### Disability Services

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<td>Academic Progress Tracking</td>
<td>GPA Comparison</td>
<td>At the end of Spring 2015, the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) for students with disabilities was 3.03; the CGPA for all undergraduate day students was 3.25 [Note: These figures were derived from the Academic Information Resources (AIR) application on June 12, 2015]. The difference or gap was .22.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Progress Tracking</td>
<td>Graduation Rates</td>
<td>For the past several years the OAS has been tracking graduation rates for students with disabilities. The four-class average for those who graduated in Spring 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 is 86.7% (72/83). This percentage is higher than the graduation rate for all PC students, which tends to hover around 85% [Note: The recent history of graduation rates reported to the NCAA by Providence College was used as the basis for this comparison].</td>
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<td>Self-Efficacy Coaching</td>
<td>Cumulative GPA Comparison</td>
<td>At the end of the Spring 2015 semester, the cumulative grade point average (CGPA) for the eight (8) students who received self-efficacy coaching throughout the 2014-2015 academic year was 2.59. Meanwhile, the CGPA for all other first-year students with disabilities was 2.97. And, as noted previously, the CGPA for all students with disabilities was 3.03. [Note: These figures were derived from the Academic Information Resources (AIR) application on June 16, 2015].</td>
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<td>Self-Efficacy Coaching</td>
<td>Faculty Survey</td>
<td>In September 2014, an intake survey was administered to twenty-four (24) incoming freshmen who disclosed a disability to the OAS. This survey included the following statements:</td>
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<td>● I fully understand the nature of my disability;</td>
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<td>● I understand how my disability affects my ability to learn and perform well academically;</td>
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<td>● I would know how to adapt or compensate if certain accommodations were temporarily unavailable to me;</td>
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<td>● I know how to advocate for my own needs as a student with a disability;</td>
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<td>● I understand what the term &quot;reasonable accommodation&quot; means for me.</td>
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<td>Students evaluated the extent to which they agreed with each of these statements (on a 4-point scale, 4 being &quot;strongly agree&quot; and 1 being &quot;strongly disagree&quot;). Attached to each of these statements were questions which asked students to qualify their ratings.</td>
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<td>The survey results were used by the Assistant Director for Disability Services to identify students in need of self-efficacy coaching. Altogether, eight (8) students were identified as good candidates for this service [Note: One</td>
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The gap between the CGPA for students with disabilities and the CGPA for all undergraduate day students is within acceptable limits. Students with disabilities tend to have a lower GPA, on average, than the general student population. Continue tracking to ensure that the gap does not increase.

Results this year show an increase in the graduation rate for students with disabilities (76.8% in Spring 2013 vs. 86.7% in Spring 2015). Results are very encouraging. Continue to track.

This year, there was an increase in the gap between first-year students who did and did not receive self-efficacy coaching (0.38 in Spring 2015 vs. 0.14 in Spring 2015). In addition, while those who received self-efficacy coaching in 2012-2013 had a higher CGPA (2.98) than all students with disabilities (2.90), those who received self-efficacy coaching in 2014-2015 had a lower CGPA (2.59) than all students with disabilities (3.03). It is important to note, however, that these results are based on a very small sample size (6 students in Spring 2013 and 8 students in Spring 2015). Continue tracking to determine reliable trends.

Responses suggest that self-efficacy coaching is helping at-risk students with disabilities develop the skills and relationships that they need to be successful at Providence College. Comments from the faculty in the spring were especially positive, suggesting that once students had a semester completed, they had a better understanding of how to manage their time and employ strategies for success. Continue to assess.
student did take a medical leave at the end of the spring semester]. Coaching was provided directly by the AD for Disability Services and/or by the Associate Director for Office Operations, depending on each individual's particular needs.

At the end of each semester, a short qualitative survey was emailed to the professors of the students who had received self-efficacy coaching. In this survey faculty were asked to share their own perceptions of the students' self-efficacy skills. In the fall we received twenty-one (21) responses, and in the spring we received fourteen (14).

In response to the first survey item – "Can you tell me what you have observed about [the student’s] growth during the course of the semester? How, if at all, has his/her approach to learning improved?" – professors made several positive comments about the students' demeanor in the classroom. For example, one professor noted, "He tries hard and puts in a lot of effort. Our class was very welcoming to him, and I know he felt it." Another professor commented that her student was "definitely learning to take more responsibility."

In response to the second item – "If the student has grown or improved, what behaviors have contributed?" – one instructor replied, "I don't think he is trying as hard to use his disability to enable him to be disabled anymore because he knows that is not what I expect from him." Another commented, "He is making more of a concerted effort to contribute to classroom discussions."

All of these comments reflect components of self-efficacy coaching: taking ownership of one's education, contributing during class discussions, and relinquishing one's disability as a "crutch." In short, the comments do suggest that self-efficacy coaching is having a positive impact on students' growth and development.

At the end of the academic year, six (6) of the eight (8) students who had received self-efficacy coaching re-evaluated themselves on the statements from the intake survey mentioned above (Note: One (1) student took a medical leave at the end of the spring semester, and another did not show up to complete the exit interview).

Whereas all six (6) students had either disagreed or strongly disagreed with at least one of the five statements on the intake survey, all six agreed or strongly agreed with these same statements on the exit survey. One student commented, "I would say I've come to understand my disability more and its effects. While I know how to cope with it, I'm always looking for more ways to better handle it." Another student stated, "I know what is reasonable and how to work with what is given to me."

Exit surveys continue to suggest that self-efficacy coaching promotes the growth and development of students with disabilities. Continue to assess.

Self-Efficacy Coaching
Freshman Intake Survey/Exit Interview
At the end of the Spring 2015 semester, graduating seniors with disabilities were invited to participate in an exit interview. This interview included two questions that asked students to reflect on their academic growth, as well as their readiness to enter the "real world." Thirteen (13) students chose to participate.

In response to the first item – "Do you feel that, over the past four years, you have developed skills to compensate for your disability in school? Why or why not? If you have developed compensatory skills, to what extent did the OAS assist you?" – all thirteen (13) students reported that they had learned or developed useful skills to compensate for their disabilities. For example, one student commented, "I have definitely developed skills to compensate for my disability in school. I have attended many of the OAS workshops, such as time management and note taking skills, which have provided me with skills that allow me to manage my disability." Another student com-

Survey results suggest that students with disabilities have acquired lifelong strategies to compensate for the challenges presented by their disabilities.

It is important to note that, by building these exit interviews into the spring-semester accommodations request meetings, we were able to increase student participation (10/13 students who were invited chose to participate). The AD for Disability Services will continue this practice in the coming year.
mented, "Absolutely! I learned how to ask for services and how to approach my professors when needed about my disability. I worked to understand and improve my approach throughout the years and was able to reduce the [number] of times I needed to ask my professors for an extension. Jenn helped me work on good self-care and time management. By senior year I did not ask once for an extension, whereas freshman year I was asking nearly every week!"

In response to the second item – "What kinds of jobs are you applying for? Do the limitations associated with your disability concern you as you move into your career? In other words, do you feel that you have developed skills to compensate for your disability in the workplace? Why or why not?" – six (6) of the thirteen (13) students reported they were still in the process of looking for jobs, and four (4) reported they were going to graduate school. Three (3) students had accepted full time positions in their field. One (1) of these three (3) students remarked, "I am not concerned with my disability in the future. I have [learned] to understand what I need to do in order to reduce my symptoms." Another stated, "I have developed better self-care and time management skills with Jenn that will help me keep ahead of my work in the future."

In May, 2015 students with disabilities from the Class of 2014 were contacted to assess perceptions of "real-world" readiness one year after graduation. Out of the fourteen (14) students who were contacted, eight (8) replied (57.1%). When asked if the four years at Providence College had helped them to develop the skills to compensate for their disability in school, all eight (8) answered positively, with one student commenting, "I felt like the OAS taught me so many valuable lessons and tactics which I still use today, both in my academic life [and] in the workplace.

When asked, "Do you feel that you have developed skills to compensate for your disability in the workplace?", all eight (8) students responded positively. One student wrote, "I feel extremely confident in saying that PC did prepare me quite well for the real world." Another replied with, "I think PC definitely helps students prepare for the real world – but if students don’t take advantage of the resources that are provided, there really isn’t much more the school can do."

Results suggest that the OAS and the College are successful in promoting sustainable self-efficacy among students with disabilities. Continue to assess.

### Tutorial Center

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<td>Peer Tutoring</td>
<td>Final Grades Comparison</td>
<td>At the end of Fall 2014, final grades for “regular tutees” (i.e., students who had come for tutoring in a single course 7 or more times) were compared to the class average for the courses in which these students had received tutoring [Note: Class averages were provided by the Assistant Dean of Enrollment Services]. 48.3% (117/242) of regular tutees earned a final grade that was equal to or higher than the class average. 51.7% (125/242) earned a final grade that was lower than the class average. Here is a breakdown of those who earned grades BELOW the average:</td>
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<td>● 32.8% (41/125) were within .33 (or one-third of a letter grade) of the class average;</td>
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<td>● 17.6% (22/125) were within .67 (or two-thirds of a letter grade) of the class average;</td>
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<td>● 26.4% (33/125) were within a full letter grade (or 1.0) of the class average;</td>
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<td>● 23.2% (29/125) were more than a full letter grade below the average, and only one of these students failed his course.</td>
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While it is difficult to draw general conclusions from final grades, as there are many determining factors, these results show that just under half of the regular tutees equaled or surpassed their class average; and of those who scored below the average, 76.8% (96/125) were within a letter grade. While 23.2% fell more than a letter grade below the average, only one of these students actually received an "F." Overall, results continue to suggest that tutoring helps students develop skills and confidence in subjects that they find challenging. Continue to assess.

Wednesday, June 24, 2015
On January 22, 2015 a focus group consisting of five (5) regular tutees (out of 18 who were invited) was held. Four (4) freshmen and one (1) sophomore participated. Our aim was to determine the extent to which tutoring contributes to students’ academic development. The discussion was facilitated by Sister Carolyn Sullivan, Assistant Director for Tutorial Services. Notes from the discussion were recorded by Anthony Mendes, Academic Coordinator for Student Athletes.

When asked, “Do you feel that you succeeded to the degree that you hoped when you first came to the Tutoring Center? Was tutoring an integral part of that success?”, all participants responded that regular tutoring was integral to the success they had attained. For example, one said, “I think the most beneficial part was the confidence I found in myself after the tutoring. Tutoring encouraged me to be more active in my own learning, and I did better in my class as a result.” Another commented, “I probably would not have passed my class without tutoring, and I ended the semester strong.” All five (5) affirmed that tutoring actually helped them to enjoy some of the courses they would not have expected to like.

To determine whether the skills learned in tutoring might have a lasting effect, participants were asked, “Do you think that, by seeing a tutor, you developed any skills or habits that you will use in other classes?” When the participants responded, there was general agreement that skills learned in tutoring sessions would be sustainable. For example, one tutee said, “I’ve learned to look for and decipher hints to solve given problems in a simpler fashion.” Another student realized that “it’s wise to work through as much of the homework as I can because I can answer some of my own questions.” That statement prompted another participant to add, “No matter what I’m taking, I should go through problems or answers out loud; don’t simply keep reading my notes over and over.”

Overall, results continue to suggest that tutoring helps students grow and develop, both within and beyond the courses that they are currently taking. Even though it was disappointing to have only five (5) students respond to the focus group invitation, those who came were very engaged. Crosstalk was dynamic, and all had come for tutoring in several subjects, so their comments reflected a wide range of experience. Efforts to encourage stronger participation will continue.

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<th>Peer Tutoring</th>
<th>Focus Group</th>
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| On January 22, 2015 a focus group consisting of five (5) regular tutees (out of 18 who were invited) was held. Four (4) freshmen and one (1) sophomore participated. Our aim was to determine the extent to which tutoring contributes to students’ academic development. The discussion was facilitated by Sister Carolyn Sullivan, Assistant Director for Tutorial Services. Notes from the discussion were recorded by Anthony Mendes, Academic Coordinator for Student Athletes. When asked, “Do you feel that you succeeded to the degree that you hoped when you first came to the Tutoring Center? Was tutoring an integral part of that success?” all participants responded that regular tutoring was integral to the success they had attained. For example, one said, “I think the most beneficial part was the confidence I found in myself after the tutoring. Tutoring encouraged me to be more active in my own learning, and I did better in my class as a result.” Another commented, “I probably would not have passed my class without tutoring, and I ended the semester strong.” All five (5) affirmed that tutoring actually helped them to enjoy some of the courses they would not have expected to like. To determine whether the skills learned in tutoring might have a lasting effect, participants were asked, “Do you think that, by seeing a tutor, you developed any skills or habits that you will use in other classes?” When the participants responded, there was general agreement that skills learned in tutoring sessions would be sustainable. For example, one tutee said, “I’ve learned to look for and decipher hints to solve given problems in a simpler fashion.” Another student realized that “it’s wise to work through as much of the homework as I can because I can answer some of my own questions.” That statement prompted another participant to add, “No matter what I’m taking, I should go through problems or answers out loud; don’t simply keep reading my notes over and over.”

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<th>Peer Tutoring</th>
<th>Session Evaluations</th>
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| Following each session, the Tutoring Center collects evaluations from tutees. For assessment purposes, results from sessions held in November 2014 were tabulated. In these evaluations 96.7% (238/246) of tutees agreed or strongly agreed with the following statement: “After this tutoring session, I feel more confident in my understanding of the material and better able to do the work on my own.” 3.2% (8/246) were not sure. When tutees were asked to qualify their ratings, several recurring themes emerged: (1) Many tutees commented on the tutors’ ability to rephrase and re-present content in ways that made it more understandable. For example, one student said, “My tutor helped me understand the different formulas needed for my bio lab class by drawing out the figures and numbers on a white board so I was able to see them more clearly.” Another commented, “My tutor helped me draw diagrams on a whiteboard and broke down each step to smaller, simpler steps. She also showed me video clips that we watched together and [reviewed].” An observation that appeared often after sessions was, “My tutor clarified crucial vocabulary terms and used great examples from life situations to help me understand things better.” (2) Other tutees commented on the tutors’ sharing of skills and strategies to help them master material. For example, one student said, “Because of my tutor, I learned how to [separate] the main information from unnecessary information to focus my studying.” In another post-session evaluation a student noted, “I learned that I should print out the course terms and make a study guide with them, which I plan to do tonight!” After a confusing math class, and a helpful tutoring session, another student wrote, “I learned better ways to use the product rule instead of the quotient rule; this was helpful because I like the product rule much more.” (3) Several tutees also recognized the good study tips that their tutors imparted to them. For example, one tutee commented, “My tutor said she | Results continue to suggest that tutoring fosters growth by promoting effective study habits and fostering confidence in students’ ability to work more independently. Continue to assess.
uses sticky notes while reading to write down key details that need to be in [her] notes. I plan to use this strategy as well.” Another student noted, “I will definitely use a whiteboard to diagram for studying in the future; it’s easy to break down steps and illustrate each one when drawing them out like this.”

In Fall 2014, there were three major areas of supplemental instruction: General Biology, General Chemistry, and Organic Chemistry. In November, a standardized evaluation form was distributed to program participants. Altogether, 170 evaluations were returned: 132 from General Biology, 10 from General Chemistry, and 28 from Organic Chemistry.

In these evaluations, 75.3% (128/170) of the participants agreed or strongly agreed with the following statement: “The study group program helped me to feel more confident in my understanding of the material and better able to do the work in this course on my own.” When participants were asked to qualify their ratings, several recurring themes emerged:

1) Many students praised their tutor’s ability to make difficult concepts more understandable. For example, one tutee noted, “The tutor went through the exercises, clearly explained the processes, and made sure we really learned them rather than just telling us the answers.” Another student said, “My tutor stressed the importance of understanding the material vs. just memorizing it, and she showed us the difference.”

2) Other students appreciated the tutors’ knowledge of the material and their ability to recommend a variety of study strategies. As an example, one student commented, “[My tutor] was incredibly knowledgeable and was able to answer any of the questions we had. I was never disappointed.” Another student stated that the tutor “taught us how to zero in on key words or phrases on chemistry exams so we stay focused on what’s being asked.” Similarly, another tutor taught students “how to outline exam expectations, which was key to how we would go about studying.”

3) Others reflected on the general benefits of the intimate learning environment that the group setting offered. Several students learned that “everyone contributes something different in a group, but it all helps with learning.” Especially complimentary and encouraging was the comment, “The tutor loves the subject, so she could explain everything slowly and clearly; she was very patient, humble and understanding with us.”

Students were also asked if they learned general strategies/skills that could be applied in other coursework. 70.6% (120/170) either agreed or strongly agreed that they did learn some transferable skills. 17.6% (30/170) said that they were “not sure,” and 5.9% (10/170) disagreed with the statement. In their qualitative comments students frequently noted learning to break down large problems into smaller, more manageable parts. One of several students also noted, “In the groups we practiced critical thinking skills and these work in all subjects.”

At the end of Fall 2014, forty-seven (47) biology and chemistry students had attended at least five (5) supplemental instruction sessions during the semester. Of that number, 59.6% (28/47) received a final grade that was equal to or greater than the class average. [Note: Class averages were provided by the Assistant Dean of Enrollment Services]. 40.4% (19/47) earned a final grade that was lower than the class average. Here is a breakdown of those who earned grades BELOW the average:

- 42.1% (8/19) were within .33 (or one-third of a letter grade) of the class average;
- 21.1% (4/19) were within .67 (or two-thirds of a letter grade) of the class average;
- 21.1% (4/19) were within a full letter grade (or 1.0) of the class average;

These statistics, coupled with the evaluation responses above, help to affirm the developmental benefits of our supplemental instruction programs. Continue to assess.
• 15.7% (3/19) were more than a full letter grade below the average, and none of these students failed the course.

In addition, final grades for those who came to group sessions on a regular basis (i.e., 5 or more times) were compared to final grades for those who came infrequently (i.e., less than 5 times) or not at all. Results showed that a slightly greater percentage of those who came on a regular basis (59.6% or 28/47) earned grades that were equal to or greater than the class average; the comparative percentage for those who did not come regularly was 57.4% (132/230).

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<td>Career Workshops</td>
<td>Workshop Evaluations</td>
<td>During the 2014-2015 academic year, the Writing Center offered workshops to the general student population on writing effective personal statements and cover letters. 100% of attendees who completed evaluations (n=22) either agreed or strongly agreed that the workshops helped them advance their knowledge of the skill area being covered (19/22 strongly agreed; 3/22 agreed).</td>
<td>Overall, results are positive and suggest that these workshops are effective in helping students develop career-focused writing skills. Continue to assess as necessary and appropriate.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom Workshops</td>
<td>Workshop Evaluations</td>
<td>Throughout 2014-2015, Writing Center administrators also created and facilitated writing workshops tailored to specific courses. During the Fall 2014 semester, writing-to-learn workshops on source integration and citation were created for THL 270 and 380, both taught by Dr. Daria Spezzano. In the Spring 2015 semester, the Writing Center created a writing-to-learn workshop on source integration and citation for a DWC Colloquium, taught by Dr. Tiure Valikeakari and Dr. Margaret Manchester. For assessment purposes, students in the Fall 2014 workshops were asked to fill out workshop evaluations. In these evaluations, 95.7% (22/23) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that “The workshop helped [them] better understand how to use sources effectively in [their] writing.” Only one (1) student disagreed.</td>
<td>Overall, results are positive and suggest that these workshops were effective in helping students develop specific writing skills and strategies. Anecdotal feedback from Dr. Spezzano supports this conclusion. Continue to assess, as necessary and appropriate.</td>
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<td>Face-to-Face Tutoring</td>
<td>Focus group</td>
<td>On March 24, 2015 a focus group consisting of six (6) students who used the Writing Center at least four (4) times during the fall semester was held. The purpose was to determine how well the Center helps students develop writing skills over the course of several sessions. The discussion was facilitated by Will Toner, Assistant Director of the Writing Center. Notes from the discussion were recorded by Rebecca Morse, Writing Center GA, and Anthony Mendes, Academic Coordinator for Student-Athletes. When asked to “describe the expectations you had when you initially came to the Writing Center” and to comment on whether or not those expectations were met, all participants agreed that their expectations were met and, at times, exceeded. For example, one student replied, “I was hoping [a tutor] would help me organize my paper. Any expectations I had were completely surpassed. I really like how [my tutor] helps me organize my essays and gives me ideas for how I can continue working on my essay outside of the tutoring [session]. [Going to the Center] also helps with managing my time and avoiding waiting until the night before to write my paper.” Another student reported, “I didn’t really know what to expect, but everyone recommended it. [The tutors] ask really good questions. Every time I’ve come to the Writing Center I’ve gained something, which has kept me coming back. The results in my papers have also kept me coming back.” A third student stated that his “expectations were met” but that although the</td>
<td>Overall, results are very positive and suggest that tutors are helping students develop writing skills and revision strategies. However, results suggest that efforts must be made to develop writing tutors’ ability to explain grammatical concepts. This concern will be addressed during the Fall 2015 training program.</td>
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tutors know grammar, “they can’t always explain it.”

When asked, “How have you changed as a writer as a result of your work in the Center?”, several students described different invention strategies and revision techniques that they now regularly practice. For example, one student admitted, “I had never made an outline before. Now I outline every paper before I begin writing, and it has made the writing process much easier.” Another student reported, “I’ve learned how to make a really detailed outline, which is important for longer papers. In high school my outlines were simple and not all that helpful. Now I’ve learned how to write down what information I will use and where, and that has made papers more manageable and helped me stay on topic.” Still another said, “[My tutor] and I always read my paper out loud, so if I don’t have time for an appointment, I read my paper out loud on my own and try to catch the mistakes.”

When asked to comment on elements of style that they had learned, one student reported, “I always introduce my quotes now. That was something I was not aware of before coming to the Writing Center.” Another said, “I know how important transitions and topic sentences are now, so I spend more time revising them.”

**Face-to-Face Tutoring**  
**Pre/Post Essay Assessment**

During the Fall 2014 semester, the Writing Center collected papers from twenty (n=20) students who had worked with a writing tutor. Each student contributed a pre- and post-tutoring draft for assessment. In December, two readers (the Assistant Director of the Writing Center and the Writing Center GA) scored each of the drafts using a rubric. The rubric was based on a 15-point scale, including three categories (content, organization and mechanics). The average increase between pre- and post-tutoring drafts was 1.95. When translated to a 100-point scale, scores increased by an average of thirteen (13) points.

Results are quite positive and suggest that several facets of students’ writing improve after working with Writing Center staff.

In the future, the staff should consider portfolio assessment as an alternative to this particular method. Collecting multiple papers from “regular tutees” would allow for more robust assessment of their growth over time.

**Face-to-Face Tutoring**  
**Session Evaluations**

Throughout 2014-2015, the Writing Center conducted 3,706 face-to-face appointments, representing a 30.6% increase from 2013-2014 (2,837 in 2013-2014 vs. 3,706 in 2014-2015). For assessment purposes, results from November 2014 session evaluations were tabulated. In these evaluations (n=257), 93.8% (241/257) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they would “be able to improve [their] papers significantly” after working with a tutor (169/257 strongly agreed; 72/257 agreed). More importantly, 91.1% (234/257) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they “learned strategies or skills that [they could] apply to future writing assignments or projects” (133/257 strongly agreed; 101/257 agreed).

In the qualitative portion of the evaluation, students were asked to respond to the following prompts: “What exactly did your writing tutor do to help you find ways to improve your paper? What exactly did you learn today that you can apply to future writing assignments?”

In response to the first prompt, student feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Many students commented favorably on peer feedback they received during early stages of the writing process. For example, one student admitted, “I came in without much to work with. We went over my ideas and the texts, and then we went over themes and other possible ideas. [My tutor] played devil’s advocate and helped me see all the sides and then helped me come up with a thesis and an outline.” Another student remarked, “I was stumped on finding a way to structure and formulate my paper, and my tutor effectively helped me in doing that. I am now more confident [and] can now make my body paragraphs more organized.” Several students also commented favorably on sentence-level feedback they received at later stages in the writing process. For example, one student wrote, “[My tutor] helped me clean up my paper by pointing out ambiguous pronouns, addressing the passive voice, and helping me fix the wordiness of some of my sentences. She also helped me better understand the purpose...
Another student reported that a tutor “went through the entire paper with me and showed me grammar mistakes, syntax errors, and content issues. It was really helpful because she gave me tips on where to make additions or to eliminate sentences/words. She also gave me helpful tips on how to manage my revisions, such as taking a day of not looking at [the essay] and then re-reading it] to find areas to improve.”

Comments were also quite favorable in students’ responses to the second prompt. Several students commented on gaining an enhanced awareness of specific skills and strategies that have helped them become more successful writers at the college level. For example, one student wrote, “[My tutor] showed me how to break down the prompt in order to be able to develop a thesis that clearly addresses each part of the [assignment]. Now I use this strategy for beginning papers.” Another student commented, “I learned how to introduce quotes and make them flow [from] the preceding sentence.” A few students commented on their improved knowledge of citation after working with a tutor. For example, one student wrote, “I learned how to cite, the differences between primary and secondary sources, and how to use them in a research paper.” Finally, there were a handful of students who shared how the Writing Center has helped with the transition from high school to college level writing. Early in the fall semester, one first-year student simply reported, “I learned how to write a college paper because it is different from anything I’ve written in high school.”

During the Spring 2015 semester, the Writing Center collected ten (n=10) papers from students who had utilized The Write Site. Original submissions were archived and, after receiving feedback from a Write Site tutor, students were asked to submit their revised papers. In April, two readers (the Assistant Director of the Writing Center and the Writing Center GA) scored the original submission and the revised version of each paper using a rubric. The rubric was based on a 15-point scale, including three categories (content, organization, and mechanics). The average increase between pre- and post-tutoring drafts was 1.54 points. When translated to a 100-point scale, scores averaged an increase of 10.3 points.

Submissions to The Write Site are down from a year ago, but evidence suggests that students who use the service still find it helpful in developing their writing skills. It is possible that decreased Write Site numbers have a direct correlation to the significant increases in face-to-face tutoring. Indeed, for most students, face-to-face tutoring remains preferable. The Write Site seems to serve primarily as an option for those students who are unable to visit the Writing Center in person. Even still, efforts to promote the Site must be renewed.

In the qualitative portion of the evaluation, students were asked to provide responses to the following prompts: “In what specific ways were you (or will you be) able to improve the paper that you submitted? What exactly did you learn that you can apply to future writing assignments or projects?” In response to both prompts, the majority of students’ comments were positive, with a few important trends emerging:

Several students commented favorably on Write Site tutors’ ability to help them maintain controlling purposes in their papers. For example, one student wrote, “The response I got back helped me figure out how I could...
better clarify my argument and where I needed to expand my explana-
tion.”  Another student commented, “I was able to improve the structure significantly, allowing my argument to be [more sound].”  Others commented that “clarity issues were addressed,” “organization improved,” and that the “feedback was well-put.”  

A few students noted revision and invention strategies that they would be able to apply to future assignments. For example, one student reported, “I learned a technique for formulating thesis statements that I will be able to use on future papers.”  Another commented, “I learned that I was generally using too many quotes in my writing, and that when I do use quotes, I need to introduce them.”  

Faculty Evaluations  During the Fall 2014 semester, the Writing Fellows Program was continued in eight (8) courses: HIS 100, taught by Dr. Karen Holland, and seven (7) sections of ENG 101, taught by Elliott Stevens (1), Rebekah Greene (2), Amisha Patel (2), and Dr. Elaine Brousseau (2).  Students enrolled in these courses were required to meet with Writing Center staff members (i.e., “Writing Fellows”) on an ongoing basis to discuss drafts of their major papers.  At the end of the semester, faculty members were given the opportunity to evaluate their students’ growth and development as writers.  Four (4) of five (5) faculty members returned evaluation forms, assessing a total of 118/130 students in the program.  

In these evaluations, the instructors indicated that 64.4% (76/118) of students (n=118) had either “greatly improved” or “moderately improved” their writing during the course of the semester.  22.9% (27/118) of their students showed at least some (i.e., “slight”) improvement.  12.7% (15/118) of students showed no improvement at all.  Several of the instructors noted that students who showed little or no improvement were either (a) strong writers from the outset or (b) not fully engaged in the course or the process of revision.  

In response to the question, “How effective, in general, was the program in helping students to improve their papers and their overall writing skills?”, the majority of comments were favorable.  One professor noted, “The program is incredibly effective.  In the past I have found that my ENG 101 students fall into some patterns that go against the writing process, and it’s hard for me to disrupt these patterns because, after all, I see them for only an hour and a half each week.  With the Writing Fellows, I found that I could apply far more pressure on my students to write and revise outside of the classroom, which is where I believe crucial improvements need to be made in order for students to become better writers.”  Another professor pointed out that “[Students are] often more comfortable meeting with a trained peer than with a professor.  That level of comfort made it easier for the student[s] to ask more questions, be more forthcoming, etc.”  Of the five instructors who used the program, only one expressed dissatisfaction with the results, noting that the program “created a lot of additional work for me to simply hold everyone accountable” and that “an optional fellows program would work better for me so students could self-select and remember that ultimately they are accountable for their work and communication with their fellows.”  

In response to the question, “How might the [Writing Fellows] program be improved to yield better results?”, one professor suggested creating “online resources [that] outline how instructors have used their fellows.”  

Results are mostly positive and suggest that the Writing Fellows Program (WFP) helps to promote students’ growth and development as writers, particularly when they are fully engaged.  Further expansion of the Writing Fellows Program is contingent upon funding.  Should the program continue to grow, attention must be paid to building a stronger web presence, complete with overview, contact information, and resources for instructors.  Additionally, increased attention must be paid to educating instructors about the degree of faculty involvement that is required to make the program successful.

Student Self-Evaluations  At the end of the Fall 2014 semester, students who participated in the Writing Fellows Program were given the opportunity to assess their own growth and development as writers.  Of those who responded to the survey (n=120), 94.2% (113/120) agreed or strongly agreed that working with a Writing Fellow “helped [them] to make significant improvements in [their] papers for the course” (48/120 strongly agreed; 65/120 agreed).  

Results are mainly positive and suggest the Writing Fellows Program helps to promote students’ growth and development as writers.  However, student evaluations also suggest that Writing Fellows should be better trained to work with more “advanced” writers who do not see the need for assistance.  Writing Center administrators must equip fellows with strategies to challenge students at all skill levels.  Furthermore, the benefits of the program for all
Meanwhile, 91.7% (110/120) agreed or strongly agreed that working with a member of the Writing Center staff “helped [them] to develop skills that [they] can apply to future writing assignments or tasks” (35/120 strongly agreed; 75/120 agreed). In the qualitative section of the survey, students articulated a variety of transferable skills that they had learned. Prevalent among them were the improved ability to maintain controlling purposes throughout a paper, integrate source material effectively, refine thesis statements, develop transitions and topic sentences, and practice revision techniques (i.e., “reading aloud”) to self-correct. One student commented that her Writing Fellow “didn’t just tell me how to write my paper, she made me really think about what I wanted to say.”

However, a few students reported that the program was not necessary for them. For example, one student said, “I didn’t really need my writing fellow, but it was nice to have another person take a look and see what needed to be fixed.” Another wrote, “My writing fellow didn’t help much. Not because [she wasn’t] good, but rather because I didn’t really need the help.”

Evaluations suggest that the program helps to promote students’ growth and development as writers, but they also affirm that Writing Fellows could be better equipped to work with students who may not, at first, seem fully engaged with the course or writing process. This concern will be addressed during the Fall 2015 training program.

The discrepancy between the fellows’ assessment of students’ transferable skill development (80.8% “greatly” or “moderately” improved) and the faculty assessment of transferable skill development (64.4% “greatly” or “moderately” improved) is notable. However, this incongruity can be explained by the relatively low ratings of one instructor, who was concerned with the “additional work” created by the program. All other instructors collectively reported that 82.5% of their students “greatly” or “moderately” improved their overall writing skills – a percentage that is much more in line with the fellows’ assessment. In comparison, the instructor in question reported that only 19.4% of her students “greatly” or “moderately” improved their writing skills, which brought down the overall faculty rating significantly.