Welcome to the Winter Issue!

Susanna Davidsen | Executive Director

A new year brings a fresh start in many aspects of our lives. It is a time when we say, “Things are going to change.” I am going to spend more time volunteering, or with my family, or going to the gym… the possibilities are endless. Forty-five percent of us make resolutions, and most of us abandon them sometime in February, when the dark of the morning and a warm bed overcome the excitement we felt in January about waking at 5 a.m. to exercise. Many students resolve to do more studying, make progress on their dissertation or capstone project, get better grades, or spend more time on assignments. Despite the statistics on the persistence of New Year’s resolutions, people who explicitly make resolutions are 10 times more likely to attain their goals than people who do not explicitly make resolutions. Yes, 10 times more likely! In this newsletter, you will find many examples of ways the Center for Student Success can help students keep resolutions and meet their goals. From classes to webinars to tutorials, we can work together to help them succeed at Walden University and make their resolutions the ones that really do change their lives.

Susanna L. Davidsen
Executive Director
Center for Student Success
Staff Spotlight

Jon Allinder | Walden Library Reference and Instruction Librarian/
Public Policy and Administration Subject Liaison

Can you describe your role at Walden?

I currently wear two hats: I am a Reference and Instruction Librarian, which primarily means I assist students and faculty with research and developing information literacy skills; I am also a liaison to the School of Public Policy and Administration (SPPA), which means I focus on providing library support to students and faculty within SPPA.

How do you support Walden students?

I like to think that I support our students by helping them develop the information-seeking skills necessary to be effective learners/researchers.

What is your favorite part of your job?

The thing that stands out the most to me is the opportunity to work with new students who may have been out of the educational setting for a long time and are coming back with a lot of trepidation and uncertainty. Not only has it been a while since some of our students have been in school, but they are coming back to an entirely digital learning environment! Talk about a discombobulating experience. I get a lot of satisfaction from working with these new students and making them feel more confident and assured as researchers.

What do you do when you are not working?

I have a 1-year-old daughter, so a lot of my time is spent hanging out with her and watching her grow. I am usually engaged in a house project of some sort, and right now I am (slowly) remodeling part of my home. When I am not wielding a hammer or a diaper, I am usually buried in a book, and since it is dark and cold outside, I have decided to revisit some big, fat Russian novels.

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

Get to know your library liaison! This link will help you identify the liaison for your college or program.

Academic Skills Center

Christy Fraenza | Graduate Assistant, Academic Skills Center
Graduate Assistant and Peer Mentor Programs

Graduate assistants who are hired by the Academic Skills Center take on many different roles and help with multiple projects within the Center for Student Success (CSS). One of our current projects is building our Peer Mentor Program to better assist students who may be struggling in their courses. Because of that focus, we have been researching peer mentoring best practices to develop an effective, worthwhile program.
According to Arendale and Keimig (as cited in Milne et al., 2007), programs are more effective if they are integrated directly into the academic course, which is the strategy we have been using. Based on this knowledge, we have added a mentor into courses to assist students through the discussion board or other group discussion areas. In addition, students can contact mentors through e-mail, chat sessions, or webinar sessions; students can also schedule an appointment with their mentors for more individualized assistance.

In our biostatistics courses, our mentors actually went further and developed a website, study guides, and frequently asked questions (FAQ) resources to provide students with additional direction. Using such an approach is one of the earliest models of peer mentoring (Turrentine & MacDonald, 2006). Because our mentors are limited to 10 hours per week in their position, this strategy allows our mentors to focus their time on individualized, in-depth feedback.

So far, mentors have been added within courses that have been identified as barrier courses, such as the CSS support course *Skills for Academic Integrity* and math, finance, and statistics courses across the university. We are working to expand this program to assist as many Walden students as possible.

In addition to our mentors within courses, we are also piloting a peer writing group for students within the Ed.D. program working on their prospectus document. Mentors working with this group meet with a group of students one night per week, over 8 weeks. During these meetings, all members of the group provide feedback to an individual student regarding their project. The goal is to support these students as they work to complete their prospectus and move forward in their projects.

In an effort to build a successful program, we have been collaborating with faculty members who have implemented (or are developing) their own peer-mentoring programs. We have found there are many different programs being developed across the university focused on helping students succeed academically or transition into higher education. Eventually, we would like to develop a community for all of the peer-mentoring programs that are happening at Walden so we can all share our experiences and best practices.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the peer mentoring program within the Academic Skills Center, please send us a note at academicskills@waldenu.edu.

References


Career Services
Lisa Cook | Director of Career Services

Networking

The holidays are a great time to reconnect with friends and family through social events, phone calls, and holiday cards. How often do students pick up the phone or jot a quick e-mail to say hello to a former boss, mentor, or colleague? Well, we have the app for that: LinkedIn! We are kicking off our monthly webinar series this year with Maximizing LinkedIn to Build Your Professional Network (see p. 9 below). We hope your students will join us and get connected!

Job Search Support Webinar Series

Are your students seeking new career opportunities but not sure where to start? This comprehensive webinar series discusses key aspects of the job search: self-assessment, researching job information and careers, networking and branding, and interviewing. Your students can learn the latest tips and job search strategies and listen to feedback from the audience, all offering support as they navigate their career journey. Students may access these webinars here.

Library

Change in life is inevitable. Change on a website is no different! We are very excited to launch our improved, streamlined Walden University Library website.

The greatest and most important thing to report to you is that all of the same content is available. All of our databases and guides remain. We have not taken anything away.

We have organized our resources and content to make it easier to find what you need, when you need it.
Things you may notice right away that are different:

- The old "Research Databases" button is now called "Articles by Topic."
- Our "Search & Find" tab near the top of the page contains organized categories for all our varied resources.

You may be wondering, "Where are the books?" Our extensive book collections have not gone away. We have even integrated some new methods for quickly and easily finding books in the library and beyond.

On the new website, you can find our book collections under the Search & Find tab in the blue bar that runs across the top of the page.

The new Search & Find tab acts as a gateway to all of our different types of resources. You can find links to search for books, dissertations, tests and measurements, encyclopedias, journal articles, magazines, newspapers, and many other resource types in this list.

Another change worth mentioning is the new research portals for every school. It is our hope that this adjustment makes selecting the appropriate resources more intuitive for everyone.

These research pages are the new gateway to the best resources in each subject area and include not only research databases, but also books, topic guides, and other authoritative resources selected for inclusion by the subject liaison librarians.

Among these carefully selected resources, we have also integrated short videos that demonstrate how to search.

Take some time to look around and let us know what you think. We will continue to collect your feedback about our new home as we all settle in for the long haul. Here is a link to our feedback survey. For a short tour and behind-the-scenes
insight on the why and how of undertaking this redesign, view the archived New Library Website Tour webinar.

If you just want to know more, please visit our Help & Guides section. This section gathers all the opportunities available to learn more about the library, the information resources available, and how to make it all work together in the intricate dance of information literacy and education.

**LIBRARY NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION**
Get to know the library’s new improved book search: http://library.waldenu.edu/762.htm

**Writing Center**
Brian Timmerman | Director of Writing Services

Over the last year, our webinars have become highly popular with students. In 2011, we saw roughly 300 graduates and undergraduates at these sessions. This year, we have seen close to 10,000 (!).

For those of you not in the know, our webinar schedule can always be found here. Students (and faculty!) can register for a wide variety of topics, ranging from basic APA to capstone development, and we always try to keep our presentations as interactive as possible. (Your students will typically see two or three staff members in the Q and A box ready to answer their questions during the session.) Oh, and did I mention that they are free?

**WRITING CENTER NEW YEAR’S RESOLUTION**
Visit the Writing Center’s Getting Started page to see the latest resources available to your students. If you’re short on time, just watch the brief introductory video.

I am also happy to report that we are getting awfully close to launching some new services, many of which follow the same instructional model of the webinars. We have piloted a few of these services with a handful of students, and the associated satisfaction survey results have been encouraging. Stay tuned! I am sure you will hear something more between now and our next quarterly newsletter.
Finally, as we begin a new year, I just want to publically thank my staff for their hard work over the last year. I am so lucky to work with all of them, a team of talented, smart, and enormously funny individuals, and I cannot express the pleasure I get learning from them all. Thank you!

New Writing Center Web Resources

Get caught up on Writing Center announcements at our new Announcement Archive, and take a tour of our services on our new Getting Started page.

Polish your skills with new Synthesis and revised Using Evidence resources. Also, stay tuned to our Lifecycle of a Paper resource, created by popular demand. Look for continued updates and improvements in 2013!

Have you visited our Writing Center Toolbox for Faculty lately? We have added new recordings to our webinar archive, a weekly series of faculty FAQs, and a fantastic resource for dissertation and doctoral study committees, Six Steps to Mentoring a Form-and-Style-Ready Doctoral Capstone. Be sure to bookmark the site and check back often for resources to help you with your student writers!

Welcome, Nathan Sacks!

Walden students now have the opportunity to work with the Writing Center's newest writing tutor, Nathan Sacks. The author of American Hip-Hop: Rappers, DJs and Hard Beats, Nathan holds a bachelor's degree in English from Cornell College and a master's degree in English and American Literature from NYU.

CSS Presentations

Jonah Charney-Sirott, Sara Culver, and Beth Oyler, Writing Center


Amber Cook, Writing Center


Annie Pezalla, Center for Research Quality, and Heidi Marshall, Academic Skills Center

Webinars
Library (for students)

Brainstorming Search Terms
- Monday, January 7, from 7 to 7:40 p.m. Eastern time
- Wednesday, January 9, from Noon to 12:40 p.m. Eastern time

Medical Research: Finding Reviews
- Monday, January 22, from 11 to 11:40 a.m. Eastern time
- Wednesday, January 24, from 9 to 9:40 p.m. Eastern time

Finding Government Documents
- Monday, February 18, from 8 to 8:45 p.m. Eastern time
- Tuesday, February 19, from Noon to 12:45 p.m. Eastern time

Medical Research: Finding Studies by Type
- Tuesday, February 26, from 11 to 11:40 a.m. Eastern time
- Thursday, February 28, from 9 to 9:40 p.m. Eastern time

Introduction to the Walden University Library
- Tuesday, March 12, from 8 to 9 p.m. Eastern time
- Wednesday, March 13, from Noon to 1 p.m. Eastern time

Searching Strategies
- Wednesday, March 13, from 8 to 8:45 p.m. Eastern time
- Thursday, March 14, from Noon to 12:45 p.m. Eastern time

Medical Research: Health Policies and Legal Cases
- Tuesday, March 19, from 11 to 11:40 a.m. Eastern time
- Thursday, March 21, from 9 to 9:40 p.m. Eastern time

Google Books
- Wednesday, April 10, from 8 to 8:45 p.m. Eastern time
- Thursday, April 11, from Noon to 12:40 p.m. Eastern time

Google Scholar
- Tuesday, April 16, from Noon to 1 p.m. Eastern time
- Wednesday, April 17, from 8 to 9 p.m. Eastern time

Please see more information on Library webinars on our web site.
Career Services (for students)

Using LinkedIn to Build Your Professional Network
- Thursday, January 24, from 4 to 5 p.m. Central time

Informatics
- Tuesday, January 29, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Central time

Group Advising Webinars for Students New to Career Services will be offered three times:
- Friday, January 11, from 11 to 11:30 a.m. Central time
- Monday, January 14, from 3:30 to 4 p.m. Central time
- Thursday, January 31, from 4 to 4:30 p.m. Central time

All webinars are listed under “Latest News” on the Career Services Center website.

Writing Center (for faculty)

Introduction to the Writing Center
- Tuesday, January 29, from 11 a.m. to Noon, Central time

Activating Student Writing Skills Through AWE: A Toolkit for CUGS Instructors
- Thursday, January 31, from 10 to 11 a.m. Central time
- Tuesday, February 5, from 7 to 8 p.m. Central time

Coaching Developing Writers Toward Cohesive Papers
- Tuesday, February 19, from 7 to 8 p.m. Central time
- Wednesday, February 20, from 11 a.m. to Noon Central time

The Writing Center sessions listed above are for Walden faculty, with more information here. See our winter calendar for full student webinar offerings.