



UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

Annual Report
Academic Year: 2021-2022

The mission of the University Writing Center is to foster effective writing strategies that will not only help writers with their current assignments, but also build foundations for success in future academic and professional writing situations.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

The University Writing Center, located in the D.F. Lowry Building, is an academic support program that provides individual peer tutoring in writing to all UNCP students. The Center is supported jointly by Academic Affairs and the Department of English, Theatre, and Foreign Languages and is housed in Student Academic Support and Retention. The Director of the Center, Dr. Elise Dixon, is an assistant professor in the Department of English, Theatre, and World Languages. The University Writing Center employs student tutors from all disciplines, paying them an hourly wage for their tutoring services. A Graduate Student Assistant is also assigned to the University Writing Center. The University Writing Center provides one-to-one tutoring in writing to UNCP students who are working on writing related to UNCP coursework, scholarships, or other applications.

This annual report provides usage information gleaned from our database of student records. It also provides updated information regarding improvements, new programs, and other developments that have taken place in the University Writing Center over the past academic year.

If you have questions about this report or would like more information, please contact:

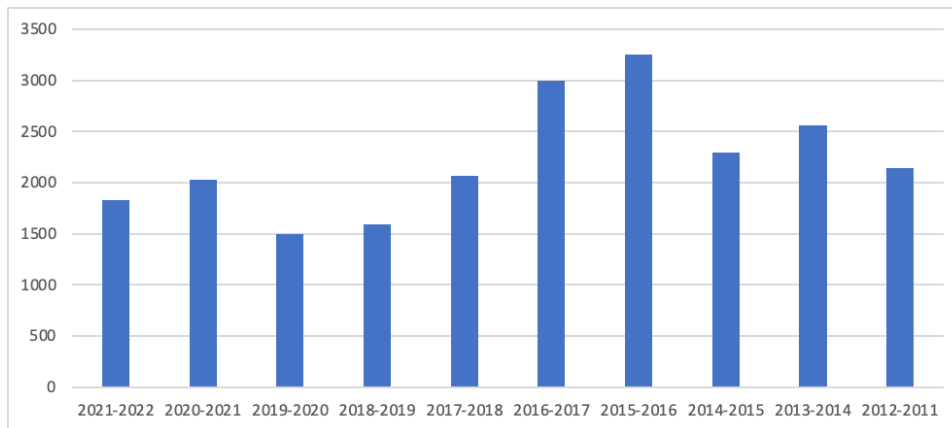
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WRITING CENTER USAGE

YEAR AT A GLANCE

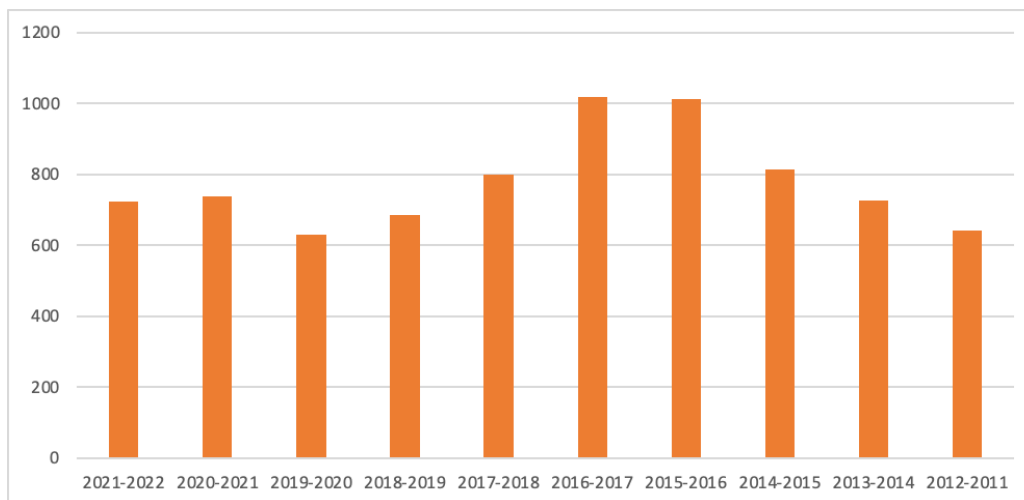
- 1828 writing consultations total
- 724 total unique users
- 1502 online consultations

This year saw a decrease in tutorial sessions by 196 sessions, a 9.6% decrease from the previous year.

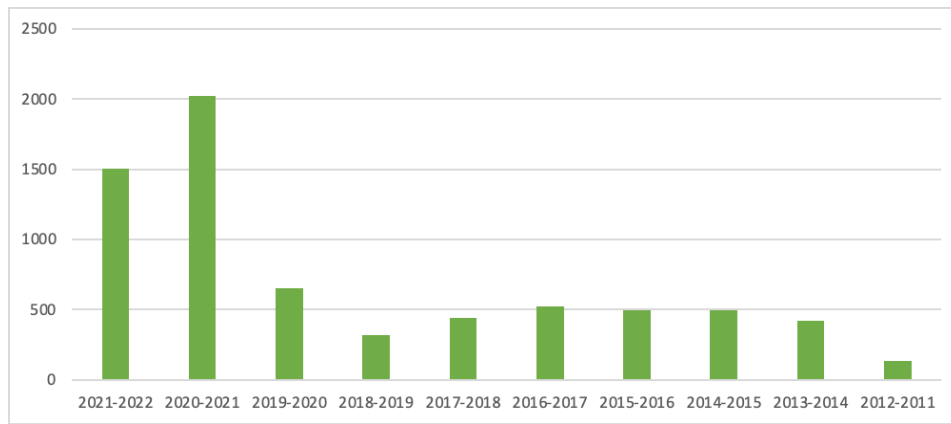


This decrease could be attributed to the increased amount of in-person courses being offered at UNCP, and a lack of understanding among students of how to access resources in-person. In addition, this academic year began with the DELTA COVID-19 surge, and then Spring semester saw the Omicron COVID-19 surge. Students may have been busy taking care of themselves, their family, or other loved ones.

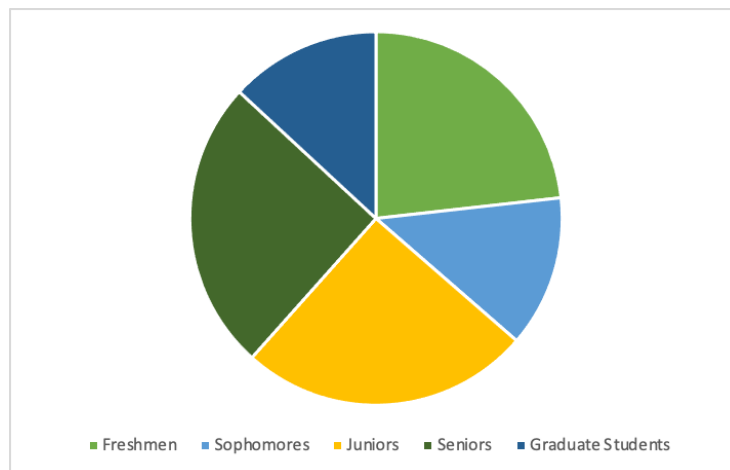
The total number of unique users decreased by 15 students to 724 students. 52% of students visiting the center returned multiple times. The Writing Center tutored 8.7% of the total UNCP population this year.



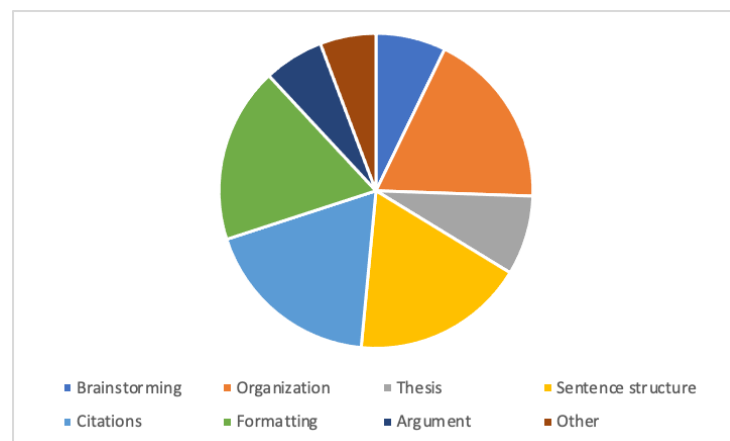
Online appointments increased by 1369 to 2024 students total. Again, this is due to the pandemic and the nearly entirely online experience at UNCP.



Student visits were made predominantly by junior and seniors, but with a strong mix of lower classmen and graduate students as well.



Students requested assistance on various aspects of writing, with many requests focusing on sentence structure and organization:



WRITING CENTER USAGE & FUNDING

The Writing Center's student usage has grown and slowed significantly over the past five years. According to past interim director Mike Berntsen, in the academic year 2017-2018, the writing center received an initial reduction in budget, which led to limited hours. Since then, the writing center has seen some difficult years, with the pandemic impacting what can and cannot be done in the center in terms of appointments and outreach. In Fall 2021, the writing center remained online with limited in-person hours. In the Spring, the writing center opened fully in-person. This transition may have impacted usage.

In terms of funding, the writing center went over-budget this year in order to stay open for Fall 3 and May-mester, and due to a baseline raise given to all tutors. Tutors now start at \$10/hour and can work their way up to \$12/hour with semesterly raises. The writing center also received a much-needed makeover of the physical space, with new paint on the walls, decorations, a new coffee machine, and two new Mac computers.

BEFORE



AFTER



TECHNOLOGY

WCONLINE

For the past nine years, the University Writing Center has subscribed to WCOonline, a web-based system that included the following features:

- A web-based appointment system.
- A data base that tracks students and student visits by various attributes
- A survey tool
- Usage reporting capabilities
- Online tutoring capabilities.

ONLINE TUTORING SESSIONS

The online tutoring capabilities feature a web-based platform where students paste or upload documents to a shared space. Tutors and clients can both highlight and modify the document. Communication is carried out through a chat feature. This is a popular feature for online and distance students

WEBSITE

The University Writing Center's website includes an 'about us' page which includes a mission statement and an explanation of our approach. The website also features a page for faculty, a page with pictures and biographies of the tutoring staff, a page of helpful links, a page that explains how to apply for a tutoring position, and a page explaining our online tutoring platform. Students can make appointments via our website.

HARDWARE

The University Writing Center has six computers that are available for student use, one of which has DSS software installed. One printer is also available. The computers are three years old and in acceptable condition. The Writing Center also has a StarBoard projector for presentations and for group writing projects.

TUTOR TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TUTOR TRAINING COURSE

University Writing Center tutors are trained in a full-credit course, ENG 2990: Writing Center Theory and Practice. In the course, students read theoretical and practical texts in the writing center field. Students in this class are required to complete four projects: a reflective narrative, a researched argument, a multimodal assignment, and a tutoring philosophy. In class, we discuss recent and foundational writing center texts and practice consulting each other. Students are also required to complete multiple observations of current tutors. The class creates a knowledgeable and skilled cohort of tutors in the University Writing Center. This experience and training greatly enhances the students' qualifications for teaching and related careers.

BI-WEEKLY TRAINING SESSIONS

All University Writing Center tutors participate in bi-weekly staff-training sessions. Many sessions this year focused on trouble-shooting online sessions, providing guidance for “dropoff” papers, and reading through Laura Greenfield’s *Radical Writing Center Praxis*.

RESEARCH

This academic year, tutors proposed a panel presentation at the Southeastern Writing Centers Association conference and were accepted. They presented on compassion fatigue for tutors during COVID-19 and received interesting and useful feedback from their audience.



Session M3, Roundtable, WCC Room, Saturday, 2:00pm-3:00pm

How Tutors Manage Compassion Fatigue in a Time of New “Normalcy”

Elizabeth Gagne, Shannon Derricott, Lakota Craft, Lily Monaghan (University of North Carolina at Pembroke)

Covid-19 highlighted various social and mental health needs and mental needs communities face during a time of uncertainty. As universities across the country work to reach a sense of normalcy, students—and tutors more specifically—still experience compassion fatigue associated with past trauma from trying to mediate through a world that is no longer familiar. This roundtable aims to acknowledge how tutors today are handling compassion fatigue while they maintain professionalism within Writing Centers.

Additionally, Shannon Derricott Braswell and Elizabeth Gagne collaborated on a presentation about increasing engagement of the writing center at UNCP’s Undergraduate Research and Creativity Symposium.

4 - The Writing Center: Investigating Ways to Increase Engagement and Usability

Shannon Braswell, English, Theatre & Foreign Languages

Mentor: **Elizabeth Gagne, Elise Dixon**

Abstract:

As a Writing Center it is imperative that multiple voices are heard to gauge and increase student involvement and engagement. The projected goals for the University Writing Center revolves around asking students what they need, hosting events that bring students in, and interviewing other university writing centers to see how they meet the needs of their students. This research will allow the center to learn what can be done to create an inviting and interesting environment that students are eager to be a part of. Lori Salem writes in "Decisions: Who Chooses to Use the Writing Center?" that writing centers are where college students have the opportunity to choose the type of writing instruction they will receive (p.150). Students are the sole reason why writing centers exist and asking them directly what they want and need will allow centers to be a better tool for said students. It is understandable that students may be reluctant to visit the writing center out

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Pembroke Undergraduate Research & Creativity Symposium – 2022

of fear of being told that they are “wrong”, especially when they are sometimes sent to centers as a punishment. Harry Denny, from "Understanding the Needs and Expectations of Working-Class Students in Writing Centers", expands upon this by stating that “Writing centers should be a godsend for students”(p.69). It is the job of the center to find out all of the information that they can in order to create a space that is helpful and approachable rather than intimidating. The best way for the center to achieve this is by communication with students and other writing centers. Ultimately, this should target new areas for further research to help evolve and improve the writing center.

STAFF & RECRUITMENT

WRITING CENTER STAFF

Fall 2021-Spring 2022 Staff

Elise Dixon, Director

Graduate Assistant:

- Elizabeth Gagne (English Ed)

Undergraduate Tutors:

- Lily Monaghan (Sociology/Political Science)
- Elijah Johnson (English)
- Drew Cook (English)
- Amanda Brownsberger (English)
- Lakota Craft (English)
- Linn Brown (Spanish/ Political Science)
- Alyse Coggin (English Education)
- Clavaria Jefferys (English Education)
- Mahmood Faraj (English)
- Roland Pruitt (History)
- Shannon Derricott-Braswell (English)
- Zaveyan Pearson (English)

RECRUITMENT

To replace graduating staff, recruitment was undertaken in the Spring. This consists of emails to faculty seeking out nominations for excellent writers, or helpful collaborators that they have seen in their courses. Once I receive the nominations, I send an email to all nominated students to register for ENG 2990. After students take the course, students apply to work in the center by submitting their resume, cover letter, and tutoring philosophy.

UNIVERSITY OUTREACH

WORKSHOPS

The Writing Center conducted multiple outreach activities this academic year, including participation in Pembroke Day, The Center for Student Success' Boo Bash, and various orientations and outreach talks with transfer students, incoming freshmen, and ARC students.

In addition, Dr. Dixon and Elizabeth Gagne conducted workshops for four different classes, with visits to three ENG 1060 courses and one nursing course.

FRESHMAN SEMINAR

Many Freshman Seminar instructors include the University Writing Center in their course. Some include the Center in their scavenger hunt, some bring their class by the Center, and some invite a representative of the Center to visit their class. We encourage all of the above and hope to strengthen our connection to Freshman Seminar in the coming year.

SPECIFIC COURSES

Many instructors teaching writing intensive courses have included the Writing Center in their syllabus. The instructors recommend, or in some cases require, all of their students to visit the Writing Center. Instructors forward copies of assignments and give us feedback on our work with their students. The Writing Center has relationships with instructors teaching courses in the following areas:

- English Composition
- Intro to Theatre
- History
- Religion
- Mass Communication
- Business Communication
- Math

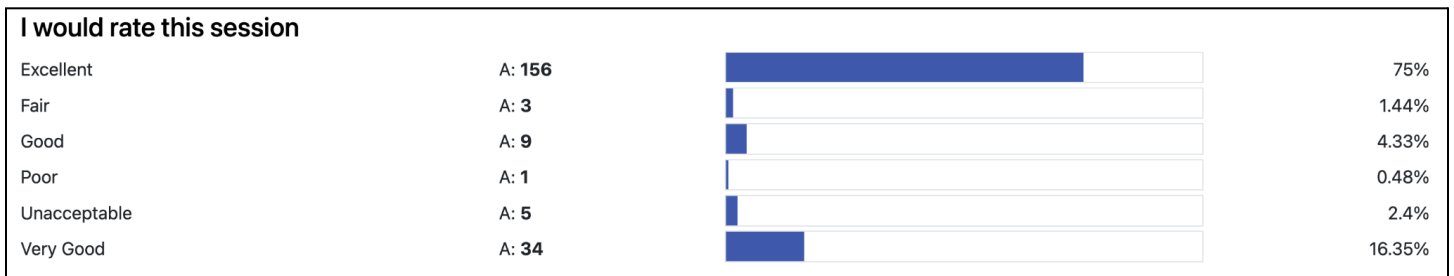
SOCIAL MEDIA

This year, since the university itself – including the center– were working primarily online, the Writing Center made a concerted effort to increase its social media presence. We created a Twitter account and Instagram and re-started our Facebook account. These efforts were led by Elizabeth Gagne, the graduate assistant coordinator.

SURVEYS

STUDENT SURVEYS

The student surveys were conducted throughout the 2020-2021 academic year. All students who visited the University Writing Center were sent an email with a link to the survey. 190 students responded.



I will recommend the center to a friend.

Moderately Agree	A: 25		12.02%
Moderately Disagree	A: 1		0.48%
Strongly Agree	A: 180		86.54%
Strongly Disagree	A: 2		0.96%

I will return to the center for future assignments.

Moderately Agree	A: 15		7.21%
Moderately Disagree	A: 2		0.96%
Strongly Agree	A: 189		90.87%
Strongly Disagree	A: 2		0.96%

I left the writing center with ideas for revision.

Moderately Agree	A: 18		8.65%
Moderately Disagree	A: 2		0.96%
Strongly Agree	A: 183		87.98%
Strongly Disagree	A: 5		2.4%

Staff member(s) were knowledgeable.

Moderately Agree	A: 21		10.1%
Moderately Disagree	A: 2		0.96%
Strongly Agree	A: 181		87.02%
Strongly Disagree	A: 4		1.92%

STUDENT SURVEY: WRITTEN RESPONSES

- Alyse is amazing! Really enjoy her.
- As my mentor, Elise is always helpful and knows my strengths and weaknesses.
- Dr. Dixon is a great professional, and her expertise has an enormous contribution to my work and my personal development.
- Elise is a great tutor and I will be coming back to her every week.
- Elise was great and very helpful!
- Elizabeth gave me helpful and informative information. She also gave me points to research for a topic I am considering for my thesis. Very helpful session!
- Elizabeth was very helpful in giving me guidance regarding my assignment. I had a very positive experience.
- Gagne is a great person to work with and they always provide excellent feedback for my papers!! Give this person the credit that they deserve
- Gagne' is great, I love working with her! She knows what she's doing and is very great at explaining and helping you understand something that you don't understand.
- Great feedback provided. The writing staff member definitely addressed my concerns. Thank you
- Great job and provided good information for my assignment
- Great session! Clarified my process and gave me good insight into a starting point for tackling citations and formatting. Will recommend and use again.

- Great session.
- Great session. Linn was very helpful and I enjoyed working with her. Iâ€™ll definitely return for more papers and hope to work with Linn again.
- Great. Linn is awesome. Best person I've ever worked with.
- He was very nice, helpful, and knowledgeable.
- I am impressed with the writing services. My tutor Elizabeth was very helpful.
- I appreciate what the writing center provides for its students
- I didn't have a live appointment, so it's great that Lily critiqued my slides in a way that was thorough and clear to understand. I appreciated all of her suggestions!
- I had previously shared the same assignment with the writing center and got absolutely no feedback, other than everything looks good, and a few suggestions, such as capitalization, punctuation, etc. My writing assignment did not pass with my professor. I am now revising to resubmit and Lily gave me a lot of great suggestions and every single one were needed. I truly appreciate her taking the time to actually read my paper and find the areas that I need to revise.
- I have been using Lily all semester for my writing enriched class. I have another WE class next semester and If Lily is still there, I'll definitely go back to her. She's been great. And her recommendations have been great.
- I never received any feedback
- I really enjoyed my session with Ms. Lily. She was extremely helpful with pointing me in the right direction to get started on my essay! I would definitely recommend her to other students!
- I really loved Linn! She was so sweet and very helpful. I shared my concerns with her, and she was very supportive and caring allowing me to know that she was there for me every step of the way of my paper and I really appreciated that being that I feel burnt out and unmotivated. She really helped me achieve a start, and now I can start on my difficult paper.
- I think video conferencing is more effective, than sending the paper to the tutor to look over it for review. Such as when you submit a paper the tutor provides feedback thatâ€™s good, but video conferencing you can ask questions and guidance towards the paper!
- I was a bit hesitant about the written feedback style of tutoring but honestly this might be preferred as I have a very busy schedule balancing work and school. The feedback is really helpful and brings about points that I hadn't even considered when writing the paper. So far with the two tutors I have interacted with, I can say with full confidence that the writing center is highly professional and highly knowledgeable.
- It wasn't clear on how to meet up with the person to answer the questions I had for an assignment and now my grade is going to be dropped because I couldn't figure out how to meet with the person.
- Lakota rocks!
- Lakota was very patient and helpful.
- Lily is Amazing!!!
- Lily is the absolute best!!!!
- Lily was great to work with. She was extremely helpful and I really left our call feeling better about my paper.
- Lily was great! I really appreciate all her help. I feel like I have more direction now.
- Linn was an excellent in assisting me on my History paper.
- Linn was excellent in her suggestions. She was professional and understood what was I asking. Great to work with.

- My writing center appointment was with Lynn due to Lily being unavailable. She was extremely helpful and provided great feedback with insightful constructive ideas. I found the writing center to be a useful tool that I will utilize in the future. I think the writing center should be incorporated more as part of the introduction to UNCP for transfer students because having resources virtually for off-campus and commuter students is essential and a great way to build connections between UNCP, resources, and students.
- Shannon has a great personality that's encouraging, helpful, and informative. I didn't realize the writing center could help with citations. I struggled last year with some of the citations, for I do not want to plagiarize.
- Shannon really helped me get to the bottom of my Article that I will be writing. I will definitely return back and request her help.
- Shannon was amazing.
- Shannon was awesome and knew exactly what she was talking about! She was very informative and gave me great tips on how to improve the organization of my paper!
- Shannon was really helpful with helping me to break things down so that I could better understand the assignment and article.
- Shannon was very polite and helpful. She was able to show me what corrections needed to be made and explain how to avoid making the same errors in the future. I found the meeting very helpful and I will use the writing center for my future course papers again.
- She was amazing in her feedback that was given. She completed this and had it returned to me quick. I am very pleased with her help and she made me feel better on my questions I had!
- She was nice and helped me understand what I needed to do.
- She was very professional, and took the time and answered all my questions.
- Thank you for the feedback.
- THANK YOU GAGNE! YOU ARE VERY WELL APPRECIATED!!
- THANK YOU LILY!! PLEASE KEEP WORKING THE WAY YOU DO AND I APPRECIATE EVERYTHING! TAKE CARE!! YOU ARE APPRECIATED
- THANK YOU LINN!! PLEASE HAVE A GREAT AND WONDERFUL SEMESTER! YOU ARE AMAZING
- THANK YOU SO MUCH ALYSE!! TAKE CARE! AND HAVE A WONDERFUL SEMESTER
- Thank you so much for the guidance.
- THANK YOU!!
- The person I worked with was so helpful and great with clarifying my ideas and helping my paper flow a lot better!
- The sessions was filled with conversation. The conversation allowed me to think about my writing and provide appropriate responses. She was kind to continue with my session past the scheduled time.
- The staff member is very professional and knowledgeable.
- The writing center always gives great feedback in a timely manner.
- This has been a valuable resource and has helped build my confidence for citations and formatting.
- This is the second time that Gagne has provided feedback and it has been helpful.
- This resource is very efficient and useful. I will most likely be using the writing centers services sometime in the future again. I would definitely recommend this resource to a friend.
- Very helpful and knowledgeable about the topic at hand. She also gave good suggestions. Thank you.
- Very helpful, will be going back to see her.
- Very knowledgeable and friendly!

- Very simple to follow and helpful.
- very specific changes!!!! made it easy.
- Very straightforward and helpful
- Very transparent and worked to help me with everything I needed. I will definitely be utilizing the writing center more often.
- We felt that Ms. Gagne was very professional and took the time to assess our presentation. Gave feedback that was comprehensive and made suggestions for improvement with any personal bias or opinion. I have never used the Writing Center previously and yes I will do so again. Thanks so much Ms. Gagne.