

## Typed Narrative

**Name:** Fran Hooker

**Criterion 3 – Core Component(s):** (3c)

*The organization creates effective learning environments*

The Writing Center supports the academic mission of Webster University by helping all members of the University community become strong, confident, self-reflective, and independent writers. The Center seeks to foster a rich and stimulating culture of writing at Webster, one that recognizes the connection between writing and learning and that acknowledges the powerful role that writing plays in our intellectual, social, cultural, and political lives. The Writing Center encourages students to view writing as a process of discovery; in the act of writing, we ask new questions, deepen our understanding, and find new ways to explore and express our own voices.

The Writing Center offers free, friendly, and individualized support for all writers at Webster, from freshmen to graduate students, from students with remedial needs to those working at highly advanced levels. Coaches help with every stage of the writing process, from brainstorming ideas to documenting sources. The Center offers support for all types of writing projects, including résumés and cover letters; admission essays and personal statements; research and term papers; and dissertations. In addition to hour-long, face-to-face appointments, the Center also provides the following services:

- telephone and online support for Webster's extended domestic sites and an online service for the University's international sites;
- a series of workshops offered each semester on a variety of writing topics;
- a classroom visit program tailored to the specific needs of individual courses;
- sponsorship of the Freshman Writing Awards;
- faculty workshops on topics such as preventing plagiarism and creating writing assignments;
- community outreach, such as tutoring students from the Herbert Hoover Girls and Boys Club of St. Louis and offering an annual workshop for minority students, helping them develop and polish their college admissions essays; and
- access to nine state-of-the-art computers, including several equipped with programs designed to assist students with visual and other disabilities.
- The Writing Center creates and disseminates handouts and online resources for students to help them improve their critical thinking, research, and writing skills necessary for academic success.
- The Writing Center has created a *Faculty Guide to Using the Writing Center*.
- **Classroom Visit Program**  
Responding to Webster students' needs, the coordinator and/or staff visit individual classrooms, leading workshops specifically tailored for a particular course/discipline. The service enables us to help large numbers of students more efficiently and to target their needs more precisely.

- **Writing Workshops**  
The Writing Center presents 6 to 12 workshops each semester on writing related topics. The workshops allow us to more efficiently reach students who are struggling with specific areas of their writing. Workshops also help us reach students who might not otherwise use the Writing Center.
- **Freshman Writing Award**  
Created in 2004, these annual awards have helped us achieve our mission of fostering a culture of writing at the University and have helped bring public recognition to superior performance.
- **Non-credit Writing Coach Training Course**  
Most Writing Center coaches are not only employees but also students. This course furthers their intellectual growth by helping them develop a strong theoretical and practical understanding of Writing Center work and by helping them engage in a critical, reflective practice, both as writers and as coaches. The course also ensures that our training is efficient, thorough, and consistent, which allows us to better serve the University community.
- **Faculty Development Workshops and Seminars**  
Working with the Faculty Development Center, we have begun offering a variety of seminars and workshops for faculty in order to help them craft more successful writing assignments, evaluate student writing more effectively and efficiently, and develop strategies for dealing with issues such as plagiarism.

### **Evidence**

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**Criterion C – Core Component(s):** (3c)

**Area(s):** Student, faculty & staff writing programs & workshops

Identify and describe what evidence and where to find evidence relating to the above.

The Writing Center provides an environment that supports all learners and respects the diversity they bring. We serve a diverse range of students, from a variety of racial, ethnic, language, age, and ability levels.

**Evidence:** statistics, intake forms, logbooks and schedules, thank you letters from students, evaluation forms, self-study analysis report, coach observation and evaluation forms for coaches, coach training materials, class visit records, workshop sign-up and evaluation forms.

- Coaching procedures focus on student learning, including the mastery of research, writing, and thinking skills necessary for academic success.

**Evidence:** Intake forms, evaluation forms, self-study report, coach evaluation forms, coach self-reflections, coach training materials, handouts, website resources, presentation materials, class visit records, workshop sign-up and evaluation forms.

- The Writing Center works one-on-one or online with undergraduate and graduate students from all of Webster's campuses, supporting learning throughout the student's experience regardless of the location of the student.

**Evidence:** Online Writing Center (statistics, logbook, copies of all papers with comments, thank you letters from students.)

- The Writing Center employs, when appropriate, new technologies that enhance effective learning environments for students.

**Evidence:** Online Writing Center (statistics, logbook, copies of all papers with comments, thank you letters from students, online handouts.) Coach training: Connections website.

- The Writing Center's systems of quality assurance include regular review of whether its educational strategies, activities, processes and technologies enhance student learning.

**Evidence:** Participation in conferences and consortia to ensure up-to-date best practices, presentation and publication of papers, evaluation forms of our services, evaluations of staff, Writing Board minutes, training materials, coaches' self-reflection exercises.

- The Writing Center supports improvements in curriculum, pedagogy, instructional resources and student services

**Evidence:** Faculty workshops, Writing Committee minutes, Writing Board Minutes, Freshman Writing Award documentation, *The Faculty Guide to Using the Writing Center*.