

**External Review**  
**Tutoring and Writing Center at Rollins College**

Submitted by

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**Executive Summary**

Rethinking the Writing and Tutoring Center should happen as part of broader, strategic thinking at the institutional level. Support for both teaching and learning at the college should be approached strategically, based on clearly identified needs, and targeted to meet those needs. As the new President engages in a strategic planning process, we suggest that the discussions about support for teaching and learning consider our responses to the external review questions.

By supporting current, effective partnerships, and building new ones based on identified needs and opportunities, the various entities that support teaching and learning (the Tutoring and Writing Center, Library, Instructional Design Technologies, Information Technology, Center for Teaching Excellence, Student Affairs) can accomplish more than they could as separate entities, and perhaps more efficiently and effectively. The FITI grants may provide a model for how collaboration between units can be supported institutionally. These grants, which bring together a faculty member, librarian, instructional designer, and the Center for Teaching Excellence, create a structure for addressing a specific need, a course or assignment redesign, and harness the varied types of pedagogical expertise available.

In addition to assisting the professor with a course, they provide a valuable opportunity for the staff involved to learn from each other, and perhaps to take away some strategies and tools for use elsewhere. These kinds of **partnerships—structured, need-based,**

**and collaborative**—can help students succeed by drawing on Rollins’ **diversity of resources** and build on the existing **culture of relationships**.

### **Recommendations**

- Retain the location of the Tutoring and Writing Center in the Olin Library.
- Replace the word “tutoring” in the name of the Tutoring and Writing Center to reflect a broader approach to academic support. We suggest “Academic Support,” “Academic Success” or perhaps simply “Learning,” but we urge the College to choose a name that resonates with the campus and does not suggest remediation but rather enhancement and support.
- Create a “Learning Hub” or “Neighborhood” in the Olin library to provide co-located, integrated teaching and learning support services for faculty and students to include: Writing Center, Learning Center, the Center for Teaching Excellence, Instructional Design and Technology, and the Library.
- Create a cross-unit Advisory Board for the new Learning Hub or Neighborhood with members from the Center for Teaching Excellence, Information Technology, Library, Student Affairs, Learning and Writing, Academic Affairs, and faculty and student representatives.
- Develop a programmatic, multimodal literacy approach (a framework and program), drawing upon current literature and recommended literacy frameworks for the 21st century and building upon Rollins’ campus interdisciplinary knowledge and work.
- Assess needs for writing and learning support across the College curriculum to determine which subject areas and courses need focus, and where students are struggling within the curriculum. Tailor the writing, tutoring, and other academic support programs to address the critical subjects, courses, or skill enhancement needs of the students.
- Consider other methods for providing subject area and course assistance such as Supplemental Instruction (SI), group tutoring, and flipped classroom techniques.
- Develop an ongoing method of program evaluation and continuous improvement for academic support services, perhaps using the Logic Model.
- Develop and integrate academic support services, inclusive of all types of diversity, to include English language learners, disabilities, and nationalities, into the new Learning Hub or Neighborhood.
- Discontinue the CRLA certification for tutors.
- Move towards a smaller, more versatile, more highly-trained Learning and Writing Centers student staff to more strategically serve the academic support needs of the students, to allow for better training and oversight, and to serve the diverse student body of Rollins College more equitably.
- Hire two full-time, year-round coordinators/directors, one in support of writing and the other in support of subject area academic support (tutoring, supplemental instruction, etc.). Further, increase clerical support for scheduling and supporting student employees. All positions should be on full-time, 12 month contracts.
- Hire a new Director for the Center for Teaching Excellence.

## Challenges

### **1. Is the administrative location of the Tutoring & Writing Center within Academic Affairs and physically within the library appropriate?**

Without exception, all interviewees indicated that placing the Tutoring & Writing Center administratively under Academic Affairs and physically inside the library were positive changes that have benefited students, staff, and faculty. Common comments included, "The space is wonderful," "The Tutoring and Writing Center has a good reputation and it is fantastic," "It has become a vibrant space for students," and "Having the coffee shop there is wonderful ....it is Club Olin."

In fact, throughout our interviews, other possible co-locations (of the Teaching Excellence Center, support for English language learners, disability services) within the library were mentioned to encourage synergy and collaboration in support of student learning and faculty teaching services. Such a move could further promote group (e.g., writing communities, group tutoring, workshops on multimedia tools) and private conversations about teaching and learning. We encourage the Library to consider using the second floor location identified as potential collaborative space for more co-located services, creating a Learning Hub.

### **2. Should Rollins consider integrating the services of the Center for Teaching Excellence with Instructional Design & Technology and the Library? What are the advantages and disadvantages of collocating that center in the Olin Library building? Are there other services that we should consider integrating into this service model and space?**

There was strong evidence that the Rollins community would benefit from integrating services from the Center for Teaching Excellence, Instructional Design & Technology, and the Library into a 'learning hub or neighborhood' (Dugdale, 2009) located within the library. Advantages include:

- Creation of a physical hub or neighborhood for teaching and learning services will visually show prospective students, parents, alumni, and donors that Rollins continues its commitment to teaching excellence and helping students succeed.
- Elevated visibility for the Center for Teaching Excellence as a place where faculty go to learn about the latest learning science research, pedagogy, and teaching practices.
- Increased synergy, cross-unit collaborations, and programming efforts between Library, Instructional Design and Technology, and Center for Teaching Excellence staff which will promote a wider and richer culture of teaching and learning excellence services.

- Possible savings in administrative costs by better leveraging current financial, administrative, technical, and other support staff.

In addition, as is common in many large organizations, we encountered some confusion about the roles and competencies of professional staff working across units on collaborative projects. Current collaborations seem to be in an early phase, in which the collaborators are still getting to know others' areas of expertise and clarifying them for communication with faculty and administration. For example, we heard that faculty and staff may not understand the professional competencies of librarians and instructional designers related to course redesign, student success efforts, and digital/information literacies (which we will call "multimodal literacies; see below). These pre-conceived notions are often aligned with the organizational, political, and historical ways in which librarians, academic technology professionals, teaching center professionals, career professionals and information technology professionals are placed within units. Co-location of these professionals and services, together with the encouragement of a culture of partnerships to meet strategic learning outcomes, will strengthen the already strong Rollins' culture of student success and relationship-building.

In order to promote strategic thinking efforts around student success and support for teaching, we recommend a cross-unit advisory board for this learning hub or neighborhood with members from the Center for Teaching Excellence, Information Technology, Library, Student Affairs, Learning and Writing Center, Academic Affairs, and a representative group of faculty and students. We recommend this advisory board:

- develop a multimodal literacy framework (see response to Q8 below) for students to guide decisions about services and programs,
- review the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) high-impact educational practices (AAC&U, March 2016) as they brainstorm new program and service ideas,
- advise the learning hub or neighborhood coordinators on future organizational structure and cross-unit collaboration, and
- conduct a baseline and then periodic follow-up needs assessment for student academic support to identify both curricular needs and student access needs, asking if all Rollins students have equitable access to the tools they need to succeed academically.

This work will build upon Rollins' mission to graduate students with a commitment to global citizenship and responsible leadership. The advisory board would seek approval of its recommendations through faculty governance with final approval by the Provost and President. Based on this work, future services might include:

- new faculty pedagogical development programs focused on themes such as writing/rhetoric across the curriculum, course design, blended learning, and multimodal literacies,
- online tutorials to support students' and faculty's digital skill set (e.g., Lynda.com),

- faculty peer-to-peer mentoring for teaching,
- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning practices (e.g., publications and presentations at a new College yearly symposium),
- English Language Learners Support,
- Career Life Planning (including resume and application writing), or
- A dedicated Mathematics Center with tutoring and online support.

As the College considers creating this learning hub or neighborhood, please note a few themes that emerged from our campus conversations. Although almost everyone felt that the library would be a great place to locate the Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE), some faculty expressed concern about the need for privacy for faculty learning experiences. Some faculty might view the CTE as remedial and thus would prefer that access is not visible to other faculty, administration, and students. However, we heard more often that the CTE could become a vibrant center that promotes excellence in teaching and creates a culture where improving teaching practices is viewed positively.

The learning hub should be presented, and ideally perceived, as a place of learning for all—that every member of the Rollins community is engaged in ongoing learning, the learning hub is a nexus for learning. That being said, because we recognize that faculty may find themselves in situations where their access to the CTE would depend on confidentiality, we urge you to consider having both *visible* and *private* spaces available for faculty pedagogical support: ‘safe’ spaces for conversations related to improved teaching practices, evaluation, and tenure; and open, visible spaces to support activities such as workshops, reading circles, writing clubs, etc.

One disadvantage of centralizing services into a learning hub concept is that it may require a culture shift around academic support for students. We learned that, though much of the tutoring happens in the TWC, it also often occurs in residence halls, fraternity houses, or other convenient locations for students, around the clock. We heard that students may not want to walk to the library late at night or may seek tutoring from a friend. To allow for some flexibility, while reigning in this practice somewhat, the College may want to consider having some services located at additional learning hubs or neighborhoods. The College might engage in a learning landscape (Dugdale, 2009) campus inventory and create a central learning hub or neighborhood with satellite hubs. The library could serve as the primary hub, but there might be 1-2 strategically dispersed learning hubs elsewhere. Both the primary and satellite hub locations should have scheduled times with familiar services. We will speak more about this idea in Q4 when we discuss staffing.

**3. Since 2013 the Tutoring & Writing Center and the librarians have begun to integrate content tutoring and writing consultation with information literacy instruction. Have we done enough? If not, what more should we be considering?**

There are opportunities for the teaching librarians working with the Tutoring & Writing Center to collaborate on additional programming. Currently, as a part of their training, the tutors/consultants review a research guide and meet with the librarian who created the guide to discuss and refine. We would suggest building on this opportunity. For example, librarians and writing consultants could collaborate to offer writing/research studios or sessions. Both a librarian and a writing consultant could be available by appointment to meet as a team with students during peak research paper times for assistance with research, writing, and citations. Often, students may not be able to determine the best person, a librarian or a writing consultant, to ask for assistance. Students in the midst of the research and writing processes may benefit greatly from a team-based approach for support.

Broader awareness of the information literacy efforts of librarians would help the Rollins community understand the value that librarians can add to the overall College curriculum and academic support programs. Increased visibility of classes, workshops, research assistance, and consultations through the website and other communication channels could extend the reach of librarians both in and outside the classroom.

As the learning hubs develop and academic support staff (including student tutors) begin to work together in more collaborative and integrated ways, and as the College embarks on strategic planning, conversations about writing and research should include the topic of metaliteracies and threshold concepts, especially as defined by the new Association of College and Research Libraries' (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (American Library Association, March, 2016). Librarians could lead discussions among staff and faculty -- as part of a programmatic approach to general education and also in more specific conversations about course design -- about the concept of metaliteracy, which "expands the scope of traditional information skills (determine, access, locate, understand, produce, and use information) to include the collaborative production and sharing of information in participatory digital environments (collaborate, produce, and share). This approach requires an ongoing adaptation to emerging technologies and an understanding of the critical thinking and reflection required to engage in these spaces as producers, collaborators, and distributors. (Mackey & Jacobson, 2014)

**4. For many years Tutoring Services and the Writing Center, while working closely together, had separate coordinators. In 2009, this staffing was reduced and one person coordinated both services with 80% clerical support. Particularly in light of some of the potential changes envisaged in these questions, is this staffing adequate?**

We recommend two full-time, 12-month coordinator positions: a Writing Center Coordinator/Director and a Learning Center Coordinator/Director. We recommend one full-time, 12-month administrative assistant. We also recommend re-evaluating the use of more than 100 student employees.

Working from a broad needs assessment for learning on campus, the new center coordinators could restructure staffing of the centers to more strategically meet those needs. We see an opportunity to meet course-based learning needs through other means such as supplemental instruction (see Q9), and to rethink the purpose of the tutoring center (and thus to re-name it).

*Coordinators:*

We heard from multiple sources that the current staffing levels are insufficient and limit what the Tutoring and Writing Center can offer to students and faculty. One coordinator must really struggle to train and oversee the high number of subject tutors and writing consultants, which leaves little time and energy for new programming, in-depth assessment, collaboration with outside units, and strategic thinking. We also see a need for coordinators with the specific areas of professional expertise in writing and curricular academic support. We have outlined the basic preparation/experience recommendations for these two positions in Q5.

Should the return to two full-time administrators prove unfeasible, we strongly urge the College to find a creative solution to the need for professional expertise in both writing and curricular academic support. Expertise in writing studies may be found in the English department and writing program's faculty, while expertise in academic support for curricular areas may be found in faculty from subjects that require more support (e.g., languages, mathematics) or in education.

Whether the College decides to return to two coordinators (which we heartily recommend) or continue to employ one, the leadership of the Learning and Writing Center should work as part of a team of allied staff and faculty. We heard the desire for the new faculty hire in English to be affiliated with the writing center, perhaps to enhance tutor training, to advise/consult with the writing center coordinator, and to collaborate with the Writing Center and the Center for Teaching Excellence to revive the summer writing workshops for faculty development. In addition, the writing center coordinator should work closely with the Office of International Student & Scholar Services to support English language learners and with the Center for Career and Life Planning regarding writing as part of career and graduate school planning, in addition to on-going collaboration with other units in the 'learning hub' of Olin Library.

Likewise, and perhaps more so, the Learning Center Coordinator should have working relationships with multiple units on campus: with all academic departments, but especially those whose courses require more academic support than others (based on a needs assessment, but presumably mathematics, foreign languages, the sciences), and with Disability Services and other units in Student Affairs that support students who learn differently (e.g., the "success coaches").

Note: Many institutions also have a separate Mathematics Center with a PhD-level faculty director who coordinates mathematics tutoring and other instructional support in addition to teaching a limited number of courses. We recommend that the College

consider this option as it conducts a needs assessment of existing levels of academic support.

*Administrative Support:*

Also, currently only one part-time, 10-month operations coordinator manages WOnline, scheduling, and timekeeping for over 100 students. While recommendations we have made elsewhere may reduce the number of individual tutors and the haphazard nature of their time cards, we do see a need for a dedicated administrative assistant for the academic year. The enhanced programming we have recommended elsewhere (supplemental instruction, writing workshops, extensive collaboration between administrative units) would justify the need for year-round, full-time support. In addition, if the TWC student staff is reduced (see below), this person could perhaps also take on the payroll/timecards for other student workers in the co-located services of information technology and the library.

*Student employees*

We urge the coordinator(s) of the Learning and Writing Centers to carefully evaluate the use of more than 100 tutors working in locations of their choice and entrepreneurially seeking students to tutor. We have recommended elsewhere (Q9) such a needs assessment, to see where students may be better served using supplemental instruction and group tutoring, where course-specific tutors are necessary, and where subject-area tutors could perhaps serve students instead. We have suggested some ways that student tutors could receive specialized training (e.g., in ESL support and multimedia technology) to enhance their skillset and earn a higher rate of pay. We heard that it can be difficult to recruit students in the needed areas, sometimes due to the low pay. We suggest the Learning and Writing Centers move towards a smaller, more versatile, more highly-trained student staff to more strategically serve the academic support needs of the students, to allow for better training and oversight, and to serve the diverse student body of Rollins College more equitably. We believe that this leaner but more versatile staff should be compensated appropriately to their skillset and experience.

Moving to regularly scheduled hours may help students plan ahead for tutoring times, and thus to see tutoring as a regular part of their learning, not something to do in an emergency. We are concerned that the current practice of allowing tutors to work at any time/place and later submit a report may make academic support more accessible to students with more social capital, and less so to those with less, such as first-generation students, international students, students in the Holt School, etc. Though the practice appears to make academic support more accessible, we are concerned that it does so in less than equitable ways. We are also concerned about the limited oversight of extensive off-site tutoring and the culture of students needing to “drum up business” for their tutoring areas (self-advertising work that presumably is uncompensated). Lastly, this practice carries an enormous administrative burden in reporting and payroll.

**5. We are facing the imminent retirement of the long time Coordinator of the Tutoring & Writing Center. What kind of professional preparation and experience should we be seeking in the replacement(s) for the position?**

We recommend the hiring of two coordinators, one for the Writing Center, and the other for Tutoring/Learning Center:

The Writing Center director should have at least a Master's degree (PhD preferred) in English/rhetoric and composition or a writing studies-related field. He or she should have experience working in and directing a writing center at an undergraduate liberal arts college. The director should demonstrate knowledge of the professional literature and discourse around writing centers, have experience training writing center tutors, and be familiar with current, effective practices for writing centers. Ideally, the candidate would have some expertise in teaching/tutoring English as a second language and in assessing writing center practices and programs. The International Writing Center Association (IWCA) offers an intensive Summer Institute for new writing center directors that could enhance the new director's experience. A PhD hire could potentially teach in the writing program.

The Tutoring/Learning Center director should also hold, at minimum, a Master's degree (PhD preferred) in a related subject area such as Higher Education or Student Affairs. He or she should have experience managing tutoring services at an undergraduate liberal arts college. The director should demonstrate knowledge of the professional literature and discourse around curricular/academic support; have experience training subject-area tutors; and be familiar with current, effective practices for peer tutoring, supplemental instruction, and the assessment of both. Should the director need further immersion in the field, the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) offers an intensive Summer Institute and a Professional Mentoring program for new tutoring center directors.

**6. We invest a lot of time and effort in CRLA Certification. Is it worth it?**

During our two day visit and after investigating online, we did not observe a return on investment for the participation in the CRLA Certification. Also, we did not hear an overwhelming response for students that they valued the CRLA certification. CRLA seems to be focused on "reading, learning assistance, developmental education, tutoring, and mentoring" (College Reading & Learning Association, March 2016). Participation in this certification may be a historical artifact of the current Coordinator of Tutoring & Writing Center's primary background in tutoring and mentoring. We do not recommend continuing with this certification program.

There does not seem to be a focus on writing in the certification, so it seems even less useful for writing center tutors. Writing center discourse (in *Writing Center Journal*, *WLN*, and other writing studies journals and books, and additionally in presentations at writing center conferences) has a rich tradition of experimenting, assessing, and

discussing tutor training, as peer tutoring has long been the predominant model for writing centers. Within that literature, many models for writing center tutor training are available.

In the future, perhaps building on the current training framework, the new directors could develop a broader framework to address writing and tutoring across all subject areas and provide for the specific needs of Rollins students based on institutional research. The College should undertake a tutoring needs assessment to determine what subject areas need focus (writing, mathematics, chemistry, biology, foreign language, English language learners); where students struggle within the curriculum; and then tailor the tutoring program to address these critical subjects or skill enhancement needs. Tutoring resources could then be strategically placed at the point of critical need. The new coordinator(s) for writing and learning should have the flexibility to create a new training program based on effective practices that fit the needs of the Rollins students. Training for tutors and consultants need to reflect the different subject areas: mathematics, writing, English language learners, chemistry, biology and foreign languages.

#### **7. As international enrollment grows at Rollins, should services for English Language Learners be integrated into the existing services of the Tutoring & Writing Center?**

The Learning and Writing Centers should be inclusive of all types of diversity: languages, disabilities, nationalities, socio-economic status, etc. English-language learning (also referred to as English-as-a-Second Language or ESL) students may require specialized services, even if their degree of fluency is high. Writing in the disciplines; following western/American writing, citation, and argumentation conventions; and communicating ideas clearly and effectively are challenges for all students, but especially for those who are non-native English speakers. We heard repeatedly that many international students need more specialized support for writing; deans, faculty, and career center staff all emphasized the need for more ESL support.

The Writing Center coordinator should be in close contact with the Office of International Student & Scholar Services and other staff who support international students. Faculty should be able to easily refer students to specific services for English language support. The writing center could increase its support for English language learners in a few ways. Writing tutors could opt for specialized training in ESL support to then earn a higher pay rate once they have completed the training and a certain number of tutoring hours. This training might be offered by the Writing Center coordinator, a member of the English faculty, an online program, or an outside consultant (or a mix of these options). These specialized tutors could offer a regular writing group for ESL students, which may offer conversations about writing in English; workshops in American academic essay writing conventions; short grammar, word usage, and vocabulary modules, etc. To support students' spoken English, the Writing Center could sponsor conversation circles, facilitated by a trained tutor.

In addition, we encountered a related need for integrated support for students with disabilities, notably those with learning differences/disabilities. We heard conflicting opinions from students about the tutoring and academic support experiences of students with disabilities; some expressed frustration with a lack of adequate supports while others seemed quite satisfied with the support they had received. In the interest of more consistent and comprehensive academic support for students with learning differences, we recommend that the Learning and Writing Centers engage more closely with the Office of Disability Services and Student Affairs. We do not necessarily recommend the full co-location of disability services in the library, as students' confidentiality is a concern, and housing with other offices of Student Affairs makes sense, but we would recommend finding a way for disability services to have a presence in the library. That might mean offering some drop-in office hours, coordinating and cross-training with "success coaches" and tutors, or offering skill/strategy-based workshops (e.g., time management for students with ADHD; reading strategies, etc.).

**8. Students are increasingly asked to produce multimedia, video, online presentations, in-person presentations, and to manipulate and present data. Should the services of the Tutoring & Writing Center expand to cover this proliferation of media and formats? If so, how?**

We highly recommend that the Learning and Writing Centers offer services for multimodal, digital, or media literacy. A constant theme we heard in our visit was that the Rollins' community is committed to graduating students who are leaders and global citizens. Multimedia technology (e.g., video, sound, music, images, text, animation) has a profound effect on the art of persuasion, communication, collaboration, research, teaching, and learning. It will shape how Rollins students communicate and interact in the future, so they need to develop new literacies to make sound political, social, ethical, and cultural decisions, and to succeed professionally.

As noted, the rise of the internet and digital tools has elevated the importance of multimedia and has spawned a host of 'new twenty-first century literacies' – information, media, visual, multi-media, digital, multi-cultural, reproduction (remixing of existing digital media) emerging technology, and digital humanities literacies. (Deegan, 2014; Koltay, 2011; McCarthy & Witmer, 2016). In Q3, we encouraged the Rollins community to take a multimodal literacy approach – studying the literature around these twenty-first century literacies and drawing on your own campus interdisciplinary knowledge and work (critical media and cultural studies were often cited as two disciplines actively assigning multimedia assignments)– and design your own strategic multimodal literacy framework. This multimodal literacy framework should identify specific learning outcomes that are incorporated throughout the curriculum in all disciplines and in the work of the Library, Instructional Design and Technology area, Learning and Writing Centers, and the Center for Teaching Excellence.

Once this multimodal literacy framework has been designed, the 'learning hub' can create services that emphasize critical thinking skills associated with media selection, draw from the many disciplines studying these multimodal literacies (e.g. English, design, communications, psychology, computers science, political theory, gender studies), and help faculty and students produce media.

We also suggest a team approach to developing these services – drawing upon the expertise of faculty, staff, and students. You might consider developing a semester or year-long 'multimodal literacy faculty fellowship' position(s) (with a partial course relief and nominal stipend) to help develop this framework and the associated services alongside the 'learning hub' staff. Mid/Late career faculty might see this fellowship opportunity as an exciting professional development opportunity and could become advocates for these new literacies.

Possible services to consider:

- A multimodal literacy course or workshop for faculty, delivered by professionals across several units at the Center for Creativity. This course would address the comment we heard several times about the need for some faculty to increase their knowledge of how digital tools impact learning activities, teaching practices, and students' future ability to communicate, collaborate, and work in teams. It would focus on both technology and pedagogy.
- A multimodal literacy course or workshop for students. Instructional designers, librarians, and faculty could design a learning experience with the primary goal of helping students develop skills needed for digital media intensive assignments. This course (it could be a one credit course) or workshop could be taught by an instructional designer and/or specially trained Learning and Writing Centers tutors. The course would benefit both students who need to learn digital tools and skills for their own academic pursuits and Learning Center tutors who could take this course in order to provide digital/multimedia consultations with students.
- Multimedia consultation services for students. Learning and Writing Centers tutors who have taken the above course, or who possess the requisite skills through other means could offer scheduled or drop-in consultation times in support of digital assignments. Tutors with enhanced skills like this should be paid a higher rate than the basic tutor pay rates. Similar consultation services are already offered from 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm Sunday through Thursday in the Center for Creativity at Olin Library but not all faculty are aware of this service. This current service needs to be promoted. Some faculty noted that they hesitate to create digital assignments because students have such a wide range of digital skill levels, and they worry that students will not have needed support to complete digital assignments. These described services would help to meet this concern.
- Continue to provide technology workshops for students at the Center for Creativity in tools such as Photoshop, Excel, Illustrator, and HTML. As with the above-mentioned consultations, we suggest that student tutors could deliver this training after they received specialized training (view

<https://at.doit.wisc.edu/training/software-training-for-students/> to see how another campus uses students to deliver a suite of software training for students).

We observed that the instructional designers have expertise in course and curriculum redesign and need to be supported as they continue to deepen this expertise in such areas as situated learning and backward design methodologies (Fink, 2013; Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Noted by several people, faculty do not view the instructional designers as having expertise in course/curriculum design, a misperception common across higher education, especially when instructional designers are in an Information Technology unit. Having --and using to their full potential-- campus professionals with a passion and deep expertise in pedagogy, course/curriculum redesign, and learning technologies would greatly assist Rollins engagement in strategic planning efforts related to teaching and learning.

**9. The Tutoring & Writing Center services are based on individual, one-on-one, in person interactions between the peer educator and the student client. Should we consider other models of service (group consultations, online consultations, asynchronous services?)**

The College should undertake a writing and tutoring needs assessment to determine what subject areas need focus (writing, mathematics, chemistry, biology, foreign language, English language learners); where students struggle with the curriculum; and then tailor the tutoring and other programs to address these critical subjects or skill enhancement needs.

For writing support, the writing center could offer drop-in, evening workshops taught by more advanced, experienced tutors, perhaps with guidance from the writing center coordinator or English/writing program faculty — on particular, but wide-reaching topics such as pre-writing/brainstorming strategies, thesis development, revision strategies, or writing for particular disciplines. The writing center could also offer customized, in-class workshops to support writing instruction across the curriculum. Many writing centers also have a writing fellow program, where a tutor is embedded in a class and offers additional writing support to the students in that class—this might be a good option for more writing-intensive courses, or those that demand more challenging writing assignments. (Tutors who have the required training and experience for the extra responsibility of teaching workshops should be paid a higher rate than the base rate for tutors, similarly to what we suggest for ESL and multimedia specialists.)

The Learning Center could offer similar drop-in, evening workshops on topics connected to learning strategies, such as time management, note-taking, group work strategies, etc. As with the above-suggested writing workshops, workshop topics could be derived from tutor notes: which topics come up repeatedly in tutorial sessions and could be generalizable? These workshops could be taught in collaboration with the Success Coaches or other staff in Student Affairs.

It was brought to our attention that evening college students may have difficulty meeting with tutors due to time and commute constraints. We are especially concerned about this population, as they are more likely to be first-generation college students, working parents, etc., who may need more and different academic support than traditional day students. These students might benefit from online tutoring for writing or subject areas.

Furthermore, the College should consider other methods for providing subject area academic support. For example, if a high number of Rollins students need support for math courses, consider developing a Mathematics Center, coordinated by Mathematics faculty. The Center for Teaching Excellence could also help faculty develop and use teaching methods that support individualized student learning, such as flipped classroom techniques. (Oxford Math Center, March 2016; Agnes Scott College, March 2016; Khan Academy, March 2016).

Also, Supplemental Instruction programs are well-established in undergraduate education programs. *Supplemental Instruction* (SI) is an academic support model developed by Dr. Deanna Martin at the University of Missouri-Kansas City (UMKC) in 1973 that uses peer-assisted study sessions to improve student retention and success within targeted, historically difficult courses. SI is a non-remedial approach to learning as the program targets high-risk courses rather than high-risk students. (Lafayette, March 2016; Khan Academy, March 2016; Purdue University, March 2016; University of Missouri-Kansas City, March 2016; Wikipedia, March, 2016).

#### **10. How can we assess the effectiveness of our tutoring and writing services in improving students' mastery of course content and improved writing and other skills?**

The current Tutoring and Writing Center coordinator has a rich repository of data related to TWC services, e.g. use of tutoring services by different disciplines. Moving forward, we recommend that the job description for the new director(s)/coordinator(s) include experience with program evaluation or at a minimum experience in working with an evaluator who can set up a feasible, doable, and useful program evaluation. A good program evaluation will focus not only on attainment of goals and objectives but also on business improvement/workflow processes that will help decision makers make continuous improvements and help leaders be good stewards of resources. We recommend obtaining both quantitative and qualitative data so that decision makers can not only see the numbers, but hear the stories of clients.

One program evaluation framework that has gained popularity recently is the logic model (University of Wisconsin Extension, March 2016). A logic model will be useful to the Learning and Writing Centers if Rollins engages in strategic planning that sets priorities for the Centers (see Q2). Once priorities have been set, a logic model would visually depict program resources (inputs), Center activities and processes (outputs), and changes or benefits (immediate outcomes and predicted long-term impacts).

Once this logic model has been created, coordinators/evaluators and the advisory committee (evaluation team) would develop an evaluation framework to determine priorities for gathering useful information. Together the evaluation team can decide on evaluation priorities, such as: usage data, business process efficiencies, student satisfaction, students' ability to achieve essential learning outcomes, or impact on student global leadership skills. We recommend using the AAC&U VALUE rubrics when assessing learning outcome achievements so evidence can be shared nationally through a common dialogue and understanding of student success (AAC&U, March 2016).

The logic model evaluation framework is one model; Rollins may decide on other evaluation methodologies to use. We offer the logic model as a helpful process for conducting a campus needs assessment, mapping out resources, determining long and short term outcomes, and setting priorities. It is both a planning methodology and evaluation framework. Finally, many funders require a logic model as a way of showing resources, goals and outcomes. If Rollins is considering applying for an outside grant or asking donors for financial help with the changes we have recommended, a logic model is a useful way to communicate goals, processes, outputs, immediate outcomes, and long-term impacts to various audiences – especially decision makers.

As the TWC coordinators engage in program evaluation, we highly recommend they receive guidance from the advisory board and partner with other units – perhaps institutional research and also faculty that may want to conduct research projects related to their discipline and student learning. The TWC will also need to work closely with institutional research experts to ensure that any presentations or publications have followed institutional research protocols. Similar to the multimedia faculty fellows program (Q8), perhaps faculty with an interest in assessment of learning could receive a course release and stipend to conduct research as part of this assessment.

### **Resources**

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