



UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER
ANNUAL REPORT
2021 - 2022

FROM THE DIRECTOR

This document is the first Annual Report produced by the University Writing Center (UWC) at Texas A&M. We hope it gives you a sense of what the University Writing Center contributed to the campus during the 2021-2022 academic year and how we continue to pursue our mission of helping Aggies become more effective communicators.

The fall of 2021 marked the UWC's return to campus after being remote due to COVID 19. Staff and consultants alike were excited to be back and consulting in person. During our year of working remotely, we had tried to create a virtual version of the UWC's storied "Bat Cave," the area where our peer consultants complete asynchronous consultations, share stories and advice between sessions, and bond over crossword puzzles and debates about the Oxford comma. Seeing the real-life Bat Cave in action once more made us realize that the online version was a pale approximation of the reality. It was great to have consultants mentoring each other in a shared space once again.

To minimize the risk of spreading COVID during a fall surge, we held our classes and orientations online and conducted our training via small group meetings. By spring, we tentatively resumed most of our normal in-person events. Luckily, we were mostly unscathed by COVID and avoided any disruptions to our services. We also emphasized aspects of in-person tutoring in our trainings, realizing that almost none of our peer consultants had ever tutored face-to-face before.

Our popular graduate programs, including our graduate writing retreats and the Write Line accountability groups, remained online as we found that remote sessions allowed more graduate students to participate, including those enrolled in distance programs. One graduate program that we offered both in-person and online was our Dissertation, Article, and Thesis Assistance (DATA) program which pairs students working on longer projects with the same consultant for the semester. We also resumed offering in-person classroom workshops, which continued to be an important part of our campus outreach.

In all, the 2021-2022 year was a welcome return to something close to normal in Aggieland. The global pandemic and the isolation it caused, however, made our staff even more aware of the critical importance of effective communication—whether it be between government officials and their citizens, businesses and their clients, or even friends and families trying to stay connected remotely. At the University Writing Center, we're proud to play a part in helping the next generation of Aggies develop the communication skills they will need to succeed, no matter how the world around them changes.

Nancy Vazquez

Director, University Writing Center

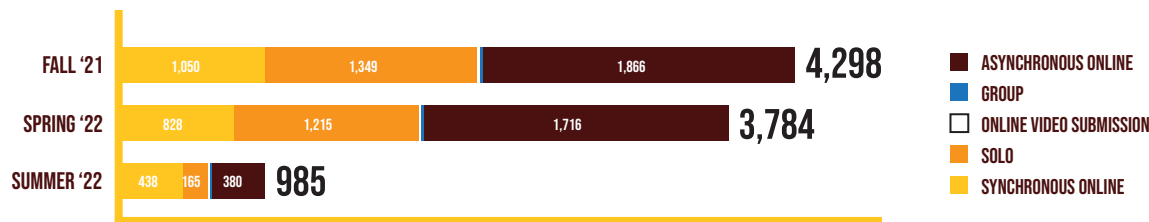
2021 - 2022 CONSULTATION HIGHLIGHTS

The University Writing Center (UWC) provides three types of peer consulting options for undergraduate and graduate students:

- In-person consultations at one of our two physical locations
- Asynchronous online consultations where students upload a document (email)
- Synchronous consultations where students meet via Zoom

We also provide consultations for students working collaboratively in groups and offer additional support for students for whom English is not their primary language.

CONSULTATIONS



- **9,068** total consultations
- **4,074** unique student visits
- **2,729** in-person consultations
- **3,961** asynchronous online (email) consultations
- **2,316** synchronous consultations via Zoom
- **61** group appointments

FAST FACTS

- **3,352** unique undergraduates & **709** unique graduate students
- **1,373** students who had multiple sessions
- **665** students indicated that English was not their primary language
- **35-minute** average for consultations
- **12%** of students left survey reviews

“

“The consultant gave me a lot of good ideas and insight during our session. She identified areas I needed to clarify or improve while also giving me confidence about the additions I added to the new draft. I have appreciated the accountability and direction of the sessions, which have eased my personal anxiety of sharing my writing.”

WHO WE SERVE

For the 2021-2022 academic year, the UWC had 2561 unique undergraduate and 644 unique graduate clients attending consultations.

- Seniors **(1762)** were overwhelmingly the largest users of our service
- The Engineering and Liberal Arts colleges had the largest number of clients with **830** and **685** respectively

CLIENTS

CLIENTS BY CLASSIFICATION

U1	475	U4	1762	G7	412
U2	547	U5	19	G8	274
U3	654	G6	8	HSC*	30

*Health Science Center

CLIENTS BY COLLEGE (MAJOR, COURSE)

Unknown	30	Liberal Arts	685
Agriculture & Life Sciences	538	Mays Business School	254
Architecture	161	Medicine	8
Architecture-School	3	Medicine-School	3
Arts & Sciences	54	Nursing	16
Bush School of Gov & Pub Serv	32	Nursing-School	2
Dentistry	29	Perf, Visual & Fine Arts	1
Education & Human Dev-School	10	Public Health	116
Education & Human Development	541	Qatar Campus	1
Engineering	830	Rangel Coll of Pharmacy	2
Exchange Program	8	School of Law	3
Galveston Campus	1	Science	281
General Studies	116	Veterinary Med & Bio School	2
Geosciences	62	Veterinary Med & Bio Sciences	379

WHO WE SERVE

CLIENTELE DEMOGRAPHICS

Figures 1 and 2 indicate the ethnic origins of students for each consultation. Figure 3 indicates the ethnic distribution of graduate students for each unique user.

PERCENTAGES OF ALL AY 21-22 UNDERGRADUATE UWC CONSULTATIONS BY ETHNIC ORIGIN OF STUDENTS

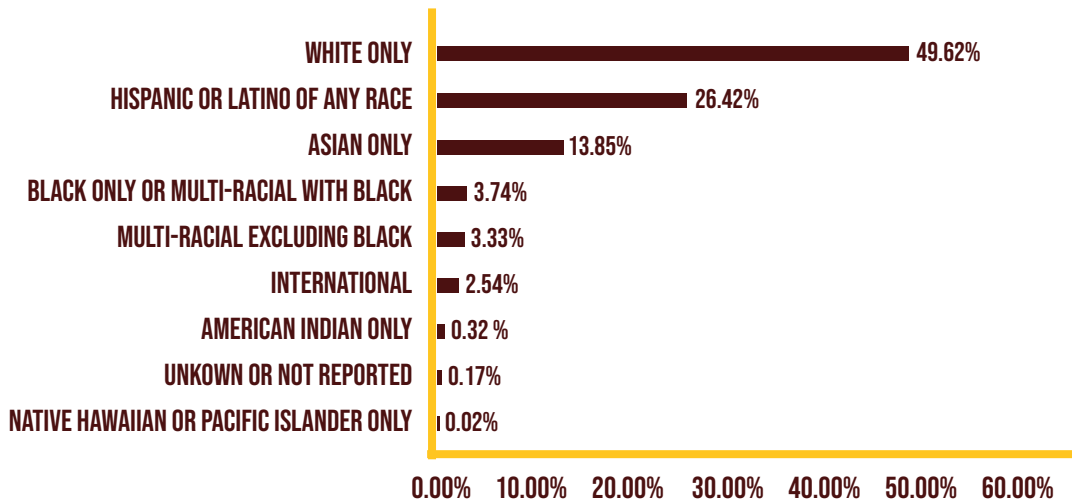


Figure 1

UNDERGRADUATE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF ETHNIC ORIGIN PER UNIQUE STUDENTS

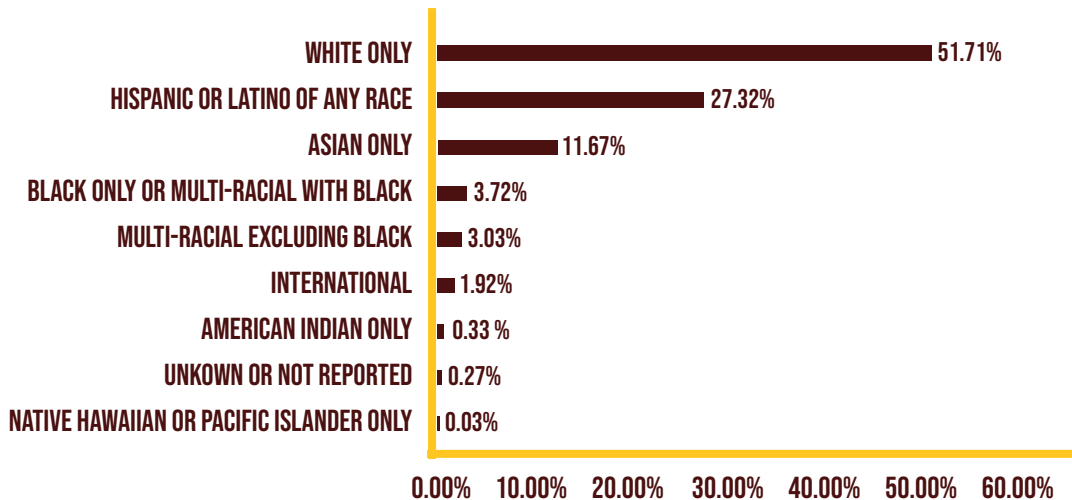


Figure 2

WHO WE SERVE

PERCENTAGES OF ALL AY 21-22 GRADUATE UWC CONSULTATIONS BY ETHNIC ORIGIN OF STUDENTS

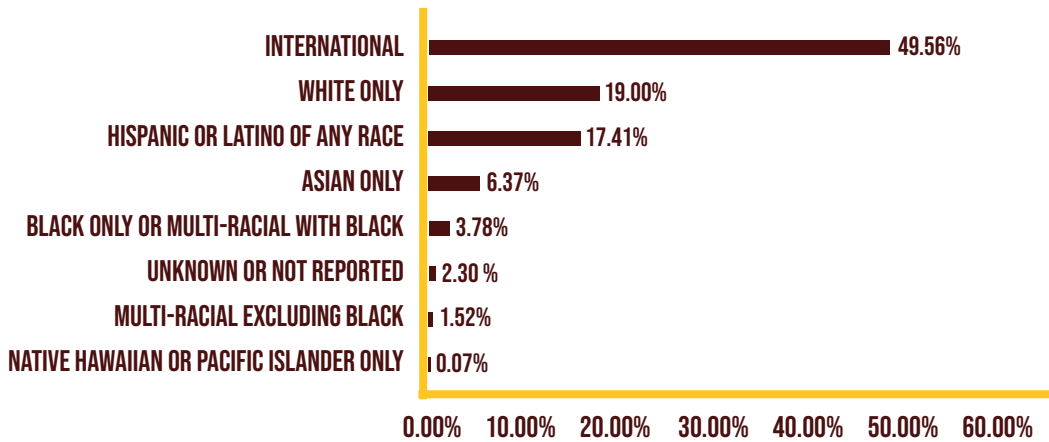


Figure 3

First generation students made up a quarter of all unique UWC undergraduate students (Figure 4). (Numbers for graduate first generation students are not counted by the university.)

PERCENTAGES OF FIRST GEN STUDENTS AMONG UNIQUE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

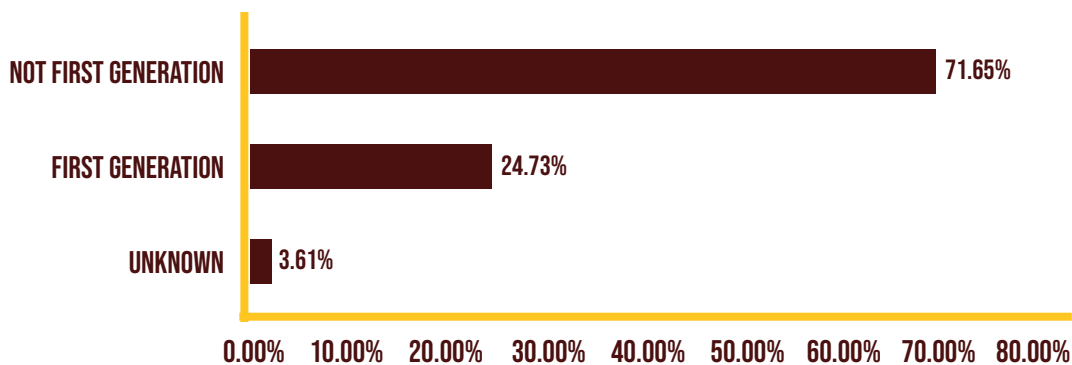


Figure 4

FAST FACTS

- **24.73%** students self-identified as first-generation
- **49.56%** of graduate consultations were with international students
- **607** students indicated that English was not their primary language

PROGRAMS

We support both undergraduate and graduate students through consultations, as well as through a variety of writing and speaking programs.

Additional programs includes writing retreats for undergraduates and graduates, online writing accountability groups, and a specialized consultation program for students working on longer documents such as theses or dissertations.

PROGRAM NUMBERS

- **67** graduate students participated in the writing retreats, working online for four days during the interim and receiving daily coaching from advanced consultants
- **84** students completed the Dissertation Article and Thesis Assistance (DATA) program, which allows undergraduate and graduate students working on longer documents ten repeat sessions with the same consultant
- **182** graduate students in **14** groups participated in Write Line, weekly online accountability writing groups held through Zoom

FAST FACTS

- **67%** of students using DATA worked on their dissertations (Table 5)
- **83** of the **99** students [**84%**] who started the DATA program completed the program during the semester (Table 6)
- **51** of **67** attendees of the writing retreat worked on dissertations [**76%**], **12** worked on theses [**18%**], and **4** worked on articles [**6%**] (Table7)

PROGRAMS

DATA PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

SEMESTER	PHD	MA/MS	UNDERGRADUATES	PER SEMESTER TOTALS
FALL 2021	21	4	9	34
SPRING 2022	20	3	12	35
SUMMER 2022	26	3	0	29
AY 21-22 TOTALS	67	10	21	98
% TOTALS FOR AY	68%	10%	21%	100%

Table 5

DATA PROGRAM COMPLETION RATE

SEMESTER	APPLICATIONS RECEIVED	STARTED PROGRAM	COMPLETED IN SEMESTER	PERCENT COMPLETED
FALL 2021	53	33	28	85%
SPRING 2022	41	37	32	86%
SUMMER 2022	41	29	23	79%
TOTALS	135	99	83	84%

Table 6

THESIS/DISSERTATION WRITING RETREAT PARTICIPANTS

RETREAT	ATTENDEES	ARTICLE	THESIS	DISSERTATION
AUG-21	20	1	4	15
JAN-22	23	2	5	16
MAY-22	24	1	3	20
TOTALS	67	4	12	51

Table 7



Program Quotes

“The DATA program is one of the best resources I’ve ever had The pleasure of using at TAMU. Quintessential to my success.”

“The Write Line sessions were invaluable. The accountability and camaraderie of the sessions greatly contributed to me meeting 85% of my goal. ”

SUPPORT FOR COURSES

Beyond supporting students through consultations and programs, we provide support for courses, including W (Writing) and C (Communication) courses through our classroom workshops and support of the W and C Course Advisory Committee. Additional resources for faculty teaching writing or speaking are provided on our website.

CLASSROOM WORKSHOPS

Instructors can request workshops on writing, speaking, and research topics for both graduate and undergraduate courses, which are conducted by consultants and full-time staff.

- 140 workshops were conducted for classes with a total enrollment of **4,327** students
- 37 requests were for the Overview of UWC Services

WRITING AND COMMUNICATION (W & C) COURSES

W & C courses are designed and administered within departments and approved for a period of four years by the W & C Course Advisory Committee and the Faculty Senate. All TAMU students must pass two W courses or one W and one C course in their major that fulfill the graduation requirement.

- Students in W & C courses who had one (or more) writing center consultations scored, on average, a 0.2 higher GPA for that W or C course than those students from the same course who did not visit the UWC (Fig. 6)

W & C COURSE STUDENTS WITH UWC INTERVENTION

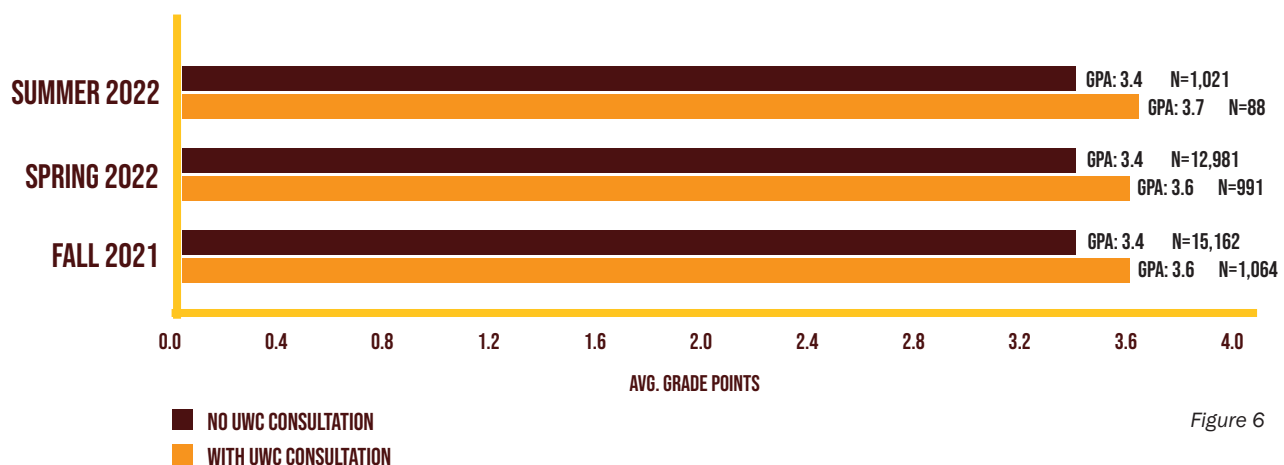


Figure 6

SUPPORT FOR COURSES

Full-time, first time in college students in Fall 2021 who used the University Writing Center for consultations had a higher rate of retention than those who did not (Table 1). This general correlation between higher retention and use of the UWC remained consistent across all demographic groups (Table 2).

FIRST GENERATION STUDENT USE OF UWC SERVICE

COHORT	USED UWC	DID NOT RETURN		RETURNED	
		N	%	N	%
FALL 2021	YES	4	1.3%	299	98.7%
	NO	523	4.8%	10,399	95.2%

Table 1

DEMOGRAPHICS OF UWC SERVICE INTERVENTION RETENTION RATES

COHORT	ETHNIC ORIGIN	USAGE OF UWC	DID NOT RETURN		RETURNED	
			N	%	N	%
FALL 2021	AMERICAN INDIAN	YES	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
		NO	1	4.3%	22	95.7%
	HISPANIC	YES	2	2.6%	75	97.4%
		NO	146	5.6%	2,483	94.4%
	AFRICAN AMERICAN	YES	N/A	N/A	9	100.0%
		NO	21	6.6%	296	93.4%
	NON-UR MINORITY	YES	2	0.9%	213	99.1%
		NO	353	4.5%	7,566	95.5%

Table 2



Instructors Talk about Classroom Workshops

“Awesome support element in bettering our students to be better professionals.”

“The staff member was very helpful, and their presentation has enabled the students to appreciate the UWC resources. I am grateful for their valuable service to my class.”

OUR STAFF

PEER CONSULTANTS

Our writing and speaking consultants are undergraduate and graduate students from a variety of majors and disciplines. We typically employ 45-60 writing consultants each year. During our hiring season in March, we usually hire between 25-40 consultants depending on how many consultants are returning.

To develop their skills, our consultants participate in regular training throughout the fall and spring semester through observations and co-sessions for new hires, as well as weekly staff or team meetings on various training topics, including editing vs. consulting, navigating power distance in consultations and strategies for working with longer documents.

Our consultants also receive additional training and professional certification from the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA), with the opportunity to receive up to three levels of tutor certification: beginning, intermediate, and master. Only the first level is required for all consultants, while the second and third levels are optional and tied to pay raises.

FAST FACTS

- **33** new consultants (7 graduate and 26 undergraduate students) were hired
- **18** consultants returned from the previous cohort
- **27** consultants were certified as beginning tutors
- **13** consultants were certified as intermediate tutors
- **5** consultants were certified as master tutors



Consultants Talk about Working at the UWC

"I appreciate all the skills I've learned here. I feel so lucky that I can say I've worked here."

"I learned a lot about how to improve my consultations — whether establishing authority in sessions, recognizing when I should change tactics, and listening to my clients more effectively."

OUR STAFF

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

The writing center professional staff consists of full-time writing consultants (Level I through III), program coordinators, and directors managing the writing and speaking programs and leading teams of peer consultants. The staff also includes an Administrative Coordinator II and Administrative Associate I, who oversee office operations.

FAST FACTS

- Thadeus Bowerman was promoted from Program Coordinator I to Assistant Director I
- Tiffany Tigges was promoted from Writing Consultant I to Writing Consultant II
- We sent four staff members to the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity (NCORE) 2022 in Portland, Oregon, marking a return to conference travel since the pandemic started
- Executive Director Valerie Balester and Assistant Director Florence Davies authored publications in *Open Words*, an open-source journal, stemming from the writing center's involvement with the Department of English's Teaching Writing Now: Diversity, Inclusion and Social Justice in the Writing Classroom. This virtual symposium "aimed at bringing together scholars doing research in social justice pedagogies, cultural rhetoric's, and composition/professional writing in our rapidly changing media landscape"

STAFF PUBLICATIONS

Balester, V. (2021) Introduction: revising our practices mindfully and embodying anti-racist pedagogy. *Open Words: Access and English Studies*, 13(1), 1-10.

Young, V., Balester, V., & Davies, F. (2021) Teaching writing after George Floyd. *Open Words: Access and English Studies*, 13(1), 100-129.

LeMire, S., Balester, V., Xu, Z., Dorsey, L., & Hahn, D. (2021) Assessing the informational literacy skills of first-generational college students. *College & Research Libraries*, 82(5), 730-754.

OUTREACH

We employ a small staff student media interns to develop media projects who are supervised by Assistant Director Florence Davies. These projects range from entertaining content for social media accounts like Instagram to educational content for UWC's robust, long-standing YouTube channel.

YOUTUBE HIGHLIGHTS

The UWC's YouTube channel, which hosts several curated playlists of writing and speaking videos, notably met its benchmark of 20,000 global subscribers during AY 21-22.

- #3 YouTube channel at Texas A&M University after #1 Texas A&M Athletics and #2 the main Texas A&M channel
- 4 million impressions leading to 215.6k views
- 12.7k hours of watch time from impressions
- 3.6k growth of followers in AY 21-22

TOP 5 YOUTUBE VIDEOS FOR AY 21-22

1. Ethos, Pathos & Logos – 200,285 views
2. Active and Passive voice – 85,923 views
3. Get Lit: The Literature Review – 51,079 views
4. Toulmin Method – 37,261 views
5. Brainstorming – 26,944 views

YOUTUBE CHANNEL VIEWS DURING THE 2021-2022 ACADEMIC YEAR

