Executive Summary: Writing Center

Major Program Goals:
- Increase pay for student staff.
- Institutionalize funding for our Fellows Program
- Develop drop-in services on our off-site campus in the following order: Hollister, Morgan Hill, and Coyote Valley.
- Develop a high-quality on-line feedback process, so that students who can't access our drop-in services are still able to experience the benefits of a writing consultation session.
- Get the needed funding for ongoing professional learning trainings for both instructor and tutor to learn best practices and to develop strategies that benefit the student.
- Develop a robust assessment plan to make meaningful and informed decisions in support of our program.

Concerns/Trends:
- Tutors have low wages compared to other student jobs available off campus.
- Learning assistants cannot be measured in simple causality.
- Support for online, evening, and offsite students.
- Address the complex coordination and communication situation between 2-part time staff of LC and WC.
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Plans for Addressing Concerns:
- The center is actively participating in ASSG campaign to raise tutor's wages across the campus.
- Developing partnerships with RPIE and develop shared metrics plan and design assessment tool.
- No additional funding or staffing available for addressing fledging online, evening, and offsite students.

Recommendations:
- In conjunction with RPIE, develop, implement and assess plan for assessment of all services.
- Create a plan for comprehensive user data tracking
- Collaborate with IT to build a self-login module
- Investigate feasibility of institutionalizing funding for services, including possible raise for tutors.
- Evaluate overlap with other student support services and identify efficiency opportunities
- Develop plan for expanding services to off sites
- Develop learning outcomes and program plan.

Self-Study Summary: Writing Center

The Writing Center is overseen, guided, and largely funded by the English Department. For these reasons, our plans are integrated into the department's, and our goals and objectives serve its overall vision for English students and writers and readers across the campus community.

Specifically, we focus on three overlapping services:
1)   Extensively trained peer tutors facilitate one-on-one consultation sessions with writers across the curriculum and conduct Supplemental Instruction Sessions (study groups) for students enrolled in a Gavilan Reading and Writing Fellows supported classroom at our drop-in center, located in LI 168.

2)   The Gavilan Reading and Writing Fellows Program embeds our student tutors into select classrooms at the English 1A, 200, and 400 levels, providing in-class and out-of-class assistance to teachers and students alike. The Fellows Program fosters beneficial peer-to-peer student relationships through its out-of-class Supplemental Instruction Sessions and opens up students to coming back for our one-on-one drop-in consultations.

3)   The Center plays a crucial role in developing the leadership, academic, and expressive identities of our student staff, about 60 percent of which is from the targeted equity groups.

Our extensive training program begins with English 12A: Tutoring Writers: Theory, Training, and Practice—two-units of which are delivered prior to the tutors beginning to work at the center. Our first-semester tutors are also required to enroll in English 12B for one unit, and on-going training is provided to all staff on an ongoing basis via our weekly meetings, regional conferences, and other professional development opportunities as they occur. The center plays a crucial role in developing the leadership, academic, and expressive identities of our student staff.

Additionally, our center provides the following services:
- On-line feedback to writers provided through our specially trained Program Specialist
- Visiting Writers and Writing Events programs that are open to the public and campus community and Center-supported publishing opportunities for student writers.
- Opportunities for faculty collaboration through our Visiting Writers, Writing Events, and Gavilan Reading and Writing Fellows Programs
- Opportunities for faculty collaboration through our Writing Center English Acceleration Team sub-committee, which is comprised of the Writing Center Coordinator and members of the English Department. The subcommittee was formed to help support, offer guidance, and give input to all aspects of the Writing Center to help unify ties between the Center and Department.

Accomplishments:
Drop-in Center
The drop-in Writing Center served 370 students in Fall 2016, who visited the center 1,394

times and 434 students in Spring 2017, who visited the center 1,690 times. This is a significant increase in previous years as outlined below.

In earlier semesters those numbers looked like this:

Fall 2012	267 students visited the center 796 times
Spring 2013	267 students visited the center 987 times
Fall 2013	305 students visited the center 830 times
Spring 2014	333 students visited the center 801 times
Fall 2014	341 students visited the center 840 times
Spring 2015	236 students visited the center 600 times as of 4/7/15

In an effort to collect more meaningful data and fill gaps in the available institutional data collection tools, the center and Learning Commons collaborated in creating the "The Learning Commons & Writing Center In-Take Form," which makes understanding how students are accessing and using our services easier to track and service assessment more meaningful.

Beginning in Fall 2016, the Writing Center began offering drop-in services one day a week on the Hollister campus.

Gavilan Reading and Writing Fellows Program
In Spring 2016, the Supplemental Instruction Program was suddenly threatened with a loss of funding, but faculty, students, Writing Center staff, and alumni, rallied to save this vital service. In meeting the funding challenge, the Gavilan Reading and Writing Fellows Program was created to take advantage of the best elements of our Supplemental Instruction Program developed nearly ten years ago.

The Basic Skills Grant currently funds the $23,300 program as peer-tutoring is a key component of its mission and the state's vision for academic success and much was learned about appropriate ways for program's like ours to be assessed. In its current incarnation, we serve 27 classrooms.

As part of this program's redesign, the center instituted a paid faculty training component for all participating instructors. In Summer 2017, the center trained 17 English faculty in best practices for working with peer tutors and created opportunities for important conversations about program assessment and collaboration. The panel discussion "Embedded Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction from the Inside" portion of the training was documented and made available on-line upon request to department faculty.

Activities, Publications, and Writing Events
Between Fall 2016 and Spring 2017, the center offered a number of events, activities, and publications for the campus community including the following: "Sustaining a Writer's Life," a visit from author Ray Daniels; "The Writer's Path," a panel discussion with authors across the curriculum, including nuclear physicist Kolo Wamba; "Peace Circle," weekly mindfulness meditation; and the Spring 2017 Tutor Jam (in collaboration with the Academic Student Services Group).

Writing Center supported publications include: *Forget Me Not: San Benito County Jail Writings* and *I'm Somebody's Sunshine* (which can be accessed at http://kimberlyjeansmith.squarespace.com/teaching/) as well as a zine created by the Gavilan Literary Society, which is available upon request.

On-line Services
Our fledgling online services have reached fewer than a dozen students between Fall 2016 and 2017.

Summary of Progress Since Last Review:
Since its inception, the Writing Center's programs have always been developed and reviewed under the English Department. This is the first formal program review submitted with the knowledge of the department as a whole.

Program's Impact on Supporting and Improving Student Achievement:
Drop-in - last year, we measured the effectiveness of our drop-in program in two ways: Timekeeper and surveys. Timekeeper only allows us to track who is using the space and now how they are using it. Two surveys were developed in collaboration with the Learning Commons and Institutional Research to better capture how students were using the space and how they evaluated their experience.

Last year, in order to better understand how students are using our consultation sessions and how they perceive the impact these have on their writing, the Writing Center and Learning Commons created the "Learning Commons & Writing Center In-take Form." We look forward to sharing data from these forms as it emerges.

Embedded Tutoring and Supplemental Instruction Program
Gavilan's Fellows Program was created with the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges (RP Group) recommended success factors framework in mind. The RP group's foundational report "Student Support (Re)defined" found cognitive factors are the most powerful elements of successful programs and ultimately of student success, saying such elements need to be fully integrated on a daily basis and must include elements of nurturing, engagement, connectedness, directedness, and validation. Our tutor training program emphasizes the importance of these elements and guides our student employees in learning how to apply these in their daily Writing Center practices. For example, a portion of our training focuses on how to build a welcoming environment through language, posture, and deed. The importance of focusing on a writer's strengths are also promoted and practiced.

As mentioned above, during the Spring 2017 semester, our Embedded Tutoring Program (the previous incarnation of the Fellows Program) provided 376 Gavilan College students with 150 hours of in-class support. Optional out-of-class study sessions were also provided to students. This represents significant points of contact associated with the RP group's identified best practices.

According to Gavilan's Institutional Researcher, Seven percent of our students enrolled at the 200P level are more likely to succeed with embedded tutors in their classroom than those

without them, while six percent of English 1A students experience more success when embedded tutors are in the classroom.

The vast majority of English students enrolled in these courses in Spring 2017 said the peer tutor assigned to their class was helpful. Fifty-seven percent said their peer tutor helped "a lot," while 21 percent noted the peer tutor "made all the difference."

Sixty-nine percent of this group noted the tutor was "very helpful" specifically to helping them pass the class, and 57 percent noted the tutor motivated them to stay enrolled among other positive outcomes correlated with student success, which are named in the survey.

Resource and Staffing Changes Since Last Review:
As stated earlier, this is our first formal program review. As an ongoing project of the English Department, our program has always been developed and reviewed under its aegis.

The last few years have included a great deal of change for the Writing Center. The Writing Center was absorbed into the Learning Commons project and with it relocated from LI120 to the much larger LI168 about three years ago.

In Fall 2016, distinctions between the two projects was formalized. A full-time English Instructor was brought in to coordinate the Writing Center pieces and collaborate closely with members of the English Department as it begins to roll out its acceleration project.

Additional staffing changes include the recruitment and training of new tutors as veterans transferred and moved on and the hiring of new Program Specialists to replace those who also moved on.

Summary of Trends Facing the Program:
- Increasingly, the field is placing greater focus on the impact of affective domains in meeting writing's challenge and opportunity, and there is a better understanding of how racial and income inequality impact these types of fundamental academic tasks. For students targeted in our Equity Plan, trauma associated with writing can be especially intense. The work of the peer-tutor is critical in helping our students navigate this fraught and ultimately empowering journey and must include in-depth and varied training around the following concepts: Stereotype Threat; Code-switching; Trauma; and Mindfulness.
- There is a need to highlight and better understand the Writing Center's impact on the leadership, academic, and professional identities of our student staff, the majority who come from groups targeted in the Equity Plan.
- Our tutors have not had a starting wage increase since 2008 and recruiting and hiring enough tutors to fill our schedule has become difficult as the cost-of-living has increased in our area and other employment, which often requires less training, pays more.
- Lack of data collection tools that allow us to swiftly and effectively demonstrate our program's effectiveness.

Goals, Objectives, and Plans for the Future:

We have six primary goals:

- Increase pay for our student staff to reflect cost-of-living increases and a higher minimum wage in our service area, so that we can continue to attract quality candidates and promote the academic success, transfer, and well-being of our staff and their families.
- Institutionalize funding for our Fellows Program. Versions of this program have been in existence for about a decade and for some of the years our general fund covered it. In later years, however, it has been solely funded via various grants, which has been destabilizing to all aspects of the Writing Center as economies of scale allow us to hire enough tutors to fill not only Fellows slots but drop-in tutoring slots as well.
- Develop drop-in services on our off-site campus in the following order: Hollister, Morgan Hill, and Coyote Valley.
- Develop a high-quality on-line feedback process, so that students who can't access our drop-in services are still able to experience the benefits of a writing consultation session.
- Get the needed funding for ongoing professional learning trainings for both instructor and tutor to learn best practices and to develop strategies that benefit the student.
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