

To: Professor Leon Gottfried, Head

Copies to: Professors Harris, Hughes, Weiser, Berns, Yancey, and David Dedo

From: Kim Ballard and Susan Tennery, 1989 Writing Lab Summer Co-Directors

Date: October 10, 1989

Subject: Summer 1989 Writing Lab Report

The Writing Lab's 1989 summer session continued to show increased student and instructor use when compared to recent summer reports. We document those positive trends in this report by comparing this summer's statistics to last summer's. We detail the Lab's duties and accomplishments under the usual headings: 1) staffing and scheduling, 2) use of the Lab, 3) evaluation of staff performance, and 4) recommendations for next summer.

STAFFING AND SCHEDULING

This summer the Lab again filled two half-time positions and one quarter-time position. At times the three tutors worked overtime hours without pay, and we were occasionally forced to turn away some students who wanted tutorial help; however, we believe our personnel combination worked well because Kim contributed her business writing expertise, Susan functioned as the OWR specialist and liaison, and Dave served as the ESL specialist and liaison. All tutors actually worked in all of these areas and tutored the students taking composition courses as well as students writing papers or preparing for tests for other courses.

For the third year, tutorials were not conducted on Fridays, although self-instructional materials and the computers were available from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm Monday through Friday. This summer we did not offer evening hours, but we accommodated on an individual-appointment basis any students who could not come to the Lab during the day. While appointments were not a formal part of last summer's services, they were our most important service, as the statistics illustrate.

USE OF THE LAB

This summer the Lab continued to serve a wide array of student, staff, and "outsider" needs. The following groups made use of our services:

1. students in 001, 002, 101, 101B (Upward Bound), 102, 304, 420, 421, and 589
2. students writing for courses in communications, education, various engineering courses, history, philosophy, psychology, sociology and others

3. graduate students writing the Graduate Test Paper for the OWR
4. graduate students revising articles and dissertations
5. faculty members (primarily non-native speakers) working on articles and business letters
6. students seeking help with resumes and application letters and graduate school application essays
7. instructors, secretarial staff and students phoning in questions for the Grammar Hot Line
8. off-campus phone-in questions for the Grammar Hot line

These groups took advantage of the following services. (For a more complete tabulation of these figures, please see Attachment A.) In order to assess this year's numbers, totals from the summer of 1988 are also presented:

| | 1989 | 1988 |
|--|------|------|
| 1. students and staff using the Lab: | 426 | 348 |
| 2. number of appointments for tutorials: | 291 | 25 |
| 3. drop-in sessions with students: | 47 | 253 |
| 4. times self-instruction modules used: | 54 | 109 |
| 5. student requests for handouts: | 1364 | 124 |
| 6. instructor requests for handouts: | 107 | 10 |
| 7. Lab used as a writing room: | 20 | 55 |
| 8. student use of the computers: | 47 | 119 |
| 9. Grammar Hot Line calls: | 90 | 71 |

As this tabulation suggests, the Writing Lab served many students and staff members in various important ways this summer. Perhaps the three most important categories include the tutorial appointments and student and instructor handouts. The increase in the appointments may be related to the number of students who took advantage of more than one tutorial; these students usually made follow-up appointments after their initial visit. The dramatic increase in both student and instructor requests for handouts may be related to the aggressive promotional campaign Dave, Kim, and Susan launched (with Lynn

Shonkwiler's help) during the first two weeks of the summer session. Promotional materials detailing Writing Lab services were sent to all humanities and social science summer instructors; all of the 420 classes, several 421 classes, and virtually all of the composition classes were visited; and several history, philosophy and education classes either toured the Lab or were visited by Susan or Kim. Finally, the Exponent offered an article on the Lab's summer services, and Kim and Susan wrote a brief article for the Married Student Chronicle, the newsletter of Married Student Housing.

We would like to note that six of the seven recommendations made by the summer 1988 co-directors, Jackie Atkins and Dave Dedo, were followed by the Lab staff this summer. A versatile staff was selected so that a wide variety of student and instructor needs were met. The number and distribution of Lab positions (two 1/2 time, one 1/4 time) met most of the summer needs, although the staff members did work unpaid overtime hours to accommodate the demand for tutorials. The tutors also offered a wide range of hours for conferencing, meeting with some students in the evening by special, individual arrangement. The staff continued to publicize the Lab, and, in fact, apparently engaged in more public relations activities than any previous summer staff. The communication links between the Lab and the ESL program remained strong as did the link between the Lab and the 420 and 421 programs and the Lab and the OWR. Finally, the Lab maintained involvement with three of Purdue's special summer programs for high school students and in-coming freshmen.

Only one 1988 recommendation, the suggestion that a work/study student be hired for the summer, was not followed. The Lab also operated this summer without a computer consultant. The lack of these relatively inexpensive sources of help undoubtedly made the Lab less efficient in some areas of services. The drastic reduction in the number of students taking advantage of the computers and the loss of one computer speak to this problem.

EVALUATION OF LAB PERFORMANCE

As in past summers, this summer no teacher or student evaluations of Lab services were distributed, so we are forced to make a somewhat subjective assessment of staff performance. This evaluation will focus on the following areas: tutoring, publicity, special programs, and administration.

Tutoring. The combination of general skills and areas of expertise that the tutors possess individually and collectively seemed ideal. Kim acted as a specialist in Business and Technical Writing; Dave contributed his ESL expertise, both as tutor and as liaison; and Susan served as a knowledgeable voice from the OWR and worked with Engl 589 students. Of course, tutors did not limit their services to these areas; each worked with students writing resumes, application letters, and other business-related communications; students in ESL courses; students writing in the OWR; students writing theses and dissertations; students in various composition and other English courses; and students writing in courses throughout the university.

Both the tutors' generalist backgrounds and their areas of expertise allowed the Lab to provide effective service to a wide variety of students.

Tutoring hours were scheduled to provide maximum convenience for students. Kim offered flexible hours in the evening to supplement her scheduled afternoon hours; Dave held morning tutorials; and Susan tutored for several hours each afternoon. This arrangement helped make tutors available to students as often as possible.

Publicity. Staff members placed in various university buildings a number of publicity posters explaining Lab services, and we promoted the Lab's services to humanities and social science departments across campus and to our department's Business and Technical Writing programs. Memorandums to each humanities and social science summer instructor detailed Lab hours and services and encouraged Lab use. We believe that the increase in student and instructor handout requests (526 in 1989 versus 100 in 1988) is a result of our increased publicity efforts.

Special Programs. The Lab continued its involvement with the 4-H group that visits Purdue each summer and with HSSE's Edge on Success program for incoming minority students. Dave gave the 4-H students a brief tour of the Lab and later presented a talk on "Becoming a Good Writer." Susan and Kim participated in a panel discussion for students in the Edge on Success program, explaining ways that the Lab could help students increase their writing skills. This year we also offered tutorial and computer services and the use of the Lab as a writing room to students and instructors in the Upward Bound program.

Administration. Lynn Shonkwiler, Lab receptionist, and Mika Dorsey, Lab secretary, performed their day-to-day duties with characteristic efficiency and worked together to update and color-code files and to rearrange Lab furniture. Both willingly assisted Lab tutors in publicity efforts. Despite the time-consuming and tedious nature of the process, Lynn also patiently and painstakingly compiled by hand the statistics for this report.

The one disappointment of the summer session was the theft of an IBM computer, which occurred after the Lab had closed for the session. Although the computer was marked as university property and although Lynn followed the proper procedures for reporting the theft, FBI officials informed the Lab staff that eventual recovery of the computer was highly unlikely. The loss of this important Lab resource hurts the students who use our services, and it will continue to do so until the computer is replaced.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT SUMMER

Based on the observations of this and past reports, we offer the following recommendations:

1. A summer staff should include individuals with generalists backgrounds who also have experience in ESL, OWR, 420 and 421.

2. The present number and distribution of Lab positions (two 1/2 time and one 1/4 time) did not meet all demands placed on the staff this summer. Additional support, perhaps a set amount of paid overtime hours, should be made available to supplement the staff offerings during peak periods. No tutor should work unpaid hours.
3. A work/study student should be hired to help with receptionist duties during evening hours and to serve as a computer consultant. Neither Lynn nor any other staff member should have to compile by hand the statistics for the summer report.
4. The stolen IBM computer should be replaced as soon as possible. Perhaps a more up-to-date, user-friendly computer (a MacIntosh?) could be purchased.
5. Staff should continue to offer innovative and aggressive public relations campaigns early in the summer session.
6. The communication links that have been established between the Lab and the ESL, 420, and 421 programs and the OWR should be continued to meet the diverse and often specialized needs of writers in those programs.
7. The Lab's involvement in such special summer offerings as the 4-H program, HSSE's Edge on Success course, and Upward Bound should be maintained. Contact with these programs seems an excellent way to create good relations with future students.

In closing, we would like to thank the department for the opportunity to work and further advance our Lab-related skills, especially in the area of Writing Lab administration.

ATTACHMENT A
Summary of Lab Use

The following tables present a statistical summary of Writing Lab use for the 1989 Summer Session.

Table 1. Total number of students and instructors using the Lab

| Type of Service | No. of Students/Instructors |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. Tutorial Appointments | 291 |
| 2. Drop-in Tutorials | 47 |
| 3. Self-instructional Modules | 54 |
| 4. Lab Resources (handouts, etc.) | 1471 |
| 5. Reference Materials and use of Lab for Writing | 20 |
| 6. Use of Computers | 47 |
| 7. Instructor Use | 14 |
| Total: | 1944 |

Table 2. Number of appointments for scheduled tutorials

| No. of appts. per student | No. of students | Total no. of sessions |
|------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 61 | 61 |
| 2 | 47 | 94 |
| 3 | 22 | 66 |
| 4 | 9 | 36 |
| 5 | 4 | 20 |
| | 2 | 14 |
| | Total: | 291 |

Table 3. Number of drop-in sessions

| No. of sessions per student | No. of students | Total no. of sessions |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 | 22 | 22 |
| 2 | 8 | 16 |
| 3 | 3 | 9 |
| | | ----- |
| | Totals: | 47 |

Table 4. Number of self-instruction modules used

| No. of modules | No. of students | No. of uses of modules |
|----------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | 3 | 3 |
| 2 | 2 | 4 |
| 3 | 1 | 3 |
| 4 | 3 | 12 |
| 7 | 2 | 14 |
| 18 | 1 | 18 |
| | | ----- |
| | Totals: | 54 |

Table 5. Number of student requests for handouts, etc.

| No. of requests | No. of students | Totals |
|-----------------|--------------------|--------|
| 1 | 107 | 107 |
| 2 | 128 | 256 |
| 3 | 87 | 261 |
| 4 | 146 | 584 |
| 5 | 27 | 135 |
| 7 | 3 | 21 |
| | | ----- |
| | Totals: | 1364 |

Table 6. Number of *composition instructors requests for materials

| No. of requests | No. of instructors | Totals |
|-----------------|-----------------------|--------|
| 1 | 6 | 6 |
| 2 | 4 | 8 |
| 4 | 7 | 28 |
| 5 | 6 | 30 |
| 7 | 5 | 35 |
| | Total: | 107 |

*Includes all instructor requests for handouts

Table 7. Student use of the Lab as a writing room

| No. of uses | No. of students | Totals |
|-------------|--------------------|--------|
| 1 | 3 | 3 |
| 2 | 4 | 8 |
| 3 | 3 | 9 |
| | Total: | 20 |

Table 8. Student use of the Lab computers

| No. of uses | No. of students | Totals |
|-------------|--------------------|--------|
| 1 | 19 | 19 |
| 2 | 4 | 8 |
| 3 | 3 | 9 |
| 4 | 1 | 4 |
| 7 | 1 | 7 |
| | Total: | 47 |

Table 9

Description of Courses and Services of Students Using the Writing Lab

| A. Composition Courses | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----|----|----|------|-----|----|----|----|--------|
| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | Totals |
| 002 | 2 | 1 | 21 | 3 | | 1 | 5 | | 33 |
| 101 | 53 | 8 | 3 | 167 | 28 | 4 | 6 | | 269 |
| 101B | 2 | 3 | | 8 | | | | | 13 |
| 235 | | | | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| 304 | 15 | 1 | | 22 | | 1 | | | 39 |
| 320 | | 2 | | | | | | | 2 |
| 420 | 51 | 11 | | 458 | 46 | 5 | 4 | | 575 |
| 421 | 26 | 5 | | 88 | 9 | 2 | 2 | | 132 |
| 589 | 1 | | | 5 | | | | | 6 |
| B. Others | | | | | | | | | |
| | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | Totals |
| 1. under-grad | | | | | | | | | |
| self-help | | | | | | | | | |
| other courses | 44 | 1 | | 196 | 15 | 7 | 23 | | 286 |
| resume, etc. | 27 | 5 | | 63 | | | | | 95 |
| 2. grad students | | | | | | | | | |
| 001 | | 18 | | | | | | | 18 |
| self-help | | | | | | | | | |
| GTP | 38 | 4 | 12 | 129 | | | | | 183 |
| 3. other | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | 90 | 90 |
| Totals | 291 | 47 | 54 | 1364 | 107 | 20 | 47 | 90 | 2020 |

KEY: A-Tutorials
 B-Drop-ins
 C-Self-instruction

D-Handouts: Students
 E-Handouts: Instructors
 F-Writing, Studying in the Lab

G-Computer Use
 H-Grammar Hot Line