Welcome to the Spring Issue!

The Center for Student Success is all about student growth, whether it be through reading research in the library, growing a professional network with the help of Career Services, gaining new skills in our Academic Skills Center, or improving their writing with the Walden Writing Center.

We have a lot of new offerings this year, including Power Point and Excel webinars in the Academic Skills Center, a new YouTube Channel in Career Services, a new website for the Writing Center, and our new capstone writing workshops. If you have students in a doctoral program who could use some help writing their dissertation or doctoral study, you may want to ask them to explore these workshop courses. Classes are led by seasoned writing instructors who work with each student on a draft in a class of only 10 students. To see a list of our workshop courses, visit the Academic Skills Center Site.

Spring is a great time to plant those seeds and watch your students grow!

Susanna L. Davidsen
Executive Director
Center for Student Success
Staff Spotlight: Matt Sharkey-Smith, Writing Center

Please describe your primary role at Walden.

I am a writing instructor and the coordinator of graduate writing initiatives in the Walden University Writing Center.

How do you support students at Walden?

I teach academic writing, mostly in one-to-one paper review appointments, and work with students of all skill levels. I also teach at academic residencies, develop and maintain instructional resources, and occasionally present webinars. I teach writing support courses, as well, for the Academic Skills Center.

What is your favorite part about your job?

I most enjoy seeing aspects of writing that were previously mysterious and frustrating for students become knowable and comfortable, a skill like any other rather than an in-born trait.

What do you do when you’re not working?

I write fiction (short stories, mostly) and nonfiction. I also travel with my intrepid wife as much as we can. We’re planning a trip to Peru in the fall, mainly so we can visit Machu Picchu.

If you could offer one tip to faculty members, what would it be?

If you don’t already, try to include writing feedback in your comments on your students’ work. Even just a few comments here and there—preferably on only the most important issues—will likely help, because judicious feedback, given in a meaningful context (e.g., a graded paper a student has just written), tends to have the greatest effect on a student’s development as a writer.

Library

Video Tour

The library thanks Anne Rojas, CUGS liaison librarian, who created our new interactive Introduction to the Library video tour. Users can access it through the first slide in our slide show on the first page of the library or directly at this link. Take a look!
Hi all. I’m Melanie Brown, the new director of the Academic Skills Center (ASC) in the Center for Student Success. I joined the ASC in March after 5 wonderful years in the Writing Center. Before sharing more about me, I want to thank my predecessor, Brian Timmerman, who directed this center with great vision and energy during the past 18 months. He set sound priorities to help the ASC continue to grow—all while directing the Writing Center at the same time. Thank you, Brian!

As for my background, I joined Walden in 2001 as an academic advisor for first-year students. Back then the entire Academic Advising Team consisted of six staff members—how times have changed! From 2003-2006, I worked with Jeff Zuckerman in the Writing Center, and after a hiatus directing a writing center at St. Norbert College in northeastern Wisconsin, I returned to the Walden Writing Center as a dissertation editor, manager of writing initiatives, and associate director from 2009 until last month.

My ASC colleagues—Emily Dahlen, associate director for student learning and program director for WCSS courses, and Karen Milheim, associate director of tutoring services—welcomed me warmly and have been patient and generous in helping me learn about their day-to-day work, ongoing projects, and new ideas. Together, we will continue to build the ASC’s excellent resources for students and faculty and work to bring greater visibility to the ASC from across the university. I am delighted to be part of this team and look forward to a bright future for the ASC.
New Website

The new Writing Center website has launched! Read our website news post here that highlights the major changes, the reasons for the move, and ways users can provide feedback. The old site and links will remain live for several months, but we're encouraging students and faculty members to update their bookmarks soon. To find specific materials, use the search feature or the spreadsheet mentioned in the post.

Congratulations, Amy

Please join me in congratulating Amy Kubista as the new associate director of the Writing Center!

With Melanie Brown moving on as the new director of the Academic Skills Center (Congrats, Mel!), Amy brings her experience and passion to a position that oversees our talented coordinator team, the folks that bring you our myriad of services. This will be Amy's third position since joining the Writing Center, serving as a writing instructor from 2009-2012 and as our manager of writing instruction from 2012 to March of this year. An alumnus of the University of Wisconsin-Lacrosse (B.A.) and Hamline (M.A.), she is currently completing her studies in our Ed.D. program, and is hard at work on her proposal.

Welcome, Jenny and Christina

Jenny Martel, our newest dissertation editor, comes to Walden with a master's degree in art history from the University of St. Thomas, a joint bachelor's degree from the University of Minnesota in English and environmental science, and over 15 years of project management and communications experience. Before Walden, she worked as a freelance writer and editor and an occasional art curator. She spent several years in New York City in management consulting and has studied abroad in both Spain and Venezuela. Her favorite activities include running and racing long distances around the Minneapolis lakes, writing and reading science fiction and fantasy, and spending time with her daughter.

New writing instructor Christina Lundberg has a B.A. in English from the University of Minnesota and an M.F.A. from Naropa University. She comes to us from ITT Technical Institute Online with a great deal of teaching, writing, editing, and curriculum development experience. Christina also co-owns a design and development company, Double Shot Art and Design, serving as the managing editor and writer for websites. In her free time, Christina enjoys writing poetry and creative nonfiction, designing interior spaces, cooking, playing tennis, biking, swimming, and taking barre classes. She lives with her husband and 5-year-old son in Carmel, Indiana, and will be one of our center's remote employees.
Webinars

Academic Skills Student Webinars

Pivot Tables, Macros, and Advanced Functions in Excel | May 7 at 7 p.m. Eastern time
Analysis: T-tests and ANOVA | May 11 at 9 p.m. Eastern time
Get Acquainted with the Walden Math Classroom | May 14 at 7 p.m. Eastern time
Get Acquainted with the Walden Math Classroom | (Saturday session) on May 16 at 10 a.m. Eastern time

Career Services Student Webinars

Mid-Life Job Search Strategies | April 16 at 6 p.m. Eastern time
Resume Café | April 14 at 6 p.m. Eastern time
Curriculum Vita (CV) Café | April 22 at 6 p.m. Eastern time

Writing Center Student Webinars

April
Reviewing the Literature and Incorporating Previous Research | April 15 at 1 p.m. Eastern time
Literature Review Panel with the Library & Writing Center | April 16 at 9 p.m. Eastern time
Synthesis and Thesis Development | April 20 at 2 p.m. Eastern time
Mastering the Mechanics Part 1: Simple Sentences | April 28 at 4 p.m. Eastern time

May
APA Citations Part 1: Methods to the Madness | May 10 at 6 p.m. Eastern time
Writing at the Graduate Level | May 13 at 1 p.m. Eastern time
Practical Skills: Writing Strong Thesis Statements | May 19 at 5 p.m. Eastern time
Writing and Responding to Discussion Posts | May 25 at 3 p.m. Eastern time

June
Prewriting Techniques: Taking the First Steps | June 4 at 5 p.m. Eastern time
Discussing Procedure and Justifying Design: Writing Methods | June 10 at 1 p.m. Eastern time
Mastering the Mechanics Part 2: Compound & Complex Sentences | June 23 at 6 p.m. Eastern time
APA Citations Part 2: Nontraditional Sources | June 29 at 2 p.m. Eastern time

Writing Center Faculty Webinars

Top 10 APA Headaches of Walden Writers | April 21 at 11 a.m. Eastern Time
Writing Center's Greatest Hits | May 19 at Noon Eastern Time
Spring Growth

Here in the Minneapolis office, we are eagerly awaiting warmer weather and the end of the snowy season. As the first green buds appear, we’re thinking about growth and what that means academically. Here’s what staff in the Center for Student Success had to say about opportunities for growth this spring:

From the Academic Skills Center: Now that spring is here, consider growing your skill set. By dedicating a little bit of time to learning something new, particularly a skill that is out of your comfort zone, you can enrich your life and your talents in countless ways. This article by U.S. News & World Report suggests ways to learn something new (for free!) every day.

From the Library: Research shows that maintaining the attitude of curiosity we all had as children is a powerful force to ensure continuous learning and growth. If you didn’t immediately think “I wonder why?” you can start rekindling your natural curiosity by reading this blog post from the Psychology Today website.

From the Writing Center: Many of you devote time each week to exercise as a way to grow your physical health. Why not use that time to also strengthen your writing skills? Subscribe to WriteCast on iTunes and commit to listening to one of our discussions on scholarly writing each time you go for a run!

From the Career Services Center: Career growth happens when individuals gain new Experience, meet new People, and tell a new Story. Our new Career Services “Welcome” video features the story of Tyra, a Walden alumnus whose strategies in these three areas helped her successfully transition from being unemployed to landing a great job.

What are some ways you can grow academically this spring?

Share your ideas with us on Twitter! Tweet your recommendations and goals to @WUWritingCenter, @WaldenCareerCt, and @WaldenASC.

Publications and Conferences

Dissertation Editor and faculty member Kelly Chermack coauthored a chapter in a new sociology collection:


Dissertation Editor Basil Considine presented his paper “Anglo-Dutch Seafarers and Musical Diplomacy in the Age of Discovery” at the Renaissance Society of America’s Annual Meeting in Berlin, Germany in March.

Writing Instructor and faculty member Sarah Prince presented “Virtual Visits: Recreating the Traditional Writing Center Classroom Visit Online” at the SWCA Conference in Nashville, TN in February.

Writing Instructor and faculty member Hillary Wentworth presented “Looking Back to Give Forward: Self-Reflection in the Writing Center” at the MnWE Conference in Minneapolis in March.