PROGRAM REVIEW 2008-2011

Division: **Learning Resources: Student Success Center (SSC)**

Department or Program: **Writing & Reading Center (WRC**)

Name and Title of Preparer(s):   **Karen Chow & Julie Pesano**

I. Description and Mission of the Program

Which area(s) does this program considerably address (check all that apply):

X_ **Basic Skills**   X Transfer   XCareer/Technical   ___Other (describe)

A. Brief description of program and mission statement

WRC Mission statement: The WRC, one of nine programs integrated within the Student Success Center (SSC), supports De Anza's mission by fostering dynamic, diverse, empowering experience that cultivate and celebrate learning through writing and reading.

WRC Core values: Linguistic and cultural diversity; community involvement; Linguistic competency, mastery, engagement and risk; Non-hierarchical learning and teaching; Respect for all learners and teachers.
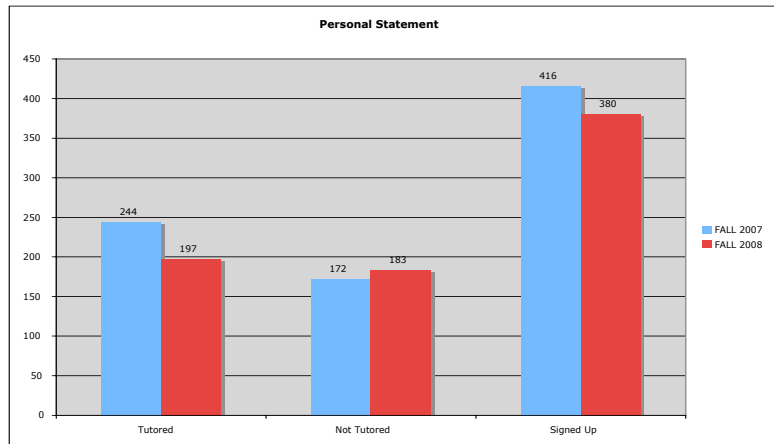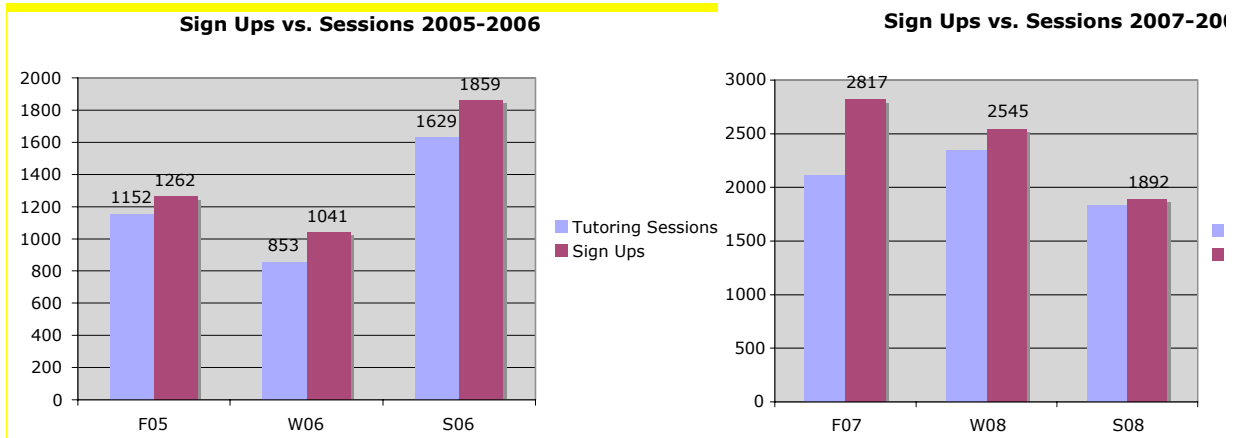
The WRC:
- Provides one on one tutoring on a drop-in basis for students seeking help with their reading and writing.
- Hosts faculty-led workshops on a variety of writing and reading topics, based on student interests and identified student needs
- Hosts events/speakers that discuss and showcase writing, reading, and diversity. Usually these events are co-sponsored by DASB, other campus student success programs, and History/Heritage Month planning committees
- Provides 10 computers that encourage collaboration with and among students and faculty
- Is a space that is actively used as a hub for faculty office hours, meetings for student groups and staff, committees, and divisions. We are a public space for the entire campus and even community to work independently and collaboratively on academic and programmatic work.

Much of the actual instructional work in the WRC is performed by Teaching Assistants (hereinafter referred to as TAs). As in other SSC programs, students depend on the work of TAs.   These classified hourly employees facilitate learning for students in individual and small group settings and are regular members of the classified bargaining unit at De Anza. Working up to 16 hours weekly, they provide excellent attention to students at a very low cost to the district. Combined, up to 47 TAs have worked in the WRC and other SSC programs, but their numbers are down to only 33 because of the current hiring freeze.

B. Summary of the program's main strengths

The WRC has been an accessible student-centered resource for students, faculty, and staff since opening in Fall 2005. We have shown an incremental increase in total students served each year. **Every quarter we log in more student demand than we have staff to accommodate (See internal data charts below).** Our program serves students across all disciplines and divisions.

Sign Ups vs. Sessions 2005-2006

	Tutoring Sessions	Sign Ups
F05	1152	1262
W06	853	1041
S06	1629	1859

Sign Ups vs. Sessions 2007-200

F07	2817	
W08	2545	
S08	1892	

Personal Statement

	FALL 2007	FALL 2008
Tutored	244	197
Not Tutored	172	183
Signed Up	416	380

C.   A summary of the program's main areas for improvement

We will more effectively encourage faculty from various disciplines to actively collaborate with us in:
- holding office hours
- conducting workshops
- encouraging student use, especially among target populations
- participating in our WRC partners program
- helping us to better integrate with other programs and departments, particularly those in which recruit targeted underrepresented students into dedicated courses (such as Puente, First Year Experience, Sankofa, MPS, ¡LEAD!, IMPACT AAPI)

D. Expected outcomes

To help students improve writing and reading skills and ultimately achieve their educational goals.

II. Retention and Growth

A. Access, growth, and retention for all students

The WRC student use is not captured through course enrollments, since we came into existence to meet student demand for a drop-in center that serves any student. Thus, the traditional means of student tracking (WSCH) presents a challenge for us.

Over the years of planning and since opening the center, the WRC leadership (which includes faculty directors, Language Arts Division Deans, SSC director, and steering committee) has been attempting to generate WSCH. These attempts include the creation of the EWRT 190x and 190y courses and the TBA hours. Unfortunately, it has been determined that these are not viable means for WSCH generation.

Our disaggregated target group/ethnicity data represents ONLY the data captured in our STS data from our computer log-in system. The STS data from our computer log-in system should be viewed as an UNDERREPORTING of our student use data. There are multiple reasons for this:

1) Log-in computer and STS server issues (which we work with ETS to address) that periodically come up.
2) Our workshops and events—frequent and well-attended—take place simultaneously with tutoring. We cannot capture the hundreds of students who participate in these educational experiences.
3) ALL of our staff, including tutors, TAs, Instructional Associate (IA), and faculty directors are part-time workers in the WRC. In these first few years of the WRC existence, the directors, with the help of the IA, have been in a constant cycle of generating, training, and refining outcomes with our student staff, tutors, and TAs on a wide variety of issues that include log-in and session procedures/outcomes, and resource and space management.
4) As a busy drop-in center, students are constantly leaving and entering the WRC; our student assistants and other staff do the best they can in capturing every student's ID/use on the log-in kiosk, but still not all students log in.

Taking into account these challenges, we do need to note that log-ins into the kiosk (e.g. STS data) did increase significantly during these periods:

2005-2006 academic year: 1,124
2006-2007 academic year: 2,294
2007-2008 academic year: 2,730

Because of the challenges with collecting accurate data from our kiosk, we have also kept and tallied data from paper sign-in sheets for our internal records.

Based upon both sets of data, we have definitely increased student access to support services and retention. For example, Andrew Lamanque extrapolated from our Winter 2008 STS data that 93% of EWRT 1A students who use the WRC persisted from winter quarter to the following spring quarter, while only 88% of the general student population did so.

Our internal data shows that from 2005 to 2006, there was a dramatic increase in the number of drop-in tutoring sessions conducted—from 1,152 (F05) to 2,068 (F06). This was made possible by a dramatic increase in TA and peer tutors (140 tutoring hours/week), the critical support of an Instructional Associate, as well as more faculty directorship release.

Our internal data also shows that in Fall 2007, tutoring sessions conducted increased to 2,112, despite a dip in available tutoring hours/week.

In Fall 2008, when we saw a more dramatic decrease in available tutoring hours/week (due to a hiring freeze on TAs that prevented us from filling positions that were vacated), the number of students served also fell to 2011.

In summary, the overall number of students we've been able to serve, in ratio to the number of tutors we've had on staff, has increased steadily. This demonstrates that high student demand exists for our drop-in tutoring service, and when we have higher staffing availability, we are able to serve more students.

B. <u>**Access, growth and retention for targeted populations**</u>

At this time, we can only determine numbers and percentages of target populations in the STS data (under-reported, as discussed above).   We requested this analysis on the quarters which we felt were closest to capturing full numbers: Winter 2008 (EWRT 1A only, since we wanted to compare all students enrolled in the same level EWRT) and Fall 2008.

The diversity of students who use the WRC reflects the diversity of our campus, but the percentage of nonwhite students who use the WRC is higher than the percentage seen in the general student population.

WRC student STS data shows for EWRT 1A students <u>only</u> in Winter 2008, we served at or close to campus-wide percentages of the target groups.

Our Fall 2008 demographics of all students (not just EWRT 1A) whom we were able to capture in the STS kiosk shows that we served at, close to, or above campus-wide percentages of the target groups.

C. <u>**How the program addresses the basic skills needs of De Anza students**</u>

Since the majority of the students we serve are basic skills students, we are directly impacting the success and persistence rate of a significant number of these students. By all significant measures, STS data reveals the WRC is having an impact on Basic Skills student success and persistence.

Usage numbers from Winter 2008 STS data show that 80% of students who are enrolled in EWRT 1A (first transfer-level composition course) in the WRC have had previous enrollment in Language Arts Basic Skills courses. In contrast, only 52% of the overall EWRT 1A student population has been previously enrolled in Language Arts Basic Skills courses.

A measure of basic skills student success is whether students pass EWRT 1A. 95% of students who use the WRC passed EWRT 1A, while 78% of the general student population in EWRT 1A passed this course. Also, 93% of students who use the WRC persisted from the Winter 2008 quarter to the following Spring quarter, while only 88% of the general student population did so.

III.   Student Equity

A.   What progress or achievement has the program made toward decreasing the student equity gap?

WRC has been actively reaching out to and collaborating with programs in both student services and instruction to increase the numbers of underrepresented students who use our services and our space. For example, we have collaborated with Puente program to host a variety of events, including the Dia de los Muertos celebration and altar display, a storyteller program, a Latina scholarship information session/workshop. With ¡LEAD! and Outreach, we have collaborated on organizing and hosted a Diversity Training workshop for tutors in WRC and Tutorial, as well as student workshops for Latino Outreach conferences and literary/author events. With ICCE, as a community partner, we hosted a Youth Empowerment Conference as well as other guest speaker events & workshops such as those featuring Community artist in residence Regie Cabico.   First Year Experience (FYE) has used the space to hold an end of quarter celebration. We've also worked with: African Ancestry Association to host events for African American History Month (such as African American Read-In and Langston Hughes reading events); Women's History Month (Vagina Monologues Reading); Latino Heritage Programming (author events, such as Paul Flores, Norma Cantu); APA Heritage (APAX) programming (author events Maxine Hong Kingston, launch of APA student literary & arts journals). Red Wheelbarrow has also hosted public conversations with featured authors/writers such as African American slam poet Saul Bellow.

B. In what ways will the program continue working toward achieving these goals?

We are continuing our efforts to achieve student equity, specifically with the First Year Experience (FYE) program. During Winter 2009, we implemented two new activities that we hope to continue:

1) We sent our Instructional Associate and a peer tutor (both of whom are Filipino American) to the Friday classes to describe WRC services and encourage students to use them. The peer tutor also returned to the FYE class as a designated tutor to work with students on their final research paper on immigration issues. Not only did this enable students to get feedback on their work, but it hopefully encouraged students who are hesitant to use the WRC to visit us in the future. We will also outreach to the IMPACT AAPI grant funded program to provide tutoring, workshop, and/or event services.
2) We held a student support services workshop, led by peer tutors, that was specifically pitched to underrepresented students (Filipino, Latino, and African American), was supported by Isang PUSO (Filipino American) and ¡LEAD! (Latin@ leadership) student clubs, and featured Academic Counselor Randy Claros, and Financial Aid representative. This workshop attracted over 50 participants and was written up in *La Voz*.

C. What challenges exist in the program in reaching such goals?

Our main challenge is lack of funding for staffing, including student staff, tutors, full- time Instructional Associate, and a full-time Director position. Currently, the WRC spends much of its efforts in applying for grant or DASB money just to keep our doors open. With more funded time, we could do more outreach and serve more students.

IV.   Budget Limitations

A. Limited Funding and Critical Resources

Currently, we are funded by one time monies from BSI, Title III, and DASB allocations, so we have no definite funds from year to year to stay open. We think that the only way to make real progress and achieve our long-term goals is to have institutional funding for adequate tutoring, staffing, and faculty director positions.

We also have limits in how many workshops we can offer. In comparison, Skills and the Listening and Speaking Lab (LSL) are able to offer more consistent workshops because they compensate the facilitators. In order to offer more workshops, we also need to provide some compensation to our faculty who are currently volunteering their time.

In addition to funding, space is also critical. If SSC programs were provided contiguous, well-designed space, they could improve their program delivery and student access in the following ways:

> * Cost savings and greater efficiency through staff job-sharing
> * Shared use of small group rooms, with increased line-of site supervision
> * Extended hours that programs could stay open due to shared staff
> * Improved control of noise and traffic through use of small group rooms
> * Improved access for basic skills students, offering a one stop-shop referral system

B. Describe the consequence to students and the college in general if the program were eliminated or significantly reduced.

Without the WRC, thousands of students would not have the support services in reading and writing they need to be successful. The federal Department of Education, through the Title III Grant, has recognized that the success of students at the developmental level depends on integrating communities of students with academic support. Similarly, the BSI work at De Anza has revealed a deep-seated demand for additional and better-integrated academic support. The Title III and BSI committees recognize the WRC's role in helping our college fulfill these federal and state mandates. Without the WRC, De Anza's objectives to increase student retention and success for developmental and underrepresented would be seriously compromised.

V.   Additional Comments

- **Relationships with Other Programs:**

  The WRC collaborates with each of the other 8 SSC programs, even sharing staff. The Instructional Associate that we share with LSL, Alerie Flandez, actually has her assignment in LC138, but reorganization of duties has allowed her to work in the WRC and LSL. We also collaborate with other programs to build a more effective and efficient service to students. In addition to the collaborations mentioned in Section III.A., we also have strong connections to Tutorial and Skills in L47 through payroll, shared tutor staffing, and tutor training. With LSL we share instructional resources and with Readiness we share TA staffing. This collaboration allows us to support each other in our individual program goals.

- **State and Federal Mandates:**

  BSI and Title III are federal mandates that De Anza has obligations to meet. The Writing and Reading Center (WRC) is playing a major role in helping the college to meet those mandates, since the leadership of the program as well as the tutoring expenses are met to a large degree through these two grants.

- **Comparable Programs at other Institutions:**

  In our research on Writing Centers from the Northern California Writing Center Conference, Writing Center Discussion Boards, and on-site Writing Center Visits, we have seen that other two and four-year colleges have full time faculty directors and compensate additional faculty for time devoted to tutoring and giving workshops. (Example models are City College of San Francisco, College of San Mateo, CSU Long Beach.)