 (+8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007/08</td>
<td>890 (-10%)</td>
<td>640 (-3%)</td>
<td>1530 (-7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006/07</td>
<td>986 (+22%)</td>
<td>662 (-1.5%)</td>
<td>1648 (+11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005/06</td>
<td>808 (+18%)</td>
<td>673 (-3%)</td>
<td>1481 (+8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students came to work on papers assigned in classes across the curriculum, at all levels, as well as on application essays. While many Writing Centers work with students required to schedule sessions, we have seen fewer and fewer required sessions over the years, as faculty wanting all of their students to use the Writing Center have been able to request a WID Mentor. This year, for the first time we also did no special projects with English 1 classes, perhaps because none of the GTAs were former Writing Center tutors easily able to imagine and incorporate such projects. Two TAP faculty did require their students to come to the Writing Center: Professors Chiu (Classics 095) and Erickson (CS 095), resulting in a total of only 34 required sessions, as compared with 131 last year, and 166 in 2009-10. Historically, about 25% of sessions were required.

Writing Partners Program

Now in its second year, this program allows students who want to use the Writing Center regularly to be matched with an appropriate tutor for weekly appointments. Thanks to additional funding from the Provost's Office, the number of partners grew by over 30%, from 64 partners over the entire year in 2010-11, coming for 685 sessions, to 64 partners in the fall semester 2011 only. Thirty of those continued into the spring, and 19 new students requested partners, with a total for the year of 84 partners coming for 945 sessions. Sessions with partners accounted for 40% of all open programming sessions. The average number of sessions per partner was 7.6 in the fall and 9.3 in the spring, so for budgeting purposes, we can estimate about 8 visits per semester per partner. Of the 84 partners, 42 scheduled additional appointments with the Writing Center, often for a little additional help right before a paper was due.

We created the Writing Partners Program when we noticed that many ELL and ACCESS students came to the Writing Center frequently, often meeting with a different tutor each time. Knowing that the numbers of international students would be growing, we hoped this program would provide more consistent, efficient, and effective writing support. Of the 84 partners this year, 58 were English language learners, 15 were ACCESS students, 6 were referred by Athletics (most of whom were also ELL or ACCESS students), and 8 were from varied backgrounds, including non-traditional students and students with writing anxiety. The demographics of the partners reflect the demographics of UVM’s current international undergraduate students:

“The Writing Partners Program has been a critical component to our student-athlete academic support programming. We have many students who utilize the program for everything from learning how to improve their writing skills to learning how to organize essays, blogs, and papers.”

--Cathy Rahill, Life Skills Coordinator for Athletics
mostly sophomores (28), juniors (20), and Continuing Education students (17), with fewer seniors (6) and first-year students (6). Four graduate students requested and were matched with partners. (We also received requests for partners from some post-docs, faculty members, and staff members but did not feel we had the resources to provide them.)

Student evaluations of the Writing Partners Program
We emailed all of the writing partners at the end of each semester, asking them to respond to a brief questionnaire. Thirty-six partners in the fall and twenty-two in the spring took the time to email a response. Fifty-four of fifty-seven students said the program fulfilled their expectations, using superlatives such as “great,” “perfection,” “wonderful,” “excellent,” “very well!,” and “fantastic.”

In describing what they gained from meeting with their partner, many students (19 out of 58) focused on how it helped them improve their general English, writing, and/or speaking skills. Several noted that this improvement in skills gave them increased confidence. Another 12 students mentioned learning more about grammar and editing. Nine students described how they got help with understanding assignments or genres or some aspect of writing in their major. Eight students said that they got help with organization or understanding the structure of an essay, and eight described how their partner provided support in the writing or research process.

When asked for suggestions for improving the Writing Partners Program, 23 out of 52 students responded that nothing needs to be improved. Sixteen requested expansions of the program: to have more partners available or to be able to meet with their partners more often. Five students said they would have preferred to meet with a tutor from their major, and eight gave additional assorted suggestions. For a compilation of all the student comments, organized to illustrate the points above, see Appendix G.

Class Workshops and Presentations
A very effective way of informing students about the Writing Center is to have a peer tutor give a presentation in class when the students are working on a writing assignment. Faculty can request that this presentation be extended into a workshop engaging students in a general conversation about writing, a conversation that might involve looking at a sample paper, discussing what makes writing challenging, identifying students’ styles of composing, or some combination of these topics. This year, we developed a new workshop on effective peer review. Our new presentation coordinator, tutor Jenna Scoville, coordinated 45 such presentations, given by a group of specially trained tutors. Twenty-six of the presentations involved an in-class workshop, resulting in contacts with 556 students. These included 11 workshops for English 1 classes, 7 for TAP classes, 3 for English ESL classes, 3 for EDSS 55 classes (for at-risk students), and 2 for TRIO students.

This is the one area in which use of the Writing Center declined: last year, we gave 76 presentations, 37 of which were workshops. This decline could be due partly to the ability of faculty who want to work closely with the Writing Center to request a WID mentor, but also reflects a decision to do less outreach this year, as our focus was on developing the Writing Partners Program to support English language learners and we were almost at capacity in serving students through our open programming. While Sue Dinitz continued to email all TAP faculty with information about the Writing Center and to meet with the English 1 GTAs, she did not, as in the past, email all English faculty and assorted other faculty teaching large courses for first-year students to offer to arrange a presentation.
Support for Diversity and Retention

In working with students making the transition to college-level writing, including students with diverse literacy backgrounds and language processing styles, the Writing Center helps support retention and diversity. To accomplish this, we carefully recruit a diverse group of tutors and then provide extensive preparation through which tutors explore expectations for academic writing and connections between literacy practices and various aspects of identity. Tutors learn how to help students build on their strengths and acquire new ways of thinking and writing without sacrificing old ones. We are aware of the many issues that complicate students’ feelings and attitudes in relation to academic writing, and so strive to make our spaces and services welcoming to and effective for all students by systematically applying the principles of universal design to our spaces, materials, and strategies for working with students. We are very proud that in a survey conducted in the three-week period following spring break, 100% of the students reported that the tutoring environment was welcoming, comfortable, and respectful, with 91% strongly agreeing.

Support for English Language Learners, Including International Students

Developing support for English language learners has continued to be a very high priority for the Writing Center. For an assessment of our work with English language learners, see p. 23.

- Collaborating with the ELL Coordinator Dana Šehović
  This year, the ELL Coordinator’s office was relocated to the WID Program. This has facilitated a wonderful collaboration in providing services for English language learners through the Writing Center. Dana provided additional training to all of the tutors on working with ELL writers, including coming to English 104, English 105, and meetings for 2nd and 3rd year tutors each semester. She met with many of the tutors who were matched with an ELL writing partner to discuss goals and strategies for working with that particular student, and was available to consult with any tutor who had a question about a particular ELL student or session. Because her office was in the same space as the Writing Center, these consultations could occur easily and spontaneously. In turn, Dana was easily able to connect ELL students coming to her for help with a writing tutor. And Dana and Sue were able to confer regularly about individual students and about ELL services and support more generally.

- Individual Tutorials
  As described above, we developed the Writing Partners Program last year to allow students wanting to use the Writing Center regularly to be matched with a tutor for weekly appointments. We hoped this program would make it easier for English language learners to connect with the Writing Center, would facilitate the creation of a relationship between tutor and student (which can be complicated by language and cultural barriers), and would allow for continuity of services, with tutors able to build on what had been accomplished in previous sessions. Last year, we worked with 48 writing partners who were English language learners, in 543 sessions. This year, with additional funding provided by the Provost’s Office, we worked with 58 ELL writing partners, who came for 627 sessions. Thirty-seven of those students scheduled additional sessions in the Writing Center, so in total the 58 ELL writing partners came for 773 sessions. Many more English language learners used the Writing Center, but because this characteristic is not marked in Banner, there is no way for us to accurately count sessions with ELL writers. Sue Dinitz was able to read the log notes of students with 4 or more contacts to look for confirmation of ELL status, and found 17 additional students, who came for 132 sessions. In total, then, there were about 75 English language learners who used the Writing Center four or more times, coming for 905 sessions.
(an average of 12 sessions each). This means that close to 40% of our individual sessions through open programming were with English language learners.

Tutor Annika Nilsson’s description of a session with her writing partner, a USPP student from China, captures the complexity and usefulness of their work together:

Most of the work we do is on short papers for her Environmental Studies class. I think quite a few of her difficulties stem from her feeling like she has to know everything about her topic. When we started working together, she would do enough research to support a 15 page paper for a 2 or 3 page assignment—and because English isn’t her first language, much of this research is quite laborious and she gets overwhelmed. On the other hand, I’ve really appreciated working with someone who is interested in and dedicated to their field of study. . . .

Lately, we’ve had some success in starting the assignment by directly answering the questions it poses in short sentences or bullet points. Then, we gradually expand those into full, polished paragraphs. This helps, first of all, to make sure that the questions actually get answered and the assignment criteria actually get met. It also helps to identify what background information is actually necessary. I think she did make quite a bit of progress over the course of the 7 sessions that we had. I think I understand the benefits of the writing partners program much better now, as well. I wouldn’t have been able to get at the underlying cause of R---‘s unfocused writing within one hour.

- **Group workshops: Conversation Circles**
  Also thanks to additional funding from the Provost’s Office, we expanded our group tutoring through the Conversation Circles class, providing tutors for 3 classes to work with students on their conversation skills in small groups. The tutors worked weekly with 37 students, creating 555 contacts. The classes are taught by Đana Šehović, who provides additional training for the tutors and supervises their work in these classes.

- **Summer Bridge Program for USPP Students**
  This spring, we continued to work closely with Janet Nunziata from Continuing Education and ELL Coordinator Đana Šehović to plan the writing tutor support for the USPP summer bridge program. Four writing center tutors were recruited to work for about 15 hours each week, holding required individual tutorials with each USPP student and facilitating weekly conversation and study groups. To ensure a smooth transition into the fall semester, Sue Dinitz will connect with the USPP students on several occasions: providing an introduction to Academic Support at the USPP Summer Bridge orientation (with Patience Whitworth), greeting students when they find the Writing Center during a scavenger hunt, and doing a workshop on writing and academic support for the group at the beginning of fall semester.

*Support for ALANA students*

Of the 1656 students using the Writing Center this year, 222 (14%) identified as ALANA (or left that space blank but could be identified by Sue as ALANA if, for example, they were USPP students). 860 students (52%) identified as Caucasian, and 570 (34%) did not identify as being of any particular ethnicity or race. The ALANA students accounted for 1206, or 28% of all our contacts.
Support for ACCESS Students
This year, 170 students registered with the ACCESS office used the Writing Center, coming for 500 contacts. As ACCESS counselors have become familiar with the writing partners program, they are increasingly consulting with Sue to connect one of their students with a suitable partner. We connected 12 ACCESS students with partners this year, as compared with 6 last year. In addition, we provided support for a new program: ThinkCollege, located in the Center for Diversity and Community Inclusion, is attempting to provide carefully selected students with intellectual disabilities with a college experience. Four ThinkCollege students requested and were matched with Writing Partners. This turned out to be a valuable experience for both students and tutors. Professor Larry Shelton, who is the Faculty Consultant for ThinkCollege, wrote a letter thanking the Writing Center for its support of the ThinkCollege students and praising the tutors:

Each of the tutors approached our students enthusiastically, with understanding and great sensitivity, and provided support while helping our students negotiate the assignments in their first-ever college courses. . . . Clearly, their greatest achievements were in their writing. All of the students who had writing partners improved significantly in their writing skill. We expect these gains will help them continue to have good experiences as they proceed into other courses.

Support for TRIO Students
This year, 98 students in the TRIO/Student Support Services Program (which supports first-generation college students from limited-income families) used the Writing Center (as compared with 109 last year), coming for 330 sessions (as compared with 400 last year). The Writing Center also offered a workshop each semester to students in the TRIO/SSS STEP program on the connections between academic writing and critical thinking. Given this 10% decrease in students and 20% decrease in sessions, a goal for next year is to reconnect with the TRIO Program staff and students.

Assessment of Open Programming Sessions
This year, we did a new assessment of our individual tutoring sessions. While we have always asked students at the end of each session if they would like to fill out an evaluation form, this year we added two questions to create a survey that would tell us more about what students wanted to accomplish in their sessions, what they ended up working on in the sessions, and how the match might relate to student satisfaction with sessions. For the three weeks following spring break, tutors asked all students to fill out the brief survey. There were 209 sessions during those weeks, with 130 students. We got 130 completed surveys, so a fairly high return rate (see Appendix F for full survey information).

What We Learned about Student Satisfaction with the Writing Center
The ratings for all six evaluative questions confirmed the outstanding service provided by our talented and committed writing tutors. Because nearly 100% of the students rated their sessions highly, there was no point in looking for a correlation between the extent to which a student’s goals were met and that student’s rating of the session.

- 99.5% of the students found the session useful, with 82.5% strongly agreeing.

“Lauren really asked specific questions, which helped me understand my thoughts and make an outline; very very helpful!”

“I understand the topic and guidelines of my paper much better and feel like I can do a much better job writing it now.”

“I came to have someone read over my paper and give suggestions/help me, and she did that.”
• 99% were satisfied with what they worked on in the session, with 81% strongly agreeing.
• 100% of the students found the tutoring environment was welcoming, comfortable, and respectful, with 91% strongly agreeing.
• 97% of students felt the process of making an appointment and meeting with the tutor went smoothly, with 91% strongly agreeing.
• 96% of the students said they would probably use the Writing Center again (for both partners and non-partners), with 87% percent strongly agreeing.
• 100% of the students said they would recommend the Writing Center to other students, with 93% strongly agreeing.

What We Learned about our Support for English Language Learners:
A little over half of the sessions during this period were with students who had asked for a writing partner, and of these partner sessions, 72% were with English language learners. Thus, the survey provides a window into the experiences of ELLs at the Writing Center. As the insights listed below suggest, we learned that while ELL students are very satisfied with their sessions, the tutors may hold some stereotypes about what to work on in ELL sessions that we need to address through our tutor training.

• While student satisfaction with all aspects of their experience at the Writing Center was high, writing partners reported being even more satisfied than non-partners, giving a higher percentage of “5, strongly agree” ratings than non-partners in rating the usefulness of their sessions and their satisfaction with what they worked on in their sessions. Writing partners reported that they found the tutoring environment very welcoming and comfortable, and that they had no trouble with the process of making an appointment and meeting with their tutors.
• Although it is easy for tutors and teachers to assume that most English language learners want to work primarily on editing, to correct the language errors that stick out in their papers, the percentage of partners who checked “Editing for grammar, punctuation, style” as a goal actually was smaller than the percentage of non-partners who checked this goal.
• Like non-ELLs, English language learners who brought draft writing wanted to work both on editing and on more global issues such as organizing and strengthening evidence.
• A much higher percentage of ELLs as compared with non-ELLs wanted to work on brainstorming ideas, understanding the assignment, and/or developing ELL reading and conversation skills. These choices suggest that more ELL students come to the Writing Center for support in understanding and preparing to complete their assignments.
• For partners, tutors seemed to prioritize goals they might think of as appropriate in working with English language learners, such as editing, ELL reading/speaking, and clarification of an assignment, while the students prioritized more global concerns with their assignments, such as getting feedback, organizing, and brainstorming. Tutors also perceived themselves as working on these ELL issues more frequently than partners perceived themselves as working on them.

What We Learned about Why Students Come to the Writing Center:
Many faculty, students, and new tutors assume the Writing Center is primarily a place where students can have a paper “checked over,” and imagine that most of the work involves changes at the sentence and paragraph levels, assuring that papers are as close to error-free as possible. However, only a little over half of the students came to work on editing. Furthermore, none of these students came just to work on editing; students who wanted to work on editing also wanted to work on global concerns involving the paper as a whole such as organizing and
strengthening a paper’s ideas, content, or thesis. The data suggests that a third of the students came before they had even written a draft, to work on brainstorming ideas and/or understanding the assignment, and about two-thirds came to get feedback on draft writing. A smaller but significant number of students came with additional specific goals, such as help with using and citing sources, interpreting a teacher’s comments on a paper, developing ELL reading and/or conversation skills, or time management.

What We Learned about What Students Work On at the Writing Center:
Most students reported that they were able to address most of their goals. The average number of items worked on was exactly the same as the average number of goals checked: 3.38. For 72% of the students, there was a 90-100% match between their goals and what they worked on in the session. Only 7% of the students had a match of less than 50%. Table 3 documents the close match between student goals and session agendas and also the nature of those goals and agendas. In a little over 60% of the sessions students reported getting feedback on a paper; organizing, strengthening content, and editing were each identified as an agenda item in a little less than 60% of the sessions. In about a quarter of the sessions, students worked on understanding an assignment or type of writing, and in about a quarter of the sessions, students worked on brainstorming ideas. A fewer but still substantial number of students worked on more specific goals, such as help with citing and using sources, reviewing a teacher’s comments on a paper, developing ELL reading/conversation skills, or time management.

Table 3
What Students Reported Working On In Comparison with Students’ Goals
n = 130 surveys

![Bar chart showing comparison between student goals and what students worked on.](chart_image)

- **Student Goals**
- **What Students Worked On**

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Growing the Writing Center In a Structure That Will Support General Education

Supporting First-Year Writing/A Foundational Writing Experience

Students making the transition from high school to college-level writing have always been a target audience for the Writing Center. This year, use of the Writing Center by first-year students increased in the same proportions as our overall increase in use of the Writing Center, so that first-year students continued to make up about 25% of the students coming for individual sessions (204 first-year students out of 810) and continued to account for about 18% of the sessions (406 sessions with first-year students out of 2385).

Supporting English 1

Writing Center support for English 1 classes continued the decline which began when the number of English 1 sections was cut nearly in half in 2009-10. Previous to this cut, sessions with English 1 students typically made up about 25% of all open programming sessions. That percentage dropped to 17% in 2009-10, to 12% in 2010-11, and finally to less than 7% this year (161 out of 2385 sessions). This was due in part to fewer projects with English 1 classes involving required sessions (0 this year, 3 in 2010-11, 6 in 2009-10). For the first time in several years, we did not have a former tutor as an English 1 GTA, modeling for other instructors how the Writing Center might support English 1, nor will we have one next year. Tutors did continue to reach English 1 students through going into their classes, offering 14 presentations, 11 of which were workshops. Re-connecting with English 1 will be a priority for next year.

Table 4: Writing Center Contacts with English 1 Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Individual Sessions</th>
<th>In-class Workshops</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>161 contacts</td>
<td>234 contacts</td>
<td>395 contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>240 contacts</td>
<td>180 contacts</td>
<td>420 contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>294 contacts</td>
<td>300 contacts</td>
<td>594 contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008/09</td>
<td>421 contacts</td>
<td>480 contacts</td>
<td>901 contacts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Supporting TAP

We continued to work closely with the TAP program, emailing all TAP faculty about our services. The number of sessions with students from TAP classes increased from 64 to 149. We also did 14 presentations in TAP classes, 9 of which included in-class writing workshops, reaching 183 students. Specific work with TAP included the following.

- A special project with Prof. Chiu’s Classics 95 class: Sue Dinitz and a peer tutor did an in-class workshop on constructing and supporting a thesis and how to do peer review. Students were then required to come to the Writing Center with a draft of their essay.
- A special project with Bob Erickson’s CS 95 class: We experimented with having a tutor attached to this class as a combination mentor/grader. The tutor did two in-class writing workshops and spoke with the class twice when their graded papers were returned. Students were required to come to the Writing Center with a draft of an early paper.
- A WID Mentor was attached to Professor Blom’s ANTH 26 class. He met with students for 21 individual sessions; held 6 group sessions attended by 31 students; and did 3 class workshops.
Table 5: Writing Center Contacts with TAP Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Individual Sessions</th>
<th>In-class Workshops</th>
<th>Group Tutoring</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>149 contacts</td>
<td>183 contacts</td>
<td>31 contacts</td>
<td>363 contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>64 contacts</td>
<td>216 contacts</td>
<td>280 contacts</td>
<td>368 contacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>225 contacts*</td>
<td>270 contacts</td>
<td>495* contacts</td>
<td>790* contacts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*This number is artificially inflated, as our previous method of identifying courses did not allow us to distinguish TAP sections from other sections with the same course number.

Supporting the Honors College First-Year Fall Seminars

We continued the model we developed last fall of having a tutor in the Honors College who was a resident and who held open writing workshops once a week. These were successful if they were held the night before papers were due; otherwise, few students attended. Tutor John Boucher held 44 sessions with students, mostly in the first half of the semester when short papers were assigned regularly. When he wasn’t available, he referred students to the Writing Center. After a few of these referrals, Sue Dinitz gave him a list of tutors who had taken the first-year HCOL seminar so he could try to connect students with these tutors. This resulted in an additional 16 sessions.

Supporting Writing in the Major

Writing Center Tutorials

Helping students understand the expectations for writing in a disciplinary context continues to be the central goal of many Writing Center sessions. With tutors from across the disciplines who receive extensive training on writing in various disciplinary contexts, the Writing Center serves as a central campus resource for students learning to negotiate the increasingly complex expectations of writing in different disciplines. Many students came to the Writing Center to work on papers for upper-level courses: 42% of all open programming sessions were with juniors, seniors, and graduate students (1012 out of 2385 sessions), likely to be taking courses at the 100 level or above. According to the log notes, many of the international students who came to the Writing Center sought help with understanding the expectations for specific types of academic writing, such as business reports.

On-line Tips from Tutors

Sue Dinitz received an Instructional Incentive Grant, “Creating Online Resources for Students On Writing In the Disciplines,” to support creating on-line resources by students and for students on writing in a variety of majors. In many Writing Center sessions, students are looking for support connected with learning how to write in a discipline: understanding assignments, how to frame a topic or question, what constitutes evidence, how arguments are constructed, conventions for using and citing sources, etc. For years, tutors have taught each other about writing in disciplinary contexts in an English 104 project, for which they create a handout on writing in their major that other tutors can use in working with students. These handouts are currently organized in binders for each discipline, a format that is not easily available or accessible to tutors or students.

The Instructional Incentive Grant allowed tutor Jonathan Roketenetz to build on the work of former tutors and create a template for transforming the binders into online resources, and to work with WID Program Assistant Kristen Cameron on designing the pages. Jonathan consulted with Sue Dinitz during this process, and Sue in turn consulted with campus experts on universal design to make the web pages accessible. She also coordinated review of each finished web
page by a faculty member in the discipline. A sample of the work that has been completed can be viewed on our test website: http://www.uvm.edu/wid/writingcenter/tutortips.

While many writing in the disciplines programs and writing centers have online resources about writing various types of papers, we know of no other site that features tips created by tutors, sharing what they’ve learned about writing in their majors. Such an approach models the collaborative, peer-to-peer learning that is the hallmark of writing centers.

The WID Mentor Program
Because the WID Mentor Program is a separate endeavor from our open programming and is offered jointly with the WID Program, we provide a separate report below.

The WID Mentor Program
In fall 2009, WID and the Writing Center collaborated to pilot the WID Mentor Program, which attaches experienced peer writing tutors to writing-intensive courses for majors. Developed at Brown University in the early 1980s, this program has spread nationally, often supporting a curricular requirement for writing-intensive courses. The national model assigns one mentor for every twenty students and is used in courses having at least two required papers, one of which is due in the first month of the semester. Mentors read through drafts and meet with each student in the class. In fall 2009, we experimented with this model in four classes and soon discovered each class integrated writing so differently that the national model had to be adjusted. For spring 2010 we experimented to develop effective models for our own campus context. We continued the experimentation during 2010-11 and 2011-12, trying to learn as much as possible about what roles, contexts and practices lead to effective use of mentors.

WID Mentor Placements
Thanks to some additional funding for this program, we placed mentors in 20 classes, as compared with 14 last year. As is evident in Table 6, the classes represent a nice range of disciplines and colleges/schools, including our first ever placements in Statistics, Engineering, and Biology. We also had mentor placements in several departments in the social sciences (Geography, Political Science, Psychology, and Anthropology) and in the Humanities (English, German, and History); two mentor placements in Natural Resources; one in Human Development; and one in Communications Sciences and Disorders. The classes also represent a nice range of levels and sizes, with mentors placed in small TAP classes; in large introductory classes in Anthropology, Biology, History, and Natural Resources; in classes at the 100 level ranging in size from 14 to 56; and in classes at the 200 level ranging in size from 8 to 29.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th># / ind sessions</th>
<th># group sessions</th>
<th># group contacts</th>
<th># wkshps</th>
<th># wkshp contacts</th>
<th>Total Contacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANTH028</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>Dickinson</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANTH026</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Blom</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANTH028</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>Dickinson</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCOR012</td>
<td>341</td>
<td>Brody</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CE154</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Holmen</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSD299</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Prelock</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: WID Mentor Program 2011-12 Placements
Table 7: WID Mentor Program Contacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of session</th>
<th>2011-12 (20 classes)</th>
<th>2010-11 (13 classes)</th>
<th>2009-10 (14 classes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual tutoring*</td>
<td>314 (+31%)</td>
<td>240 (+3%)</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group tutoring</td>
<td>477 (+56%)</td>
<td>305 (-45%)</td>
<td>555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class workshops</td>
<td>641 (+39%)</td>
<td>462 (+219%)</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Contacts</td>
<td>1432 (+42%)</td>
<td>1007 (+8%)</td>
<td>933</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluating the WID Mentor Program

Faculty, mentors, and students continue to be enthusiastic about this program. (For a fuller summary of the program evaluations, with selected comments, see Appendix H). All 18 faculty felt the WID mentor positively contributed to the students’ experience in the class and highly recommended continuing to develop the WID Mentor Program. One faculty member commented, “In my opinion this program is an invaluable means of truly teaching student writing. Faculty ‘in the disciplines’ simply do not have the time or the expertise to do this on their own, and students are more receptive to student mentors than they might be to a faculty member in many circumstances.” Another exclaimed, “[The mentor] was not only helpful in the actual writing but in bringing down stress levels and building morale so students could focus on their writing.” When asked how they benefited from having a mentor, faculty reported getting better papers, (e.g. “I got MUCH better papers”), being able to provide more individual attention to students (e.g. “[The mentor] was able to give students individual attention that I could not possibly
provide to 60 students), using the mentor’s perspective to improve assignments and materials (“It was
great to have her student perspective and questions to help me better articulate on the page and in
class what the purpose and expectations for the assignments were”), incorporating writing more fully
into the class (“I feel that I was able to add an important dimension of productive classwork
and feedback to the course through the workshops run by the WID mentor”), and learning more about
teaching writing (“I cannot say enough about how much I have learned from [the mentor] about this
Process”).

Similarly, 13 of the 15 mentors who responded (87%) strongly recommended continuing to develop the
program. In their comments, they describe a variety of benefits provided to students and faculty,
including introducing students to aspects of writing in the discipline, getting students to begin their
assignments earlier and to revise, clarifying assignments and faculty expectations, providing an outside
perspective on drafts, relaying students questions and concerns back to faculty, offering general advice
about being successful students, and helping students feel more comfortable with and confident about
writing.

Of the students filling out an end-of-semester evaluation form (some of whom never met with their
mentor), 96% recommended the WID Mentor Program continue to be developed, with 51% strongly
agreeing; and 91% agreed that having a WID mentor was useful in completing the writing assignments
for the class, with comments that echo the mentors’ comments, describing how mentors clarified
expectations, taught them about aspects of writing in the discipline, provided a different perspective,
forced them to revise, enabled them to talk through their ideas, helped them become organized, and
made them more comfortable and confident.

Developing a WID Mentor Program Model

In our third year of developing this program, we continued to learn more about what contexts and
processes help create successful placements. For example, two mentors experimented with facilitating
peer review sessions for senior-level classes, one with required group sessions (which was very
successful) and one with optional individual sessions (which students failed to take advantage of).
Mentors also experimented quite successfully with facilitating the writing of group papers, in both
Statistics 141 and Civil Engineering 154. Highlights of some of the additional insights we gained through
this years’ placements are described below.

Using Mentors Effectively in Large Classes

- For the first time, we experimented with placing mentors in very large lecture classes with
  multiple attached sections taught by TAs (NR 002, with 207 students, and BCOR 12, with 340
  students). We had two mentors for each class, but all four mentors found the experience
  challenging. Having such a large number of students, multiple TA’s with varying expectations,
  and a faculty member struggling to coordinate the many elements of these classes interfered
  with communication and made both planning and implementing programming difficult.

- On the other hand, the placement of a mentor in a large class without multiple lab sections
  (Anthropology 028, with 150 students) proved more successful. Professor J. Dickinson came up
  with a useful way to think about the role of a mentor in a large class: as providing a more
  intimate experience for students who find a large class environment challenging. Through
  optional small group workshops, electronic exchanges, and individual tutoring sessions, the
  mentor created these opportunities, and 35 students took advantage of them.
In another large class (History 68, with 129 students), we experimented with a new “mentor-lite” model. Rather than engaging in the full-blown process of planning how to best use a mentor to support student writing for up to 60 hours spread over the semester, we identified two limited services the mentor offered. She became the class’s link to the Writing Center, giving a presentation and allowing students to email her to schedule a tutoring session, and she held open writing workshops the night before papers were due, where student could come to work on their papers and consult with the mentor when they had a question or wanted feedback. This model worked so well that we made it an option faculty could request for next year. Three faculty members are going to use the “mentor-lite” model in the fall.

Communicating with WID Mentor Faculty

In experimenting with so many ways of using a mentor in so many classes, Sue Dinitz decided to check in personally with each faculty member at mid-term. This proved very helpful, providing her with a better understanding of what each mentor was experiencing, allowing her to address faculty concerns, and facilitating the revision of WID Mentor plans for the second half of the semester.

Regular communication, as part of creating a good relationship between faculty member and mentor and between mentor and students, again proved key to the success of mentor placements. Though the importance of this was stressed in workshops for both faculty and mentors and was part of each faculty member’s WID Mentor Plan, it did not always happen. For next year, we are only placing mentors in classes for which they have the class time slot free, and we are going to have mentors check in with faculty members in person each week.

Combining Faculty Development with WID Mentor Planning

In a research project this year, we investigated the impact of a WID mentor on student papers in a political science class. The professor was disappointed with the papers. When we examined the papers, we discovered that the problem lay in the assignment design and materials, not in the workshops or WID Mentor Plan. With such a clear example of how lack of clarity in the assignment reduced the effectiveness of the mentor’s work, we saw the importance of spending more time with each faculty member before the semester begins on assignment design. This new emphasis also provides us with a way to identify faculty who aren’t interested in devoting much of their own time to ensuring the success of the mentor placement. We’re also very excited at this opportunity to involve Susanmarie and link the WID Mentor program more fully with faculty development efforts.

Research in the Writing Center and WID

For the past three years, we have maintained an active research agenda exploring various aspects of students’ experiences learning to write in disciplinary contexts. This year we completed our first project and made progress on a second.

Exploring the Effect of Disciplinary Expertise in Writing Tutorials

Our article reporting on this research project was accepted for publication in *The Writing Center Journal*. To learn more about how disciplinary expertise, or a lack of it, shapes sessions, we collected a variety of data related to seven writing tutorial sessions over papers for political science and history classes. In addition to analyzing the session transcripts and evaluating the sessions ourselves, we asked three faculty members in the disciplines to assess the quality of the sessions and consider the roles played by
disciplinary expertise. What we found led us to reconsider not only the impact of a tutor’s disciplinary expertise on tutorial sessions, but also the value of directive vs. non-directive tutoring and the very nature of disciplinary expertise itself. This research has had a direct impact on our tutor training. For example, it helped us understand (a) how tutors lacking disciplinary expertise need strategies for overcoming a tendency to passively accept the tutee’s assessment of their paper and ideas for the sessions and (b) how tutors possessing subject area expertise run the risk of being too directive.

Exploring the Impact of WID Mentors on the Student Experience

Last spring, one of our WID Mentor faculty taught two sections of the same course, one with a mentor and one without. We took advantage of this opportunity to learn more about the impact of a WID mentor, receiving IRB approval for the project. We presented this research at two conferences this year: the Conference on College Composition and Communication in March, and the International Writing Across the Curriculum Conference in June. To our surprise, the students in the class with the mentor did no better than those in the class without the mentor, and the Professor was disappointed in the papers from both classes. Through (a) analyzing the impact of the mentor workshops and of the teacher comments on how each student’s project developed and on the final paper and (b) interviewing the Professor, we discovered that the problem lay in the assignment and rubrics, and their lack of any information about genre or rhetorical context. With such clear evidence of the impact of assignment construction on mentor effectiveness and student performance, we have decided to focus more time and effort working with WID Mentor faculty on their assignment design and materials before the semester begins.

Recovering and Documenting the History of WID/WAC at UVM

Susanmarie Harrington began interviewing faculty who had collaborated with Toby Fulwiler on WAC workshops in the years when Fulwiler directed the UVM Faculty Writing Project (as the WAC program was generally known). In the past year, she began working with some archival materials provided by Fulwiler covering the later years of his career, and presented a paper at the Conference on College Composition and Communication on the strategies that made the Fulwiler workshops so successful.
The Writing in the Disciplines Program and the Writing Center
Annual Report, 2011-2012

List of Appendices

A. Mission and History
B. WID Programming and Participation Evaluations
C. WID Programming and Participant Status
D. 2012 WID Institute
E. TAP Profile
F. Writing Center Survey Data
G. Writing Partner Evaluations
H. WID Mentor Program Evaluations

Appendices are available upon request.