

Connecting SAFS students with writing centers to improve writing

Compiled by Kristi Straus, SAFS Lead TA Winter 2008

An online list of all campus writing centers is maintained by John Holmes, a reference librarian. This website should contain the most up-to-date information about writing centers at UW: <http://faculty.washington.edu/jwholmes/uwwrite.html>

There are currently four interdisciplinary writing and research centers on campus that are open to our students.

1) CLUE Evening Drop-in Writing Center

- Mary Gates Hall
- (206) 616-7064
- http://depts.washington.edu/clue/dropintutor_writing.php
- Hours: Open 7pm to midnight Sunday through Thursday nights. No appointments—first come, first serve
- Designed to help students through all stages of research and writing (from researching to drafting to polishing)
- Interdisciplinary: Staff have taught college-level writing courses and have experience with ESL.

2) Odegaard Writing & Research Center

- Odegaard undergraduate library room 326 (3rd floor)
- Interdisciplinary : help from trained student tutors
- Students can make appointments online (<http://www.depts.washington.edu/owrc>) or can walk in.
- Hours: appointments available from noon to 9, Sunday through Thursday
- Designed to help students through all stages of research and writing process, on any piece of work (assignment, cover letter, other)
- received funding for a five year initiative to improve writing on campus
 - Fall 2005, had 400 sessions
 - Fall 2007, had 2254 sessions
- Goals
 - help students fully understand the assignment
 - help students plan how to complete an assignment
 - help students execute their plan and complete the assignment

3) English Department Writing Center

- Padelford B12
- <http://depts.washington.edu/wcenter/>
- Students can make appointments online, call (206) 685, 2876, or stop by
- Hours: Mon - Fri 10:30-5:30
- Open to students enrolled in any University W-courses (some SAFS courses)

4) Student Consultations with Librarians

- Designed for UW students needing research assistance with course- and degree-related projects and assignments.
- I included this because often our students need help with the research before moving on to writing
- <http://www.lib.washington.edu/help/consult/>
- hours: Mon - Fri 9-5
- For an appointment: fill out web form at least three days before appointment
- Meet with a librarian one-on-one to discuss focusing a topic, identifying & evaluating sources, and effectively searching library databases and the Internet.

Some ways to encourage students to use writing centers:

- Include a description of applicable writing centers on the syllabus and the course web page. Make it clear that writing centers are available to students at any point of the writing process—and that they are a great opportunity to improve writing.
- Remind students that revision is the key to good writing. Good writers get better at writing centers. This is not punishment or an assignment only for bad writers. This is an opportunity.
- Give extra credit for meeting with a writing tutor at a writing center. This can empower students as writers and will likely introduce some students to the writing centers. The extra credit encourages students to seek out the writing center and helps them doubly—they will receive extra credit and will likely do better on their assignment.
- Request to have a writing tutor visit your class. Tutors can:
 - give a five to ten minute presentation on services offered at the center
 - conduct a short writing workshop or in-class peer review. Students are more likely to go to a writing center if they interact with tutors in the classroom.
 - I know that CLUE and Odegaard tutors do this, am not sure of the others
- CLUE will also assist faculty and TAs who want to incorporate more writing and writing instruction into classes. For more information, email clue@washington.edu