In the spirit of the New Year, I’d like to reflect on 2014 in the Center for Student Success and on some of the initiatives we’re looking forward to in 2015. First, let’s look back: We conducted over 88,000 one-to-one instructional sessions, received more than 3.5 million web visits, and counted 160,000 views of our new Quick Answers service. Among our accomplishments last year, we launched a new website for the Academic Skills Center, began providing math and statistics tutoring, launched a doctoral career webinar series, enrolled students in the first two of four capstone writing courses, and launched QuickAnswers across the entire university. For faculty, we put together hundreds of resources that support writing feedback and instruction. We also did a lot of behind the scenes work: creating and applying quality rubrics to our library instructional materials, identifying a new website platform, and laying the groundwork for an exciting new venture called ScholarWorks, which will launch next month. Other new offerings to look forward to in 2015 include the remaining two capstone writing courses beginning enrollment in March and April and a new Doctoral Capstone Resource Guide coming later this year. All of our websites will move to a new platform and undergo some organizational and cosmetic changes that should make our resources easier to find and more functional. Come visit us and see what’s new!

Susanna L. Davidsen
Executive Director
Center for Student Success
Staff Spotlight: Edward Irobi, Graduate Assistant Tutor

Please describe your primary role at Walden.

My primary role at Walden University is working with the Public Health program to provide supplemental instruction, including assistance with Advanced Biostatistics and SPSS software skills.

How do you support students at Walden?

I support students at Walden by providing teaching assistance in the area of weekly discussion, application assignments, and SPSS software skills.

What is your favorite part about your job?

I love working with students with little or no knowledge of biostatistics to help them understand the basic concepts of the course, seeing them excelling and becoming able to apply biostatistics to their various disciplines.

What do you do when you’re not working?

My current full-time job is with the New Mexico State Department of Health in Santa Fe. I work as the State Occupational Health Epidemiologist, providing epidemiological support, writing reports, and analyzing and disseminating data. I also enjoy being with my family and friends and volunteering with youth programs in the community.

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

Online instruction is a demanding job, and Walden faculty are among the best. It is helpful for instructors to appreciate that students learn differently. Some may need more time to understand a particular course concept than do others. Patience and perseverance may be needed in order to produce the “genius” from each student.

Disability Services

Student Satisfaction Survey Results

Disability Services completed its first dedicated student satisfaction survey this quarter. A lot of very useful information we gathered will inform initiatives for 2015. Students currently registered with Disability Services were surveyed and the response rate was nearly 48%. The overall satisfaction rate was very positive, with over 90% being satisfied or very satisfied with services. The most helpful information came from open-ended questions, where we saw some clear themes emerge. One theme was around assistive technology. We need to take a fresh look at the compatibility of our technical systems with the various assistive technology our students use and try. Also, there are students who would like to see changes in our policy requiring term-by-term contact with our office. We’ll get some advisory committees together and take a fresh look at that policy as well as some others in the coming year. It was great to get student input to help drive our goals for 2015.
Career Services Launches YouTube Channel Highlighting “Career Spotlights”

Students looking for career inspiration should check out Career Services’ new YouTube channel showcasing a series of Walden Career Success stories. These “Career Spotlight” videos bring the stories to life as students share their personal career successes. One featured student went from being unemployed to landing her “dream job” with a Fortune 500 company!

Direct Students to our “Mobilize and Organize Your Job Search” Webinar

This webinar is ideal for students gearing up for an active job search in 2015. Encourage your students to join Career Services to discuss key tips and leave with practical tools they can use. Students can register now!

Library

Welcome, Lajmar!

At the end of November, the library welcomed a new librarian, Lajmar Anderson. Prior to working at Walden, Lajmar had a diverse career in a variety of library fields ranging from being an archives specialist at Ball State University, to an instruction librarian and coordinator of service learning at Indiana University-East. Lajmar obtained both his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Indiana University. While he initially contemplated pursuing graduate studies in psychology, his many years of work spent in libraries led him down a different path. Since then, he has developed a strong passion for helping students develop their own research skills through reference and instruction, particularly in online environments, which led him to Walden University. A lifelong Midwesterner, he currently resides in East Central Indiana with a dog and three cats.

Library Help and Guides

Regardless of your familiarity with the Library, it’s never a bad time to take a look at the super-helpful guides and webinars that we have available for students, faculty, and staff. Need a refresher on how to think up search terms? Need to choose a topic or pick a database? Want help with that literature review? The Library’s guides and webinars are always available on our website! To access these helpful materials, simply click on the Help & Guides link in the upper-right corner of the Library’s website.
Welcome, New Staff!

The Academic Skills Center Tutoring Services welcomed several new individuals this quarter. Walden will benefit immensely from their expertise, experience, and dedication to helping students achieve their learning goals. A warm welcome to LaTonia Richardson (biostatistics), Brooke Hill (instructional design), Heather Walzel (nursing research/biostatistics), Natasha LaBeaud (biostatistics), and Sarah Inkpen (general statistics/dissertation).

Also, big congratulations to Patrick Dunn! After working for several years as a biostatistics and statistics Graduate Assistant, he was promoted to Instructional Support Specialist (statistics). In this position, Pat will develop new resources and initiatives focused on statistics and SPSS support. We are so pleased to have him join us as a permanent staff member as he continues in this expanded role.

Doctoral Writing Workshops

The Academic Skills Center is excited to announce the launch of its second doctoral writing workshop, “Revising and Editing the Introduction.” Open to all students who have started their proposal, this course provides students with the opportunity to work one-on-one with a writing faculty member on the introductory chapter or section of their proposal.

The Academic Skill Center’s inaugural doctoral writing workshop, “Revising and Editing the Proposal,” was a huge success. Over 80 students enrolled and initial feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with 88% of students “agreeing” or “strongly agreeing” that the workshop helped them make progress on their existing draft. More information on these 6-week offerings can be found in the workshop section of the Academic Skills Center’s site.

ASC Tutoring Services

The Academic Skill Center’s tutoring services continue to grow. Providing over 1,900 sessions in the fields of math, statistics, finance, and accounting this year, the center is positioned to serve even more students in 2015. For more information about these tutoring options, please consult the tutoring section of the Academic Skills Center’s site.

Writing Center

New Paper Review Policies

Two big changes occurred within the Writing Center at the beginning of 2015. As of January 1st, the Writing Center is offering students who are working on their coursework up to two appointments per week, which allows students the chance to make more than one appointment per assignment. Making an appointment for a revised draft will help students not only improve their assignment but also better understand their writing process. For more information on the Writing Center’s policies, please visit the Writing Center’s policies page. The second change is that the Writing Center is no longer reviewing components of the premise, prospectus, or proposal through its paper review service. Capstone students will have the opportunity to enroll in a doctoral writing workshop (see more in the Academic Skills section above) or take advantage of the many other resources available to students at the proposal stage.

Capstone Writing Community Office Hours

The Walden Capstone Writing Community is a place for students in or after the capstone proposal stage to connect with colleagues and get support. One community feature is editor office hours, when students can ask questions via chat and get real-time help from a Writing Center editor. Office hours (currently offered Monday through Friday) are posted in the main room of the community, and students are welcome to contact editors who are signed in to talk about APA issues, scholarly writing, or where to find resources.
Webinars

Academic Skills

**Skill Builder Series: Statistics and SPSS:**

**Session 1: General Statistics Concepts**
- January 12 at 9 p.m. Eastern Time
- January 15 at 9 a.m. Eastern Time

**Session 2: Descriptive Statistics and Graphical Tools**
- March 9 at 9 p.m. Eastern Time

**Session 3: Analysis: t-tests and ANOVA**
- May 11 at 9 p.m. Eastern Time

**Skill Builder Series: MS Office - PowerPoint:**

**Session 1: Introduction to Designing a Basic PowerPoint Presentation**
- January 13 at 7 p.m. Eastern

Career Services

**Career Research Café**
January 13 at 6 p.m. Eastern Time

**Career Opportunities in I/O Psychology**
January 15 at 5 p.m. Eastern Time

**Resume Café**
January 21 at 5 p.m. Eastern Time

**Mobilize and Organize Your Job Search**
January 20 at 5 p.m. Eastern Time

Writing Center

**Using and Crediting Sources in APA**
January 15 at 1 p.m. Eastern Time

**Welcome to the Writing Center**
January 20 at 7 p.m. Eastern Time

**Practical Skills: Writing Strong Thesis Statements**
January 28 at 4 p.m. Eastern Time

**Life Cycle of a Paper**
February 2 at 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Engaging Your Reader with Sentence Structure**
February 11 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Annotated Bibliographies**
February 18 at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Writing Effective Academic Paragraphs**
February 19 at 12:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Reference List Checklist**
March 4 at 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Tips for Undergraduate Writing**
March 11 at 7:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Transitioning from Coursework to Capstone**
March 26 at 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time

**Beginnings and Endings: Introduce and Conclude Your Writing**
March 30 at 12:00 p.m. Eastern Time
CSS Publications and Accomplishments

In November, Writing Center Instructor Amy Lindquist presented “Providing Effective Writing Feedback in an Online Environment” at the Great Plains Alliance on Computers and Writing conference in November, and then again with colleague Rachel Willard at the Minnesota English Learner Education conference.

Fresh Start

We asked staff in the Center for Student Success for tips on making a fresh start for the new year. Here’s what they said.

From Disability Services: Amy Zafinandro and Carl Schlesser both moved cubicles recently. Moving is always a hassle, but it does force you to clean out the old and organize yourself: always a good idea when starting the new year!

From the Library: We in the library recommend a little shakeup for your research brain in 2015: For something fun and new, change out your ringtone/alarm/screensavers. Also, declutter: It’s not sexy, but it’s effective to start a new year with a clean desk and office!

From the Writing Center: Associate Director and Manager of Writing Initiatives Melanie Brown shares these tips: I make a fresh start each January in a couple of small ways. First, I tidy up my writing area. By straightening paper piles, cleaning a few files off my computer’s desktop, and setting down a different coaster for my coffee, I change how my daily landscape usually looks. Even those minor changes help me feel refreshed and ready to approach my writing with renewed vigor.

Second, I sit at my tidied writing space before work and read a page of my most recent writing, even for 5 minutes over coffee. By reading the last few paragraphs I wrote, I can keep my topic – and my writing – fresh in mind during periods when I don’t have time to write (such as when I’m at work). Then, when I sit down to write in the evenings, I don’t have to remind myself what I’d last written. The material is fresher in my mind. I hope these tips help you make a fresh start in your writing in 2015!

From the Career Services Center: Have you updated your LinkedIn profile lately? Get a jump start on this year’s networking efforts by reviewing your profile and adding last year’s accomplishments. Make a 2015 resolution to engage in LinkedIn groups, such as the Walden Career Services group, that support your career aspirations!

From the Academic Skills Center: Associate Director Karen Milheim is trying to add more fruits and veggies to her daily eating habits. It is easy to forget how eating healthy can improve memory and focus and make us all less sluggish as we go through our workdays!

How will you make a fresh start in 2015?

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