To: Professor Leon Gottfried, Head

Copies To: Professors Harris, Hughes, Weiser, Berns, Yancey, and
Mark Zamierowski

From: David Dedo and Jackie Atkins, 1988 Writing Lab Summer
Co-Directors

Date: October 10, 1988

Subject: Summer 1988 Writing Lab Report

The Writing Lab's 1988 summer session, we are happy to report, shows a dramatic rise in student use when compared to 1987. Positive trends, as will be documented, are seen in many statistical categories. These happy circumstances are the result of an effective combination of skilled tutors and the addition of many materials that appreciative students find useful.

This report will document 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 filled two half-time positions (the two co-directors), and Mark Zamierowski served as our Office of Writing Review specialist/liaison for six and one-half hours per week. This combination was most effective with Jackie contributing her expertise in Business Writing, Dave functioning as ESL specialist and liaison, and Mark in his specific role. (Of course all tutors have extensive experience with Freshman Composition.)

Again this year, tutorials were not conducted on Fridays, but self-instructional materials and the computers were available (as always, Monday through Friday, 8:00-5:00). Jackie's hours were 10:00-1:00, Tuesday through Thursday and 6:00-9:00 on Wednesday evening; Dave worked 9:00-11:00 and 1:00-3:00, Tuesday through Thursday; and Mark's hours were 9:00-12:00 on Monday, 4:30-6:00 on Tuesday, and 4:30-6:30 on Thursday.

For the second summer, evening hours were again scheduled to serve, primarily, those students involved with testing in the OWR (109, GTP, etc.) and adult students enrolled in evening classes. Also for the second summer, the evening hours were a popular and useful option for students unable to visit the Lab during more traditional times.

Appointments were not a formal part of tutorial services this summer, but as the summary of the statistics illustrates, a number of them were nonetheless scheduled. The majority were arranged to serve students in English 304 and were intended to address particular concerns of the formal research paper.

USE OF THE LAB

As always, the Lab served a wide array of student, staff, and "outsider" needs. The following groups made use of Lab services this summer:

1. students in English 001, 002, 101, 101B (Upward Bound), 101I, 102, 304, 320, 420, 421, and 589

2. students writing for courses in communications, education, various engineering courses, psychology, sociology, and others

3. graduate students writing the Graduate Test Paper for the OWR

4. graduate students revising their articles and dissertations

5. faculty members (non-native speakers) working on articles and business letters

6. students seeking help with resumes and application letters

7. 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. (A more complete tabulation of these figures is presented in Attachment A.) In order to assess this year's numbers, totals from the summer of 1987 are also presented:

		1988	1987
1.	students and staff using the Lab:	348	314
2.	number of appointments for tutorials:	25	35
3.	drop-in sessions with students:	253	117
4.	times self-instruction modules used:	109	12
5.	student requests for handouts:	124	81
6.	instructor requests for handouts:	10	3
7.	Lab used as a writing room:	55	45
8.	student use of the computers:	119	21
9.	Grammar Hot Line calls:	71	78

As this tabulation clearly shows, the Writing Lab served many more students and staff in a number of important ways. Perhaps the three most important categories are drop-in sessions, use of self-instruction modules, and computer use. Most of the increase in drop-in sessions is related to 420 and 421 students; having two staff members with experience in these areas was obviously an advantage for both students and Lab. Another reason for the increased number of 420 students was that Jackie Atkins visited all the English 420 classes to explain the lab's services and the hours in which help with English 420 was available. ESL students made much greater use of self-instruction modules this summer; there are two major factors responsible for this situation: first, the Lab has significantly expanded its self-help materials (not only in number but in quality, i.e. more theoretically sound); second, because Dave is assistant to the ESL Director, there was improved communication/rapport with the ESL Program. The sharp increase in computer use this summer may be attributed to the Lab's computer consultant, Robert Juliano, and the fine work he performed (as both consultant and promoter). (Please see Table 9 for a very complete tabulation of Lab use this summer.)

We would like to point out that two major recommendations made in last summer's report, improving communication with the ESL Program and continuing to have staff with 420/421 experience, have obviously increased Lab use and allowed us to serve a greater number of students. In addition, it now seems more definite that the absence of a computer consultant last summer (1987) was responsible for the significant drop in computer use.

Finally, it is clear that the success and usefulness of the Writing Lab's summer sessions primarily depends on successful communication between the Lab and the various programs in the department. Only that allows us to determine their particular needs, the key factor that determines if they will make use of our services.

EVALUATION OF STAFF PERFORMANCE

Again this summer, no teacher or student evaluations of Lab services were distributed, and so we are forced to be rather subjective in our assessment of staff performance.

First, the combination of skills and areas of expertise the tutors possess individually and collectively seemed ideal. Mark represented our knowledgeable voice from the OWR, Jackie indeed was, among many other positive roles, the "resume expert," and Dave helped with his ESL experience, both as tutor and liaison. It must be stressed though that each tutor's general background skills allowed this summer's session to be successful. Lab tutors must always have a background in teaching Freshman Composition, but this becomes an even more important factor when the staff is small in number.

Additional Lab activities this summer focused both inward and outward. First, a major reorganization/renovation of the physical environment occurred. Thanks to the combined efforts of Professor Harris, Lynn Shonkwiler (our excellent receptionist) Dave, Mark, and Tharon Howard, the Lab is both more "user friendly" and physically attractive. Related to this is Dave's reorganization of all self-instructional materials and the completion of an index of all the Lab's ESL materials. It is hoped that the index will be of use to ESL instructors, students, and the Writing Lab staff.

Two outward-directed activities deserving mention are the Lab's continued involvement with the 4-H group that visits Purdue each summer, and HSSE's "Edge on Success" program for minority students. The 4-H has an annual "Career Exploration" event, and a group of twenty students (ninth grade level) toured the Lab and heard a presentation on "Becoming a Good Writer." The "Edge on Success" program is designed to better orient incoming minority students enrolled in the school of HSSE to the educational and cultural aspects of life at Purdue. These students, about twenty, were given an informal tour of the Lab and heard a presentation on how the Lab can help make success in Freshman Composition and beyond a reality. A representative from the Lab also participated in a "College Survival Tips" panel discussion which included past and present minority students enrolled in HSSE and representatives from the Dean of Students Office and Counseling and Student Services. The Lab has been informed that, in part because of its participation and support, plans are under way to expand this program next summer.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEXT SUMMER

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

1. The combination of background experiences and skills that this summer's staff possessed seemed to provide optimal service; this combination should be sought in future summers if possible.

2. The present number and distribution of Lab positions (two 1/2 time, one 1/4 time) seems to be sufficient to meet summer needs if enrollment and other factors remain consistent.

3. Tutors need to provide a wide range of hours in which they are available to conference with students; evening hours at least one evening a week should be continued.

4. A work/study student is needed during the summer, especially if the lab is open during the evening. During the day the receptionist needs a lunch break, and during the evening hours the tutors cannot both tutor and answer phones.

5. Staff should continue to explore different possibilities for publicizing the Lab's services for the summer session: it is also important that the Lab always strive to publicize as early as possible in the semester.

6. The communication link that has been established between the Lab and the ESL Program must be maintained if the Lab is to continue to adequately serve the needs of ESL students.

7. The Lab's involvement with 4-H and "Edge on Success" seem to be an excellent way of contacting future students and creating good relations on and off campus. These types of activities should be continued if at all possible.

In closing, we, the summer Lab staff, would like to thank the department for the opportunity to work and further advance our Lab-related skills, and also to gain a greater appreciation of the complexities of Writing Lab administration, evident even in the slower pace of summer.

The following tables present a statistical summary of Writing Lab use for the Summer 1988 semester.

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

<u>Type of Service</u>	<u>No. of Students/Instructors</u>
1. Tutorial Appointments	21
2. Drop-in Tutorials	141
3. Self-instructional Modules	26
4. Lab Resources (handouts, etc)	91
5. Reference Materials and use of Lab for Writing	29
6. Use of Computers	32
7. Instructor Use	8
Total:	348

Table 2.   Number of appointments for scheduled tutorials

<u>No. of appts. per student</u>	<u>No. of students</u>	<u>Total no. of sessions</u>
1	17	17
2	4	8
Total:		25

Table 3.   Number of drop-in sessions

<u>No. of sessions per student</u>	<u>No. of students</u>	<u>Total no. of sessions</u>
1	90	90
2	23	46
3	7	21
4	14	56
5	4	20
6	2	12
8	1	8
Total:		253

Table 4. Number of self-instruction modules used

No. of modules	No. of students	No. of uses of modules
1	11	11
2	2	4
3	4	12
4	1	4
5	1	5
6	1	6
8	1	8
9	1	9
11	2	22
12	1	12
16	1	16
	Totals:	109

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

No. of requests	No. of students	Totals
1	71	71
2	10	20
3	11	33
	Totals:	124

Table 6: Number of composition instructor requests for materials

No. of requests	No. of instructors	Totals
1	6	6
2	2	4
	Totals:	10

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

No. of uses	No. of students	Totals
1	23	23
3	2	6
4	1	4
6	1	6
7	1	7
9	1	9
	Totals:	55

Table 8:   Number of student uses of computers

No. of uses	No. of students	Totals
1	16	16
2	4	8
3	3	9
4	3	12
6	1	6
8	2	16
11	1	11
18	1	18
23	1	23
	Total:	119

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		1				1	6		8
101	2	27		11	1	5	23		69
101B		38		34		19			85
102	1	18		14	2	1	18		54
235				1					1
304	13	5		1					19
320		2							2
420	2	73		18	3	6	36		138
421		13		4			10		27
589		4					1		5

B. Others

1. undergrad

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Totals
self-help				2					2
other courses		8		14		2	2		26
resumes, etc.	1	30	1	16			10		58

2. grad students

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Totals
001		1	53			18	6		78
self help	1		48	1	4	1	7		62
GTP	5	33	7	14		2			61

3. other

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Totals
other								71	71

| TOTALS | 25 | 253 | 109 | 124 | 10 | 55 | 119 | 71 | 766 |

KEY:
A—Tutorials
B—Drop-ins
C—Self-instruction
D—Handouts: Students
E—Handouts: Instructors
F—Writing, Stuyding in the Lab
G—Computer Use
H—Grammar Hot Line