Annual Report

Writing Lab at Purdue University

2007-2008

May 14, 2007 to April 25, 2008

Dr. Linda S. Bergmann, Director

Tammy Conard-Salvo, Associate Director

Danielle Cordaro, Graduate Teaching Assistant

Dana Driscoll, OWL Technical Coordinator

H. Allen Brizee, OWL Coordinator

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I. Summary of Writing Lab Services and Use

A. Learning

In-Lab Learning

During the 2007-2008 academic year (May 14, 2007 to April 25, 2008), the Purdue University Writing Lab served students and faculty as follows:

Heavilon Hall Writing Lab
      Number of individual users: 2,348
      Total number of times used: 5,863

      Consultations: 3,780 sessions
      In-Lab Workshops: 2 attended by 13 students total
      In-Class Workshops: 28 attended by 556 students

Meredith Hall Satellite Writing Lab
      Number of individual users: 52
      Total number of tutorials: 64 sessions

DLC Writing Lab
      Number of individual users: 24
      Total number of tutorials: 25 sessions

Total number of tutorials (all locations): 3884 sessions

Learning with Technology

The Purdue University Online Writing Lab (OWL)
   Website: 111,038,482   pages served worldwide
   Email tutoring: 8,277   emails answered

Additional breakdowns of Purdue University Writing Lab users are available in Appendix A. Users of OWL and Grammar Hotline include public libraries, colleges, industry, government, non-profit organizations, and private users.

B. Engagement with State, National, and International Users

OWL email responses by tutoring staff: 8,277. This includes Purdue students, Indiana residents, and users from around the USA and abroad and represents an increase of 2,873 email responses compared to last academic year.

Telephone Grammar Hotline: 637

Consultations with visiting scholars on starting and maintaining a writing center: 15. See Appendix B for a list of visitors and their institutions.

Pre-conference workshop for writing center professionals at Conference on College Composition and Communication 2007: 25 attendees

Major On-Campus Demonstrations

- Boiler Gold Rush (Fall 2007)
- Graduate Student Welcome Fair (Fall 2007)
- College of Liberal Arts Career Fair (Fall 2007)
- President's Council and Liberal Arts Day (Fall 2007)
- Winter Welcome Fair (Spring 2008)
- Introductory Composition (ICaP) Showcase Display (Spring 2008)

Major Off-Campus Demonstrations

- Indiana State Fair (Fall 2007)

Writing Lab Sponsored Events

- Two Résumé Extravaganzas (Fall 2007)
- Two Résumé Extravaganzas (Spring 2008)
- Lemonade Stand Information Fair (Spring 2008)

C. Discovery

Presentations about writing center research and practices were given by Writing Lab staff at the following conferences. See Appendix C for a detailed list of presenters.

- European Association of Teachers of Academic Writing 2007
- Modern Language Association Convention 2007
- Conference on College Composition and Communication 2008
- East Central Writing Centers Association Conference 2008
- International Writing Centers Association Conference 2008
- North Carolina Campus Compact 10th Annual Service Learning Conference 2008

Works in progress include several articles based on current research, five doctoral dissertations in progress related to Writing Lab practices and the OWL, and several other IRB-approved research projects.

D. Staff

Director: Linda S. Bergmann, Ph.D., Associate Professor of English

Associate Director: Tammy Conard-Salvo, M.A., Administrative/Professional

Fifteen graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) (funded by the English Department), all of whom have taught at least one year of first-year composition. GTAs hold the following special area positions:
- Business Writing Coordinator
- English as a Second Language (ESL) Coordinator
- Workshop Coordinator
- OWL Mail Coordinator

- Grammar Group Facilitator

Writing Lab/Introductory Writing Program Liaison (funded by the English Department): One GTA
Graduate student OWL staff (funded by University Reinvestment Grants):
- OWL Technical Coordinator/Webmaster
- OWL Coordinator
- Hourly workers who develop electronic instructional materials, plus two undergraduate hourly staff

Professional Writing Program/Writing Lab Collaboration Intern (funded by the Crouse Scholarship in Professional Writing): One undergraduate major in Professional Writing

Undergraduate tutors (funded by the English Department and Krannert School of Management):
- Thirteen undergraduate teaching assistants to tutor students in first year composition courses
- Twelve undergraduate business writing consultants to assist students with résumés, other job-related writing, memos, and professional writing documents

Support staff:
- Office Manager
- Project Manager
- Six student clerical assistants (workstudy)

II. Discussion of Learning, Engagement, and Discovery Initiatives and Accomplishments, 2007-2008

The Writing Lab helps students learn by providing an inviting, structured environment in which to talk with a trained tutorial staff about their practices as writers and their concerns about writing. Every member of the Purdue Writing Lab staff looks for ways to upgrade Lab resources and to reach out to the university community. In addition to working with students individually and in groups, staff members develop materials for teaching writing and consult with instructors of writing courses and with faculty across the disciplines. As emerging researchers, they further their professional development through research projects and regular presentations to academic audiences.

A. Learning

Credit Courses

Fall Semester:
- English 502W (1 hour): In-service practicum for graduate teaching assistants in their first semester of tutoring
- English 390A and English 390B (2-3 hours each): Courses in the theory and practice of tutoring writing that are a prerequisite for undergraduate tutoring positions

Tutorials

This year the Writing Lab conducted 3,884 writing tutorials. Tutorials consist of half-hour, one-to-one tutoring sessions offered both by appointment and on a drop-in basis.
- Graduate TAs work with all students, including first-year composition students, upper-class students in majors across the disciplines, and graduate students writing for courses or producing theses.
- Undergraduate TAs tutor first-year composition students and maintain close contact with the first-year composition curriculum.
- Business Writing Consultants work primarily on memos, résumés, cover letters, professional writing documents, and other career-related documents with students from across the university.

Assessment

Evaluations of the learning that takes place in the Writing Lab, collected from students and teachers, are consistently very high.
- The Writing Lab uses Likert scale point-of-contact evaluation forms for consultations, workshops, and English as a Second Language conversation groups. Please see Appendix D for detailed information.
- Point-of-contact evaluations (100% response rate): 95% of responding students rate their tutor in the "very helpful" range. Clearly, students appreciate this service and believe it helps them learn to write. See Appendix D for more detailed assessment information.
- Certain key terms occur repeatedly in the open-ended response space on our assessment forms. Students write that they consider the tutors to be well-qualified, knowledgeable, and adept consultants. They mention gaining knowledge and confidence as writers from the tutorial sessions, and they appreciate the student-centered approach of the Lab staff. See Appendix D for a sample of student comments.

Workshops

- In-Lab Workshops: 2 presentations
- In-Class Workshops: 28 presentations customized for individual classes; some of these "traveling tutors" move out of the classroom and into residence halls and student organizations. These customized workshops include but are not limited to:
    - Introduction to using the Online Writing Lab in teaching
    - Starting the writing process
    - Introduction to scholarly writing
    - MLA and APA citation
    - Résumés and cover letters
    - Visual rhetoric
    - Introduction to the Writing Lab's services
    - Pre-writing
    - Plagiarism
- English Graduate Student Workshop, "Writing Effective CCCC Proposals" for a major international conference in composition studies
- Brownbag session, "Transforming Student Projects into Showcase Displays," co-sponsored with Introductory Composition at Purdue
- Grammar Group: a weekly informal session to which students can bring questions about sentence-level concerns (piloted this Spring semester)

In-Lab Resources

- Instructional resources and handouts: over 200 web-based modules addressing writing skills and issues, available in printer-friendly format on the OWL.
- Reference library of books, journals, and reference materials for student and faculty use, including specialized resources for English as a Second Language students.
- Technology for writing and tutorials: 8 computers, 2 black and white printers, 1 color printer, 1 digital video camera, 1 digital still camera, and 1 scanner available for general student use throughout the day. This includes an advanced multimedia production station funded by the Professional Writing program. In addition, 6 laptops are available on tutoring tables for use during consultations.
- ESL technology: computer dedicated to English as a Second Language practice, which includes specialized vocabulary and pronunciation software.

English as a Second Language (ESL) Resources and Initiatives

Because 42% of Writing Lab users (2,738 total requests for help) self-identify as non-native speakers, we continue to investigate ways to better serve this clientele. The ESL coordinator, a Graduate TA responsible for overseeing ESL services and initiatives within the Lab, teaches Lab tutors some of the special skills needed for working effectively with ESL students. This year the ESL Coordinator was responsible for the following projects:
- Updated all of the materials for the ESL library to include interactive materials such as handbooks combined with CD ROMs
- Ordered and installed new software for the ESL workstation
- Consolidated ESL space by relocating the ESL workstation and bulletin board near the ESL conversation group space
- Presented three workshops to the current UTA staff, GTA staff and 390A practicum on how to work effectively with ESL students
- Responded to email enquiries about the Lab's ESL services and resources and about ESL writing issues

- Arranged for conversation groups to be team-led by graduate and undergraduate facilitators and provided training for the facilators
- Assisted an undergraduate conversation group leader in planning a Conversation Group Tail Gate party during a home football game, sponsored by the Writing Lab

Business Writing Consultants (BWCs)

In addition to offering individual tutoring sessions, the Business Writing Consultants (BWCs) conducted two workshops on résumés and cover letters and four "Résumé Extravaganza" events, which provide drop-in résumé tutoring at various locations on campus. The BWC staff also participated in the Liberal Arts Career Fair Résumé Critique. The following is a list of other accomplishments by the BWC administrative staff:

Business Writing Coordinator (Graduate Teaching Assistant)
- Taught semester-long practicum (390B) for prospective BWCs and assisted in hiring new BWCs; provided the BW Assistant Coordinator opportunities to teach 390B sessions as a means of professional development
- Helped develop working relationships between the Assistant Coordinator and incoming tutors
- Implemented Conference Proposal assignment to foster professional development among tutors-in-training
- Sent recruitment emails to Professional Writing instructors to identify candidates for new positions
- Presented workshops on business letters and memos to Animal Sciences students (4 workshops total, approximately 50 students per workshop); maintained communication with Animal Sciences professor about Writing Lab resources
- Communicated with Agricultural Economics department about Writing Lab resources
- Presented workshop on professional thank you letters to 450 Agricultural Economics students

Business Writing Assistant Coordinator (Undergraduate Business Writing Consultant)
- Assisted with 390B course by teaching résumés and cover letters
- Designed, created, and distributed a Writing Lab banner, t-shirts, fliers, and other forms of advertisement
- Created OWL handouts and PowerPoint presentations on tutoring cover letters and résumés for the OWL's new Teaching Writing section, and designed sample résumés
- Held workshops on creating OWL content and tutoring personal statements and curriculum vitas during monthly BWC meetings

Public Relations Coordinator (Undergraduate Business Writing Consultant)
- Organized a team of BWCs to design signs and other visual displays for Stewart Center display cases
- Designed new fliers to advertise Writing Lab services and organized distribution across campus
- Informed resident advisors in campus dorms about Writing Lab workshops offerings

Crouse Intern in Professional Writing for Professional Writing/Writing Lab Collaboration

The Crouse Scholarship in Professional Writing for Professional Writing/Writing Lab Collaboration, supported by the Professional Writing Program, funds a liaison between the PW program and the Writing Lab. This year the Crouse Intern was heavily involved with the @SEA pilot project in the

Professional Writing Program. @SEA, funded by the College of Arts and Sciences PLACE initiative, allowed Professional Writing Students the opportunity to work with the Tippecanoe County Historical Association to review and revise presentation of historical materials.

The following is a list of projects the Collaboration Intern completed during the 2007-2008 academic year:

General Writing Lab Projects
- Met with the Associate Director of the Writing Lab and Business Writing Coordinator to discuss BWC initiatives and connections to Professional Writing
- Attended Professional Writing Club meetings regularly to maintain a connection with students majoring in Professional Writing
- Co-facilitated a Professional Writing workshop with the Assistant Director of Professional Writing

@SEA Pilot Program in Professional Writing
- Promoted program by creating display board information and answering questions about @SEA courses at the PW Club
- Created and revised handout entitled "The Rhetoric of Podcasting" for @SEA pilot program and general distribution on the OWL
- Created @SEA Evaluations for 515 & 490 classes and for the Writing Lab and provided results to the Professional Writing Program and the Writing Lab
- Helped create the Audacity Workshop, which offered support to students creating podcasts using the software Audacity
- Created advertising and evaluation materials for the Workshop, including posting information on Student English Association moodle site
- Evaluated the workshop and reviewed potential changes

Undergraduate Teaching Assistants (UTAs)

Undergraduate Teaching Assistants primarily provide tutoring for students in first-year composition courses. They also tutor students in other courses in the satellite locations, help facilitate ESL conversation groups, and respond to requests through Grammar Hotline or OWL Mail. UTAs assist with training prospective tutors in the English 390A tutoring practicum, and they work closely with the Writing Lab/Introductory Writing Program Liaison to respond effectively to changes to the Introductory Writing Program curriculum.
The following is a list of accomplishments of the undergraduate UTA Coordinator:
- Organized activities of the UTA staff (e.g., meetings, training sessions, publicity, etc.), including biweekly UTA staff meetings tutor development activities on topics including MLA/APA format, grammar, and tutoring strategies
- Attended the new Writing Lab staff orientation
- Updated and UTA/BWC bulletin board to inform tutors of upcoming Lab events and to promote tutor development
- Promoted interaction and collaboration between UTAs and other Writing Lab staff, including the English 106 Liaison, Writing Lab directors, and clerical staff; established UTA involvement in workshops and lab tours
- Assisted the BWC and Publicity Coordinator in the organization and advertisement of the first annual Writing Lab Lemonade Stand Information Fair
- Co-organized the first Writing Lab BWC/UTA joint professional development activities

- Assisted Associate Director in introducing the new online VCaP tutoring system to the UTA staff and helped implement each round of test tutorials
- Improved Writing Lab presence on MySpace and Facebook pages

Meredith Hall Satellite Writing Lab

The Writing Lab continued to offer extended tutoring hours in Meredith Hall during the fall and spring semesters. This location, staffed by one GTA and a rotating staff of three UTAs, was open on Wednesdays from 7:00-10:00 pm. Since its inception during the spring 2005 semester, the Meredith Hall location has grown steadily from 53 sessions in academic year 2006-2007 to 65 sessions in 2007-2008.

Hicks Undergraduate Library/DLC Satellite Writing Lab

The Writing Lab continues to offer extended tutoring hours through a collaborative initiative with Hick's Undergraduate Library and its director, Scott Mandernack. During the fall and spring semesters, this location served students on Monday evenings from 7:00-10:00 pm in a conference room in the Digital Learning Collaboratory. The Library satellite was staffed by two GTAs and a rotating staff of three UTAs and BWCs. Since the 2006-2007 the DLC location has risen from 13 sessions to 28 in 2007-2008. This satellite location will be moved to a new location in the Hicks Undergraduate Library, bringing additional visibility to Writing Lab services.

Support for Instructors of English 106 (First-Year Composition)

The Writing Lab collaborates with the Introductory Writing Program and provides workshops and programs for its instructors, including:
- Specialized tutoring services through the Undergraduate Teaching Assistant program
- Strong Writing Lab presence on the Introductory Writing Committee (three members)
- Participation in orientation and mentoring for new instructors of first-year composition
- Consultations for instructors with the Writing Lab directors or the Introductory Writing Program Liaison
- Making workshops available to all first year composition courses
- Participation in ICaP Showcase and workshop to prepare instructors and students to present in the Showcase

The Writing Lab/Introductory Writing Program Liaison, a quarter-time position for a graduate teaching assistant created in 2003 by the English Department, is responsible for fostering the relationship between the Writing Lab and ENGL 106 instructors and students. The following is a list of this year's accomplishments by the Writing Lab/Introductory Writing Program Liaison:

- Updated Writing Lab materials to present to incoming graduate Teaching Assistants during an English Department orientation
- Conducted orientation sessions for mentor groups to familiarize them with Writing Lab services and pedagogical approaches
- Regularly communicated with ICaP instructors regarding Writing Lab services, upcoming events, OWL updates, and lab tours for their students;collaborated with Workshop Coordinator to keep 106 instructors informed about in-class and in-lab workshops
- Visited undergraduate tutor training course (ENGL 390A) and presented information about ENGL 106 and 108 syllabus approaches, the ICaP website, and the program's Goals, Means, and Outcomes
- Attended undergraduate tutor orientation

- Collaborated with UTA Coordinator to identify areas for continued tutor training and professionalization; assisted in the continued training and professionalization of undergraduate tutors through mini-workshops presented at undergraduate tutor meetings
- Recruited new undergraduate tutors after soliciting recommendations from instructors
- Collaborated with ICaP Assistant Director to present workshop on effective showcase presentations for students and instructors participating in the ICaP showcase (25 attendees)
- Created new promotional board advertising Writing Lab services for ICaP showcase

Support for Instructors and Student Groups Across the Disciplines

The Writing Lab helps classroom teachers across the disciplines develop and improve writing activities in their courses. In addition to ongoing work with faculty developing writing projects and providing access to instructional materials, this year's work included:

- Critique of old OWL material on WAC and advised on the creation, revision, and placement of WAC materials
- Development of workshops and instructional materials for graduate students in Civil Engineering
- Focus groups with students across disciplines to collect data on their perception of how and where writing skills are learned.

Using Technology to Foster Learning

The Writing Lab continues to offer students access to computer resources during tutorials or self-study. New and continuing projects are described in more detail in section III, page 16.

- Worked with Concurrent Consulting to develop Virtual Consultant at Purdue (VCaP), an online tutoring system that will be piloted in the fall 2008 semester
- Applied new user centered design to Online Writing Lab (OWL) site and completed additional testing with blind and low vision users
- Completed and presented research results of mainstream use of Kurzweil 3000 (special software that lets users, including individuals with disabilities, hear text aloud and use special tools during revision)
- Increased use of computers in tutorial sessions to help students improve their writing processes, to demonstrate accessing OWL resources, and to help students master internet research
- Trained undergraduate tutors to respond to OWL Mail questions
- Upgraded existing software and hardware in the Writing Lab

B. Engagement

Writing Lab (OWL)

The Purdue OWL, which counted more than **111 million pages served from May 1, 2007 and April 31, 2008, (up from 84 million**), offers testimony to Purdue's international presence. The OWL's reputation as one of the foremost web sites for writing enhances Purdue's national and international stature and provides much-appreciated service to students, teachers, and writers across the nation and around the world. The OWL is referenced in many textbooks on writing and web development and by citations in the scholarly literature of computer-assisted writing, writing centers, and composition studies in general. Appendix E contains a detailed account of OWL upgrades and improvements this year.

Grammar Hotline

Our telephone hotline responded to over 637 inquiries, including calls from students, faculty, and staff at Purdue, as well as from across Indiana and the United States.

Consultations with National and International Visiting Faculty and Writing Center Professionals

Writing Lab staff and directors regularly meet and talk with visiting faculty and writing center administrators who are starting writing centers or considering changes and improvements in them. This year we met with 15 such visitors from seven countries. See Appendix B for a table of visitors and their affiliations.

Alumni Annotations and Alumni Outreach Project

We continue our Alumni Outreach Project to maintain contact with former Writing Lab staff. In the Fall 2006 semester, we created the first *Alumni Annotations* newsletter and distributed print copies to more than 360 former staff. In an effort to become more environmentally friendly, subsequent issues have been distributed electronically to a database of over 400 contacts. The latest issue of Alumni Annotations was sent via email during the spring 2008 semester, with another issue planned for the summer. We have heard positive feedback from many former staff in places all around the globe.

Alumni Annotations contains information about current Writing Lab and OWL projects and features information about staff accomplishments and awards. An alumnus is profiled in each issue, and alumni are invited to keep in touch. This newsletter has allowed us to remain in contact with former tutors who have worked in the Writing Lab as far back as 1980 and to maintain a history of the Writing Lab.\

C. Discovery

Publications

Alsup, Janet, Tammy Conard-Salvo, and Scott Peters. "Tutoring is Real: The Benefits of Tutoring for Future English Educators." *Pedagogy* 8.2, Spring 2008.

Bergmann, Linda. Review of *Academic Writing Consulting and WAC: Methods for Guiding Cross-Curricular Literacy Work* by Jeffrey Jablonski. *The WAC Journal* 18 (2007), 79-80.

Bergmann, Linda, and Tammy Conard-Salvo. "Dialogue and Collaboration: A Writing Lab Applies Tutoring Techniques to Relations with Other Writing Programs." *Marginal Words, Marginal Work? Tutoring the Academy to the Work of the Writing Center.* Ed. William Macauley, Jr., and Nicholas Amauriello. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2007. 183-196.

Bergmann, Linda S., and Janet S. Zepernick. "Disciplinarity and Transfer: Students' Perceptions of Learning to Write." *WPA Journal* 31.1/2 (Fall/Winter 2007), 124-149

Cordaro, Danielle. "Motivating Students to Write: Some Empirical Answers (and Questions)." *Pedagogy*. Forthcoming.

Salvo, Michael J, Allen Brizee, Dana Driscoll, Morgan Sousa. "Usability Research and User-Centered Theory for 21st Century OWLs" *The Handbook of Research on Virtual Workplaces and the New Nature of Business Practices*. Eds. Kirk St. Amant and Pavel Zemlansky. Hershey, PA: Idea Group Publishing, 2008.

Conference Presentations

The Writing Lab generated 19 presentations at six national/international and seven regional academic conferences, listed on page 4 and in Appendix C. The Lab takes pride in giving undergraduates as well as graduate students the opportunity for this kind of professional exposure, and we are able to further this effort with the assistance of the Muriel Harris Tutor Development Fund. Several articles for professional journals, derived from these conference presentations, are in progress at this point. See Appendix C for a detailed list of this year's presentations and presenters.

In April 2009, the Writing Lab will host the East Central Writing Centers Association annual conference, bringing more than 200 writing center professionals and tutors to Purdue. At that time, Associate Director Tammy Conard-Salvo will be President of the Association and Director Linda Bergmann will chair the conference.

In-Lab Research Projects

Writing Lab directors and graduate staff initiated several research projects intended both to improve Writing Lab services and to investigate new theories and practices of writing instruction in the context of writing center environments.

• Deborah Rankin, dissertation-in-progress (prospectus defended May 2007; IRB-approved; Linda Bergmann committee chair) observation of and perceptions of strategies for tutoring English as a Second Language students

- H. Allen Brizee, dissertation-in-progress (prospectus defended March 2008; IRB-approved; Linda Bergmann committee chair) usability testing of instructional materials developed for OWL to be used by adult learners

- Jaclyn Wells, dissertation-in-progress (IRB-approved; Linda Bergmann committee chair), research into use of instructional material developed for OWL to be used by adult learners

- Laurel Reinking, dissertation-in-progress (prospectus defended; IRB approved; Linda Bergmann committee member), study of English as a Second Language students' interactions with tutors

- Tammy Conard-Salvo, Michael Salvo, Dana Driscoll, Allen Brizee, and Morgan Sousa "OWL Usability Testing for Blind and Low Vision Users": IRB-approved usability tests to discover ways of making the Purdue OWL more accessible to users of adaptive technologies. The research study represents a collaboration between the Writing Lab and the Professional Writing program.

- Tammy Conard-Salvo and John M. Spartz, "Beyond Disabilities: Text-to-Speech Software in the Writing Center": an IRB-approved formal study of the impact of speech synthesis software (adaptive technology) on face-to-face writing center tutorials. Study complete and being submitted for publication.

- Linda Bergmann and Morgan Reitmeyer, study of students' perception of transfer of knowledge about writing from course to course (IRB approved)

III. Planning for 2008-2009 academic year

A. Staff Positions

Linda Bergmann (Director) will be on sabbatical this academic year, and Tammy Conard-Salvo (currently Associate Director) will serve as Interim Director. Joy Santee, a graduate teaching assistant, will serve as Assistant Director. The Writing Lab's Project Manager and Receptionist positions will remain the same.

B. Technology Initiatives

The Writing Lab has continued updating and upgrading the Online Writing Lab (OWL) (Appendix E) and will begin incorporating changes based on feedback from usability testing, particularly feedback gained from low-vision and blind users. The old site has been removed and links redirected. Additional content will continue to be added, including discipline-specific writing resources and multimedia modules. Other technology initiatives include the development of a campus-wide online tutoring system and addition of a new server to handle the increased demand for OWL services.

Online Writing Lab (OWL)

- Finalize new OWL content management system and the new OWL pages; complete transfer of old materials.
- Continue engagement work.
- Continue implementing usability and accessibility research findings into OWL design and foster closer relationship with ALPS/Adaptive Programs.
- Develop new ways of communicating information on writing and research, i.e., Podcasts, Flash Movies, MySpace, Facebook.
- Pilot and implement VCaP – Online Tutoring System.
- Set up a new SQL server for increased performance of OWL.

For additional details about OWL projects, please see Appendix E.

VCaP Online Tutoring System

During the past year, the Writing Lab worked with Concurrent Consulting to develop its new online tutoring system known as Virtual Consultant at Purdue or VCaP. Dr. Linda Bergmann and Tammy Conard-Salvo trained a select group of graduate students to tutor on the system, and Tammy has begun informal testing of the software. In the fall 2008 semester, Tammy will initiate a formal pilot of VCaP, working with a section of English 515 to develop and implement formal usability tests to student-users. This will be an IRB-approved pilot.

Unlike the current OWL Mail, this system will allow writing tutors to respond to entire papers using the collaborative model of face-to-face tutoring. VCaP will be made available to all Purdue students in various stages, beginning with first-year composition courses and distance education courses and then extended to other undergraduate and graduate students.

Kurzweil 3000

The Writing Lab will continue to offer Kurzweil 3000 on several computers in the Heavilon location. Tammy Conard-Salvo and John M. Spartz have completed an IRB-approved research project related to mainstream uses of Kurzweil, and the Writing Lab expects to advertise the availability of the software to all students on campus. We are currently working with Adaptive Programs to acquire additional writing support software.

D. Goals of Specialized Tutoring Staffs and Coordinators

Workshops

- Hold future in-lab workshops in the evenings in more central campus locations, such as the new satellite location in the Hicks Undergraduate library.
- Work more closely with the 106 Liaison to promote interest in in-lab workshops relevant to English 106 teachers.

English as a Second Language

- Podcast conversation groups to foster engagement beyond Purdue's campus.
- Initiate pre-arranged monthly topics on American culture.
- Sponsor activities like the tailgate party at the beginning of each semester, both in-Lab and out of the Lab, to promote conversation groups.

Business Writing

- Strengthen ties between the Professional Writing academic program, the Professional Writing Club, and the Business Writing Consultants program.
- Create more effective promotional materials for the 390B course.
- Assess staffing needs for additional BWCs and hire from 390B accordingly.
- Create stronger communication between BWCs and participants in the @SEA program to determine needs, produce instructional materials, foster collaboration, and encourage workshop attendance.

Undergraduate Teaching Assistants

- Offer additional mock tutorials that focus on making students comfortable with facilitating active learning rather than providing specific knowledge.
- Continue resource reviews to update the Writing Lab library
- Facilitate the Purdue Writing Lab's role as host of the 2009 East Central Writing Centers Association
- Assist students in writing conference proposals as a means of professional development

OWL Mail

- Develop a system for organizing the "stock answers" folder to help tutors respond more efficiently to repeat requests and questions.
- Move OWL Mail from the current mail system to a more stable system.
- Purchase Mignon Fogarty's ("Grammar Girl") complete archive of answers to common grammar questions as reference material.
- Train more OWL Mail responders to fill rising demand.

Liaison for ENGL 106 (First-Year Composition)

- Increase collaboration with the Assistant Director of Introductory Composition.
- Work closely with incoming first-year composition instructors and the new Director of Composition.
- Serve on the Introductory Writing Committee.
- Develop and present the "Teaching with the OWL" Workshop to English 106 instructors early in eaché semester.

Appendix A: Breakdown of Users

Heavilon Hall Writing Lab Services	Times Used by Clients
Consultations	3,862
Workshops	302
In-Class Workshops	556
In-Lab Workshops	13
Grammar Hotline	637
Computer Use	1025
ESL Conversation Group	457
ESL Materials Use	57
Lab Tour	2,032
Other	762

Students' Uses of the Meredith Hall Writing Lab	Visits	Students
Grand Total	65	52

Students' Uses of the DLC Writing Lab	Visits	Students
Grand Total	28	24

Students' Reasons for Referral to the Writing Lab	Visits	Students
Advertising	130	114
Friend	335	226
Instructor	3,954	1,696

Online Writing Lab (OWL) Services*	Times Used
Website	111,038,482 pages served
Owl Mail Responses	8,277 emails answered

*See Appendix E for more OWL information.

Usage by Colleges (all centers)	Times Used
Agriculture	540
Consumer and Family Sciences	338
Education	332
Engineering	1,041
Liberal Arts	1,490
Management	653
Pharmacy, Nursing, and Health Sciences	287
Science	717
Technology	239
Veterinary Medicine	18

Usage by Classification (all centers)	Times Used
Undergraduate	4,745
Graduate	904
Staff	46
Other	122

Most Frequent Use by Major* (15 or more students)	Visits
Agriculture	
Animal Science	132
Education	
Elementary Education	62
English Education	95
Gifted Education	109
Engineering	
Civil Engineering	54
Engineering (Unspecified)	48
Computer Engineering	47
Electrical Engineering	129
Industrial Engineering	85
Mechanical Engineering	66

*Majors are self-reported by students, and may therefore be inconsistent.

Liberal Arts	
Communication	57
English	117
History	47
Political Science	67
Philosophy	94
Psychology	78
Management	
Accounting	123
Economics	60
Management	225
Nursing	
Nursing	58
Pharmacy and Pharmacal Sciences	
Pharmacy and Pharmacal Sciences	94
Pre-Pharmacy	49
Science	
Chemistry	91
Biochemistry	48
Biology	109
Computer Science	111
Undecided	137
Other	3,186

Center Usage by Students' Country of Origin*	Times Used
China	417
South Korea	799
India	209
Indonesia	157
Japan	133
North Korea	73
Taiwan	147
Other	3,878
Total	5,813

*Numbers presented here are based on the responses of the students who chose to specify their country of origin during check-in between May 14, 2007-April 25, 2008.

Appendix B: List of Consultations with the Writing Lab, 2007-2008

Summer Semester

Barbara Hamilton	Oakland College	Rochester, MI	July 5, 2007
Jim Cawthon	Ancilla College	Donaldson, IN	July 27, 2007
Cynthia Cawthon	Ancilla College	Donaldson, IN	July 27, 2007
Roba Kribs	Ancilla College	Donaldson, IN	July 27, 2007

Fall Semester

Leslie Mackey	Indiana University/Purdue Univ Fort Wayne	Fort Wayne, IN	October 5, 2007
John Bitchener	Aut University	Auckland, New Zealand	October 23, 2007
Linda Mitchell	San Jose State	San Jose, CA	October 25, 2007
Linda Thompson	DAE University	Dubai, United Arab Emirates	November 2, 2007
Elaine Fernandes Schenkel	Partners of the Americas	Washington, DC	November 19, 2007

Spring Semester

Majoi Abounajm	Purdue University	West Lafayette, IN	February 4, 2008
Mim Jae Joo	Yomsei University	Korea	February 2, 2008
Jae Suk Jung	Yomsei University	Korea	February 2, 2008
Yum Bim Lee	Yomsei University	Korea	February 2, 2008
Harriet Millan	Drexel 4	Philidelphia, PA	March 4, 2008
Larel Zizka	Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne	France	April 15, 2008

Appendix C: Conference Presentations and Presenters

CIC Writing Centers Meeting 2008

Linda Bergmann and Tammy Conard-Salvo met with other Big Ten writing center administrators to discuss best practices and innovations in the field most applicable to large, research-oriented universities.

Conference on College Composition and Communication 2008

"Portable Replicable, Empirical Results of a Cross-Institutional Frequency Analysis of Tutorial Technique and Tutorial Content"
>   Faculty: Linda S. Bergmann

"Listening to Revise: Mainstream Uses of Text-to-Speech Software in the Writing Center"
>   Associate Director: Tammy Conard-Salvo
>   Graduate Student: John Spartz

"Accessing OWLs: Writing Center Usability Testing for Blind and Low-Vision Users"
>   Faculty: Michael Salvo, Professional Writing Program
>   Graduate Students: Allen Brizee, Dana Driscoll, Morgan Sousa

Pre-Conference Workshop: "Sustaining Writing Center Technologies Through User-Centered Design: Improving Websites and OWLs"
>   Associate Director: Tammy Conard-Salvo
>   Graduate Students: Dana Driscoll, and Morgan Sousa, Allen Brizee

"Researching Disability: Intersections between Technology, Usability, and Persons with Blindness"
>   Graduate Student: Dana Driscoll

"Sites of Civic Literacy: Designing and Sustaining College-Community Partnerships"
>   Faculty: Patricia Sullivan
>   Graduate Students: Jaclyn Wells, Christina Saidy, Mark Hannah, Allen Brizee

East Central Writing Centers Association Conference 2008

"Questioning Received Knowledge: Research in Writing Center Theory and Practice"
>   Faculty: Linda S. Bergmann
>   Graduate Students: Danielle Cordaro, Lars Soderlund, Jo Doran, Brady Spangenberg

"Supporting Diversity through Writing Center Administration"
>   Associate Director: Tammy Conard-Salvo
>   Graduate Students: Richard Sévère, Joy Santee
>   BWC: Michelle Keesling

"Praxis and the Purdue OWL: Putting the OWL to Work for Local Literacy and Engagement"
>   Graduate Student: Allen Brizee

"Deaf Students and Nondirective Tutoring"
>   Graduate Student: Danielle Cordaro

"IDEAS: Helping ESL Graduate Students Negotiate Agency"
  Graduate Student: Jo Doran

"Looking Back and Looking Forward: 12 Years of OWL History"
  Graduate Student: Dana Driscoll

European Association of Teachers of Academic Writing 2007

"Roundtable on International Exchanges for Writing Tutors"
  Faculty: Linda S. Bergmann
  Graduate Student: Brady Spangenberg

International Conference on Writing, UC Santa Barbara 2008: Writing Research Across Borders

"Students' Perceptions of Learning to Write: Similarities and Difference among Different Student Populations"
  Faculty: Linda S. Bergmann (with assistance of Morgan Reitmeyer, Graduate Student)

Modern Language Association Convention 2007

"The Search for 'Replicable, Aggregable, and Data-Supported' Research: Rethinking What Actually Happens in Writing Center Tutorials"
  Faculty: Linda S. Bergmann
  Graduate Student: Laurel Reinking

UIC National Conference on Writing Centers: Race in the Writing Center 2008

"Communicating American Racial Conventions to International Students in the Writing Center"
  Faculty: Linda S. Bergmann
  Graduate Students: Tony Russell, Joy Santee, and Richard Sévère

Appendix D: Evaluations and Comments

Evaluations of Individual Tutorials ESL, Conversation Groups, and In-Lab and In-Class Workshops (5,378 total students responding)

	Student Responses	Percentage
Quality of consultation		
Very helpful	5,076	94%
Somewhat helpful	256	5%
Not helpful	16	0%
No response	0	0%
Amount Learned		
Very High	5,078	94%
Learned a little	282	5%
Learned nothing	18	0%
No response	0	0%
Likelihood of Recommending		
Very likely	4,992	93%
Somewhat likely	361	7%
Not likely	25	0%
No response	1	0%

Comments from Student Evaluations of Tutorials

At the end of each tutorial session or ESL conversation group, students have the opportunity to anonymously fill out a feedback form to evaluate their experience in the Writing Lab. The following selections constitute a small sample of the positive comments that students offered when asked to describe the most useful part of their experience in the Writing Lab:

Tutoring Style/Personality

- She was so sweet and understanding. She did not make me feel stupid for asking questions.

- She was very helpful, really explained concepts thoroughly, and made sure that I understood them before moving on.

- He helped me generate more ideas and made the necessary changes in my work. Great guy.

- He was very friendly and positive. He went above and beyond just helping me edit my paper. He also gave me very helpful tips about using the Writing Lab.

- She helped me transition my paper to make it all flow together. She was extremely helpful! Very good consultant.

- She was very easygoing and patient. She also really knew her stuff.

- I came in with nothing and he got me off to a good start.

- I feel that my tutor was extremely helpful and gave me lots of advice. I feel that my paper quality will improve greatly.

Techniques

- She was able to give more than one solution for my questions – able also to show how past success applies to methods.

- He explained why things needed to be changed. He introduced me to the concept of the warrant – Very helpful.

- She helped and assisted with the breakdown of the format for my paper. Also, I never realized how previous habits I have picked up with writing were hindering the process.

- He highlighted major errors in organization and wording and explained techniques to better my future writing.

- She gave me helpful examples to use. That made it more clear how I needed to change things.

- He made me participate instead of telling me what to do.

- We revised some of my sentences together; therefore I am likely to apply the techniques to future writing.

- She responded as a reader, helping me clarify, eliminate redundancies and reword for specificity.

- We read my essay out loud. I fixed a lot of awkward sounding sentences.

- He provided a general outline of how I should go about writing my statement of purpose. I have a clear idea of what topics to address, the order, etc.

Content of Tutorial

- She showed me how to navigate the OWL and how to cite computer software.

- Sitting down with her and discussing my experiences really helps in writing my personal statement for grad school.

- We discussed passive voice in science writing.

- I learned new résumé skills—it is important to cater to a specific job/company and also to be more specific.

- I learned how to use the Purdue library website better [for research].

Appendix E: Use of the Online Writing Lab (OWL), 2007-2008

Dana Lynn Driscoll, OWL Technical Coordinator
H. Allen Brizee, OWL Coordinator

Use of the Online Writing Lab (OWL)

The Purdue OWL serves Purdue University students, faculty, and staff as well as users from all over the world by providing:

- A content-rich website of writing-related materials at http://owl.english.purdue.edu
- Email responses to questions via a web form at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/contact/owlmailtutors
- *The Purdue OWL News*, a bi-weekly email newsletter that contains writing-related questions, answers, and information about the Writing Lab and Purdue OWL
- A site for research on the OWL for Purdue students and staff, as well as a source of research-related information for composition scholars at owl.english.purdue.edu/research
- A site for community engagement at owl.english.purdue.edu/engagement/.

Between May 1, 2007 and April 31, 2008, the Purdue OWL website served 111,038,482 pages, a 32% increase in page views from 2006-2007 (84,863,489 page views). The Purdue OWL transferred 8065.05 gigabytes of data to users worldwide this past school year.

Visitors to our site included Purdue University students, faculty and staff from all campuses, and students, teachers, workers, and learners from all around the world, including China, Thailand, Australia, Canada, Japan, Peru, Malaysia, Singapore, Italy, Turkey, Mexico, the Philippines and Korea. In addition, we have received feedback from users from Iraq (Kurdish areas), Africa, and the Middle East. Individuals serving in the United States armed forces and workers for the United States government also made use of our OWL for educational and training purposes. A sampling of unsolicited comments from Purdue OWL users is included at the end of this appendix.

Our most popular resources include our MLA and APA citation guidelines, grammar and ESL materials, professional writing and business writing documents, resources on avoiding plagiarism, and writing process materials. The Purdue OWL's hypertext workshops and PowerPoint presentations on writing-related topics are also very popular.

Our email tutoring service answered 8,277 questions this academic year from Purdue students, faculty and staff and from other users who include high school students, workers in business and industry, and English language learners from other countries.

The Purdue OWL News has continued to be distributed in bi-weekly emails to our 15,000 subscribers. The Purdue OWL News features writing-related information, a writing question of the week, and a user question-and-answer system.

Undergraduate Education Support

The OWL provides a number of resources that support undergraduate education:
- Guidelines, heuristics, materials, and slide presentations on the diverse types of writing required at Purdue University

- o Materials that support the range of different approaches to teaching English 106, i.e., rhetoric, literary analysis, theory and cultural studies, poetry and creative writing
  - o Materials that support writing across the curriculum and writing in the disciplines, including resources for engineering, the sciences, liberal arts and social sciences
- Resources focused on the Purdue experience: from the OWL homepage, students can access a list of these materials located at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/682/01/
- Writing assistance tfrom the OWLMail respondants
- An online tutoring system, the Virtual Consultant @ Purdue (VCaP), currently in its pilot stage (discussed below)
- Information on face-to-face writing tutor resources in the Writing Lab, i.e., lab schedule, contact information, information for instructors and students on writing workshops.

Last year, 2,482 requests were made to copy OWL materials for undergraduate education classroom use by instructors in all disciplines. However, we suspect the actual number of undergraduate education uses to be substantially higher, as many individuals do not directly request to use OWL materials.

According to the 2007-2008 OWL Survey (discussed further below), 31% of our respondents were undergraduate students, the highest proportion of any visitor type.

Improvements and Changes at the Purdue OWL

Engagement and the Purdue OWL
One of the most exciting additions to the OWL is the new Engagement area that houses partnerships between the Writing Lab the community of greater Lafayette. This area is located at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/engagement/. The Engagement area will serve as a sustainable resource for outreach projects. The goal of this area is to provide literacy material for local organizations and OWL users worldwide. Another goal of the Engagement area is to provide an interactive space for Writing Lab staff and members of the English Department to continue working with local communities. Engagement is an important part of the Purdue land-grant state university mission, and it is an important part of the Writing Lab's history.

This Engagement area, however, is different from past Writing Lab efforts. OWL resources developed for specific projects by members of the Writing Lab or members of the English Department are being more widely disseminated to OWL users. These engagement resources have been (or are being) developed *with* OWL users or members of local organizations. Therefore, work housed here represents a participatory approach to resource authorship (civic invention) that teams users with developers, as well as the university with the community, in close, collaborative, and ongoing relationships. Below is a list of current engagement projects with descriptions:

Community Writing and Education Station (CWEST)
The CWEST (pronounced "quest") is a sustainable, collaborative civic engagement literacy project. Literacy materials are being developed in close cooperation with the Lafayette Adult Resource Academy (LARA), a local adult basic education program: http://www.lsc.k12.in.us/laraweb/. Specifically, the CWEST will contain the following material: GED preparation resources, ESL resources, workplace and personal finance literacy.

Major goals for the project are as follows:
- To integrate local civic engagement as part of the OWL's mission
- to communicate with LARA to understand their needs and to address those needs through sustained collaboration
- to investigate and disseminate information about practical and theoretical relationships among local civic engagement, public discourse, and Composition Studies to the academic community at large.

To encourage sustainability, CWEST work has been integrated into the OWL mission. To foster participatory design, CWEST work is developed *with* LARA, and this work integrates empirical usability and outcomes research. To date, CWEST has received funding from the Purdue Writing Lab, the Purdue Liberal Arts Community Engagement (PLACE) program, and the Purdue Office of Engagement.

Purdue Professional Writing Students @SEA
The pilot program by the Professional Writing Program in the Spring 2008 semester offered service-learning opportunities with the Tippecanoe County Historical Association to Professional Writing majors. The Writing Lab participated in this pilot by offering support and assistance to students taking @SEA courses through writing tutorials and new materials housed on the OWL. The Writing Lab will continue to create materials for future iterations of the @SEA program, which will be available on the OWL for students and instructors to use.

Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) Workshop Series
This Writing Lab workshop series offers civil engineers working at the INDOT Researcher Center in West Lafayette a series of workshops in technical writing, aimed at the specific writing they do. Purdue Civil Engineering faculty and graduate students have joined the INDOT engineers at these workshops, which are being put on the OWL with user notes and sample papers.. The series was conducted by Writing Lab Director, Dr. Linda Bergmann; Director of Professional Writing, Dr. David Blakesley; and director of Introductory Composition at Purdue, Dr. Richard Johnson-Sheehan. Two Ph.D. students in rhetoric and composition, Allen Brizee and Josh Prenosil, have helped develop workshop materials and tutor the INDOT engineers.

One Laptop Per Child "Buy One, Give One"
This engagement project involves the One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) foundation (http://laptop.org/) and the Writing Lab's efforts to contribute to this educational technology program. In 2007, the Writing Lab participated in the OLPC's "Buy One, Give One" program: the Lab purchased an XO laptop and contributed an XO to a child in a developing nation. Because the XO laptop does not contain educational software on its hard drive, Writing Lab staff believed it was important to begin a partnership with OLPC because of the OWL's potential for providing writing resources via the Internet, the XO's primary source of information. Preliminary usability work was conducted with the XO to make sure the OWL loaded on the small laptop. In fall 2008, the Writing Lab will partner with an English 421 technical writing course to conduct further usability research on the XO and to develop instructional material for XO users to access and integrate OWL resources into their writing pedagogy.

Archimedes Content Management System

This year, the Purdue OWL staff constructed Archimedes, a custom-built Content Management System (CMS), designed for implementing and controlling the massive amount of content in the Purdue Online Writing Lab. Archimedes offers an interactive, visual access to critical data for OWL administrators that will ensure the best online experience for general users.

Basic Features of Archimedes
- A single, unified place to manage and expand all OWL content including the OWL, Writing Lab, PON, and VIS system.
- Dynamic email notification of server stats and failures.
- Automated dynamic email notifications to OWL users.
- Dynamic roles allowing for only access-specific privileges to Archimedes users.
- User-friendly interface for administration of back-end server processes and content development.
- Media manager for PowerPoint, PDF, and Podcasts.
- Expandable to allow for future integration (modules)

Search System

Based on usability data, the OWL implemented a new search system, currently live on all of the redesigned sections of the OWL site. The search system allows the OWL to provide more directed, robust content to visitors worldwide.

Research Pages

The new Research Section of the OWL houses research – past and present – conducted on or about the Purdue OWL. In some cases, the section includes references to and citations of OWL research not included on the page because it is contained in Ph.D. dissertations, books, or journal articles that cannot be posted online. When possible, however, the Research Section includes actual data and reports.

The goal of the Research Section of the Purdue OWL is to provide visitors and scholars with more information about work in theory and research that informs this literacy resource accessed by millions of global users ever year. This research section aligns with the open sources ideology that drives OWL work, and it reflects the land-grant state university mission imbued in Purdue's identity. Writing Lab staff believes that this area will become an important resource for encouraging more empirical research in rhetoric, composition, and writing lab studies.

Purdue Writing Lab Pages

The Purdue Writing Lab section of the site underwent a major revision this year based on both usability changes and the need to ease server strain. On the front end, users now enjoy easy, accessible navigation through a search feature that connects all sections sections of the OWL site. The Writing Lab pages are tied to Archimedes and can be easily updated by individuals with no knowledge of web programming languages.

Contact Pages

The Purdue OWL released a new series of contact pages that allows for flexibility and is tied in with our Archimedes content management system. High volume email addresses including OWL Coordinator and OWL Webmaster are now database-driven and many responses automated to reduce the amount of time the Coordinator and Webmaster must spend on weekly OWL-related email.

VCaP Online System
The Writing Lab will be piloting its new online tutoring system, Virtual Consultant at Purdue or VCaP, during the fall 2008 semester. Writing Lab staff will work closely with the English 515 class to implement IRB-approved usability testing and revise the system based on user-preferences and needs.

Unlike the current OWL Mail, this system will allow writing tutors to respond to entire papers using the collaborative model of face-to-face tutoring. VCaP will be made available to all Purdue students in various stages, beginning with first-year composition courses and distance education courses and then to other undergraduate and graduate students.

Materials Revisions, Graphics and Updates
In 2007, we revised the OWL website redesigned in 2005 and have continued to enhance, update, and add new materials to the new OWL site. This year, we have transferred most of the original OWL's 200+ resources into the new OWL. The transfer project will be completed by the end of Summer 2008. When complete, all OWL resources will be 508 compliant as established by the W3C (http://www.w3.org/) and will be housed in the new OWL design based on ongoing usability research started in 2006.

Usability Research for the New OWL

In 2007-2008, we continued usability research begun in 2005-2006. Work in the past year included implementing findings from the first two generations of usability testing and conducting the third and fourth generations of testing. The most obvious example of changes made to the OWL based on the first two generations of research is the redesign of the OWL Family of Sites homepage. The left screenshot is the 2005 OWL homepage; the right screenshot is the revised OWL homepage based on research participant data and user-centered theory.

Implementing findings from the first two generations of research also included redesigning the interior pages of the OWL, which will be completed in summer 2008.

Third generation research consisted of collecting data through an online usability survey. Fourth generation testing consisted of work with blind and low vision participants at Purdue. Preliminary results of the latest generations of research are as follows:

Generation Three, the Online Survey
The OWL staff designed and implemented an online survey of OWL users and their needs. The survey had 4400 respondents, with nearly 50% of respondents from outside of the USA.

Demographics or respondents:
- Assistive Technology (AT) users: 5% (a substantially higher proportion than on the WWW).
- Undergraduate students: 31%
- Uraduate students: 14%
- K-12 students: 11%
- Instructors: 10%
- K-12 teachers: 7%
- Parents, educational administrators, tutors, , and business professionals: 1% in each category
- Users for whom English is not the first language: 33%

Most repondents thought the OWL was usable, but many wanted to see improvements including additional media, materials, and search options.

Generation Four, Usability Testing with Blind/Low Vision Users at Purdue University
Accessibility testing with two blind Purdue students found that accessibility was good overall, but OWL usability could be improved. When asked to rate OWL *accessibility* on a scale of 1-10, both participants ranked it as 7. So participants found OWL accessible, but not necessarily *usable*. To address usability shortcomings, Allen Brizee and Dana Driscoll will continue implementing changes to the OWL based on usability and accessibility research. Part of this work will continue through the summer, 2008, when the OWL staff will partner with Purdue Adaptive Programs to learn JAWS, the most common screen reader for the visually impaired. In the future, the OWL staff will integrate design work with JAWS testing to ensure OWL accessibility and usability.

Other revisions include the following:

- Reorganize OWL splash page by reordering code content so that the search bar and popular resources read higher on page for screen reader users
- Add site map
- Add alt text tags to all graphics
- Remove graphics from navigation
- Add descriptions for citation pages
- Add document downloads (MS Word for screen readers)
- Double-check heading levels
- Develop OWL research, writing resources *with* blind, low vision users
- Design OWL while using JAWS in adaptive lab
- Continue testing

Links Requests for the Purdue OWL

Purdue OWL received a total of 1,022 requests for visible links to other sites on the Internet this year.

Future Plans for the OWL

The following are areas of work planned for the OWL:
- Finalize Archimedes Content Management System and the new OWL pages
- Continue engagement work
- Continue implementing usability and accessibility research findings/design and foster closer relationship with ALPS/Adaptive Programs
- Complete transfer of old materials
- Develop new ways of transferring/fostering information on writing and research: Podcasts, Flash Movies, MySpace, Facebook
- Pilot and implement VCaP – Online Tutoring System
- Setup and implement a new SQL server for increased performance of OWL

Words on the Go
Words on the Go (http://www.gocitybus.com/wordsonthego/index.htm) is a community arts project that collaborates with CityBus to place poetry on board the buses. Local poets submit original work for consideration, and new poems are published on the buses every six months. This project, begun by Ph.D. students in the English Department, now consists of a group of volunteers working in collaboration with staff at CityBus to celebrate language and to encourage the use of public

transportation. And in the process of soliciting and showcasing local poetry, Word on the Go hopes to build a rich sense of community. Although poetry-on-the-buses is an international phenomenon, Words on the Go is somewhat unique in its focus on community participation. Writing Lab tutor, Morgan Reitmeyer, helps coordinate Words on the Go, and the OWL Engagement area will help to raise awareness of the program.

Unsolicited Comments from OWL Users

The following is a selection from among the thousands of these comments received each year, chosen to reflect the range of users and uses.

I am an English teacher. I guess your website is one of the best source for quality English writing material. Your are doing a commendable job by putting such valuable study material on the net. Thanks a lot! -- Ravi Kumar, K-6th grade teacher, India

This is my first visit to this site. I know already that it is going to be one of my favorite places to visit when I'm searching for correct grammar, technical help and to develop a hobby that I love. Thanks to the staff of OWL and Purdue for offering this to the public. – Anonymous

You page helped me so much this semester! Thanks for you hard work and making it FREE! – Purdue University Student

I love your site. I dont' know why I didn't come across it two years ago. I purchases some APA software and still didn't get the formatting of my papers right. This is 100 times easier to follow than the software and its templates – K-12 Student, Georgia

I found most of the information on the OWL site extremely helpful and concise as I continue to review and reteach the research paper process. My students are still struggling with in-text citation, reference pages, and avoiding plagiarism and want them to understand all three concepts completely before moving on to their next English classes the following school year. Thank you so much for providing such a wonderful resource to the general public! – Professor, York College of Pennsylvania

THANK YOU THANK YOU THANK YOU!!! I have been looking for an hour for an explanation of the difference between a possessive with an apostrophe and a possessive without an apostrophe, (for example: bottle top, book cover, etc.), and out of all the sites I was directed to, yours is the only one that had the explanation. –Parent, K-12 High School Student, Spain

It is the best site, bar none, of all OWL's. Excellent, awesome, well done! I appreciate your hard work and the availability of the site for my tutor training!!! Thank you. –Survey Respondent

I hadn't really tried out the new OWL before today: it's great! Very easy to access, and the information was very helpful for the student I was tutoring.—Survey Respondent

I liked it! I even found things I wasn't looking for that were very helpful!- 3rd Grade Student, California

I love OWL! -Administrator, Rhode Island

Really fantastic and the only place I send students to find information for writing projects. Great job.—Survey Respondent

The Purdue OWL is a tremendous resource. I have found it especially helpful in working with my graduate scientific writing students who are English Language Learners. They really appreciate having a URL for a 1-3 page handout tailored to their specific problems. I point them to Purdue OWL resources via electronic commenting, which is very handy. – ESL Instructor, Korea

I'm so glad you're on the web. Though I have no idea how many of my students use this resource, I often include your URL on most of my syllabi, and even go so far as showing students in class what's available at your website. I also include the Purdue OWL as part of my "External Links" in Blackboard. Keep up the good work! –Professor, Northern Kentucky University

The re-designed website is very easy to navigate and the ability to find information is amazing. I love how I can always find exactly what I'm looking for in a manner of seconds. Keep up the great work—Graduate Student, Chemical Engineering, Purdue

I'm a librarian at a local community college. Rather than use our print copies of MLA and APA, I come here to answer patron questions and I tell them about this site – Librarian, Texas

Just a big THANK YOU for being here. I'm a high school English teacher and use your site often. I also have you posted on my protopage so my students can visit your site! – K-12 teacher, Michigan