

UWC Consultant Roadmap

Mission

The University Writing Center empowers students, faculty, and staff to develop writing and critical thinking skills by providing personalized consultations, resources, and programs that strengthen writing across campus.

Vision

To be a leader for the JMU community and the writing centers discipline as they use writing to engage with ideas and audiences.

Values

Personalized Learning – We consider the variety of learning styles and collaborative teaching methods in working with writers.

Inclusivity – We strive to be a safe, comfortable place where people of all backgrounds and groups are treated with respect and kindness.

Mindfulness – We strive to be focused and nonjudgmental in our work by cultivating awareness of mental activity, managing stress, and reducing distraction.

Critical Thinking – We inspire and practice careful analysis, synthesis, evaluation, and expression of ideas.

Connection – We strive to build relationships through understanding, authenticity, and compassion.

Tutoring Excellence

- Balance the writer's requests and priorities with attention to global concerns (i.e., purpose, audience, thesis, organization)
 - Foster the writer's autonomy, voice, confidence, and ownership of the paper
 - Explain clearly the rationale for changes
 - Avoid making assumptions about a writer's intentions, knowledge and effort
 - Manage time effectively so that the session's goals are met
 - Select appropriate strategies; exhibit flexibility, according to the writer's needs
 - Fade out in order to grant the writer autonomy and empower him/her
 - Focus on future application, transferable skills and writing terminology/concepts
 - Challenge writers to apply and demonstrate their learning
 - Make use of physical and/or online resources
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Elements in an Effective UWC Session

Establish rapport

Diagnose

- Factors: intake form, past session reports, assignment prompt, client's concerns, client's answers to broad questions
- Collaboratively set agenda for session

Apply tutoring techniques

- Questions that help the student see issues with idea development, organization, source integration, etc
- Ask for a "tour" of the paper
- Reverse outline
- Note-taking during your discussion
- Reading out loud (caution)
 - Consider "point-predict" method in Rebecca Block's study
 - Works well if you are exclusively working with later order concerns
- Identify and use online resources, handbooks, style manuals
- Ask colleagues for help
- Fading, scaffolding

Prompt a demonstration of learning

- Self-correction
- Substantive revision
- Articulation of changes or the need for change
- Use of metalanguage, new writing terminology
- Ways to prompt

Assess /Check-in

- Is this helping you? How do you feel about the paper now?
- Do you want to continue or focus on something else?

Closing/Look ahead

- What now?
- Identify clear next steps.
- The to-do list
- Other resources
- Suggest returning to UWC for another appointment after revision
- Re-establishment of rapport, encouragement
- Consider referrals to ELLS, ODS, Counseling Center, CAP