

UWC Fall 2020 Email Archive

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Monday, December 14, 2020, 10:42 AM: Wrapping Up and Looking Ahead

Dear UWC:

Thank you for all of your hard work this semester. I know it has been difficult to say the least. At this point, I can't even remember what normal felt like, but we have found a way to continue our mission under these conditions, which is impressive. I appreciate your flexibility and dedication through all of this. It looks like we will finish out the semester with about 1200 appointments and very satisfied clients, according to surveys. Not bad, all things considered.

I also wanted to recognize Skylar and Amanda, two great consultants who are graduating this semester. We are sad to see you go, and I wish we could have done an in-person send-off. On the flipside, please welcome our newly hired consultants: Sarah, Lauren, Ayana, Edana, and Bailey. Welcome to the UWC community!

Now, some important information and dates for the spring semester. As you probably guessed, the UWC will remain completely online.

- The UWC will open on 1/25/21 (only faculty and GAs on the schedule).
- The opening all-staff meeting will be 1/29/21 at 2:30 p.m.
- Peer consultants will start consultations 2/1/21.
- Last date of operations for spring will be 5/6 with peer consultants stopping 4/29.

Lastly, due to the reduced pro dev hours and being physically separated, it has been more difficult to gauge how things are going for you. I wanted to give you a chance to give us some feedback. I know you are busy, but if you could take a study break complete these two surveys before 12/18 (or shortly thereafter 😊). Your input really helps us make decisions about the UWC.

- survey about your experience with UWC faculty: <https://jmu.questionpro.com/t/ARcJIZkHPa>
- survey about your experience with WC Online and online consulting: http://jmu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_b8bclaJQrlN3SZv

Hope you all have a restful and safe winter break!

Jared Jay Featherstone, MFA
Associate Director, University Writing Center
Associate Professor, School of Writing Rhetoric and Technical Communication

Wednesday, November 11, 2020, 2:17 PM: Timesheet Clarification

For those who fill out UWC timesheets, I just wanted to let you know that you'll be copied on messages from me to the admin team, approving your timesheet. I'm going to start this new step this pay period so that you have a confirmation that I received and approved the timesheet. We've had a few instances in which people thought they had submitted timesheets, and they hadn't gone through. If you haven't seen my confirmation by the morning after the deadline, please check in.

Jared Jay Featherstone, MFA
Associate Director, University Writing Center
Associate Professor, School of Writing Rhetoric and Technical Communication

Monday, November 9, 2020, 10:21 AM: Keep It Up!

Dear UWC,

I hope you are doing well as we move into the last third of the semester. We had a great (for Covid times) October with 400 appointments! Even more importantly, considering everything going on in the nation and world, you made an impact on JMU writers. Please see the client comments at the end of this message.

Second item of business. As you know, registration is starting. I am asking for your help in recruiting the next generation of UWC consultants to enroll in WRTC 336 (taught by me) this spring. If you have any friends or classmates you think would make excellent UWC consultants, please encourage them to enroll in the course. In particular, as part of the UWC and the Learning Center's ongoing anti-racism efforts, we are looking to diversify our staff. We welcome applicants across all cultures and communities, including BIPOC, multilingual, and LGBTQIQA. You can help recruit in these ways:

1. Make an announcement in your class. Direct people to this page: <https://www.jmu.edu/uwc/opportunities/consulting.shtml>
2. Email the student about the opportunity and copy me.
3. Posting to social media: <https://www.jmu.edu/uwc/opportunities/consulting.shtml>

Once again, thanks for all of your contributions to the UWC. You might clap as you read these deserved client comments, as we would in our f2f UWC meetings:

- After 5 sessions with Kevin Jefferson working on a Personal Statement for law school, I feel immensely more confident about my statement and my ability to handle future similar assignments. Kevin takes his time and considers each word and sentence, and I am very grateful for the time and energy he has put into helping me. The Writing Center is such an amazing resource and I am so happy that it is here for students.
- Declan was great and I thought he was really helpful handling all the things I needed help with in my narrative
- Declan was helpful, listened to all my questions and comments, and was easy to work with. I was pleased to work with him and I feel my writing is stronger now.
- I found Lucy to be incredibly helpful and knowledgeable. She helped me to understand what was being asked of me and write in a way that was uniquely me.

- I have no other comments besides saying that I found my session extremely helpful and my tutor both knowledgeable and insightful.
- I really appreciated Taralyn's feedback. She focused on what I asked and helped with citations. We went a few minutes over and she was super helpful until the end. Love JMU WC
- I'm glad that the writing center can also help with faculty research articles.
- It was a great and helpful experience!
- Jay was great! Helped me with my professional statement in a way that really guided me through the process rather than telling me exactly what to change. Will definitely make another appointment if needed!
- JULIA IS THE BEST.
- Lacie made navigating the writing center effortless! She helped me understand how the writing center works and gave me excellent incite about my writing. Her comments helped me with my current writing assignment and can help me with my writing in the future! Thank you!
- Mary was very helpful with my reference page I was having some concerns about. She helped me to understand the changes I need to make.
- Michael is amazing & so helpful:)
- My experience was very positive! My tutor was warm, helpful, and genuinely seemed interested in assisting me. I will definitely be using the Writing Center again :)
- My tutor was very helpful, and also very sweet. I really appreciated her help!
- Rudy was amazing to work with, he took the thoughts that I had in my head that I was having difficulty in translating onto paper, and presented them with ease. He is an incredible resource.
- Rudy was awesome! He was so helpful!!
- She was awesome
- She was very helpful, we appreciate her feedback!
- She was very kind and very helpful!
- Thank you!
- Very helpful and professional

Jared Jay Featherstone, MFA
 Associate Director, University Writing Center
 Associate Professor, School of Writing Rhetoric and Technical Communication

Tuesday, October 20, 2020, 7:58 PM: Scholarship Applications

Dear UWC,

You are likely to see students coming in with application letters for the Goldwater, Critical Language, and other scholarships. In order to help you feel prepared for these sessions, Rudy has created a new module in our Canvas Pro Dev site. If you have unbooked sessions this week, please begin reading through the module. If you notice that an applicant for these scholarships has booked a session with you, you can use this module to prepare for the session.

Hope your sessions are going well,

----Jared

Jared Jay Featherstone, MFA
 Associate Director, University Writing Center
 Associate Professor, School of Writing Rhetoric and Technical Communication

Monday, October 12, 2020, 3:28 PM: Checking In and New Tips for Your Sessions

Dear UWC,

I hope everyone is feeling healthy and hopeful as the leaves begin to fall. It was great to reconnect with some of you during my small group meeting last week. If your group hasn't met yet, you will probably be meeting soon. Please take the opportunity to reconnect with your colleagues in real time and ask questions if you need any guidance in your sessions.

To that end, I've heard from a few of you that managing the 30 minute sessions was a bit difficult, at least initially. In order to help you navigate these short sessions, Lucy has created a set of guidelines that can be found here: <https://www.jmu.edu/uwc/tutor-resources/online-consulting-roadmap.shtml> (scroll down once you click on it).

Also, if you haven't had to use WebEx in a session yet and you aren't very familiar with it, you might want to review that section of the Canvas module. The COB 300 group projects are spilling over into the regular UWC schedule because ALL of the hours in the special course-embedded schedule have filled. I also recommend reading over our excellent resources on group writing in advance of your sessions: <https://www.jmu.edu/uwc/link-library/writing-process/group-writing.shtml>.

On that note, we still do have a bit of room in the main schedule. If you don't mind, please ask your professors if you can make a quick announcement to your classmates this week (either in the synchronous course meeting or Canvas) to remind them that the UWC is ready to help them with their writing assignments. With so much online communication going on these days, we are finding that people need multiple reminders. This will help keep our numbers up.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that we are doing our writing center work during very difficult and uncertain times. Please take some time for self-care and reach out if you are having a tough time. I'm hoping the UWC community can still be a source of support and sanity, even if we are online right now. Ultimately, we care about your wellbeing first.

Thanks for all you do.

Jared Jay Featherstone, MFA
Associate Director, University Writing Center
Associate Professor, School of Writing Rhetoric and Technical Communication

Monday, September 21, 2020, 8:25 PM: Preparing for Scholarship Applications and Industrial Design Sessions

Dear UWC,

Just giving you a heads up that you are likely to start seeing students who are working on applications for Gilman and Fulbright scholarships. These are somewhat like personal statements, but they are also different in some ways. Please see the attached references during your on-the-clock downtime so you can be prepared for sessions that involve Fulbright or Gilman applications.

Rudy has done a lot of work with our prestigious scholarships office, so he is a great person to ask if you have questions. Kevin will be putting these resources up on our [consultant resources page](#).

In addition, you are going to see students from Audrey Barnes' Industrial Design course. They have to write 1-page narratives that will show the context and need for an invented, wearable, technology product. I gave a presentation to that class today, and they are required to visit the UWC. For these, you'll want to pay attention to things like descriptive detail, world-building (these are future worlds), and the balance of scene vs summary. In addition, you'll want to help them evaluate whether the story effectively shows the context and need for their invented product. You can ask me if you have questions about these sessions. Please review the new online proof-of-visit procedures: <https://www.jmu.edu/uwc/tutor-resources/consultant-field-manual.shtml#proof>.

Let us know if you have questions.

Jared Jay Featherstone, MFA
Associate Director, University Writing Center
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Wednesday, September 2, 2020, 12:16 PM: A Few Reminders

Dear UWC,

Just a reminder that our full schedule starts 9/7. Please recheck the schedule in WC Online to make sure you are aware of your shifts. Also, remember that you should complete the Online Consulting Training Module. You'll account for this on your next timesheet. Enter the module hours and our all-staff meeting as 1-5 p.m. on Tuesday 9/1. If you have any questions, let me know.

Please note that students from the WRTC 336 class will be booking sessions with you as part of their apprenticeship. Following that, they will be contacting you about session observations. Remember that you need to ask the client's permission before starting. Also, you can request that the observer mute their mic and close their video during the session.

Hope to see you soon (probably online),

---Jared

Jared Jay Featherstone, MFA
Associate Director, University Writing Center
Associate Professor, School of Writing Rhetoric and Technical Communication

Wednesday, August 26, 2020, 6:50 PM: All-Staff Meeting Friday at 2:30!

Dear UWC,

I just wanted to remind you that we will meet this Friday from 2:30 to 3:30 in my WebEx conference room: <https://jmu.webex.com/meet/featheji>. This is a mandatory all-staff meeting. We have a lot to cover during this meeting. I am pasting the agenda below so that you have some idea of what we will cover. You might copy that to your own file if you'd like to take some notes. Looking forward to seeing everyone in WebEx-land!

Introductions and Check-in

- New undergrad consultants: Luke, Julia, Faith, Catherine, Declan, Jay
- new GA: Lacie Knight
- Re-introduce Lucy
- Recruitment for 4 new Course-Embedded Consultants for COB 300

- Heads up about Fulbright (Meredith will be sending applicants our way, their deadline is in October) (Rudy)

Online Consulting Best Practices

- When in doubt, go back to our mission, vision, values: https://www.jmu.edu/uwc/about/mission_vision_and_values1.shtml
- Session length: 30 or 60
- Session reports, how to fit them in
- Downtime, 5 minutes per report

UWC training module

- To be completed asynchronously between 9/1 and 9/7; must complete before first shift
- This will take about three hours to do it well
- Deepen expertise in online consulting
- Developing a personalized reference document (Google doc, Word doc, etc) that you will use in addition to our Online Consulting Roadmap
- The three hours you devote to the module plus our opening all staff meeting will go on the 9/1-9/15 timesheet
- Mark them on Tuesday, 9/1 from 1-5 p.m. (to help me keep track)

Scheduling, Timesheets, Administrivia

- WC Online schedule is live! Check your shifts.
- Consultant Workstations in the UWC!
- Small offices 1132 and 1122
- Lucy's office 1126
- Can work in those locations with the door closed, unmasked
- survey coming soon
- Client workspace (limited)
- A few client workspaces in the event that someone shows up, makes an appointment, and can't get to a private space in time
- Also providing space/equipment/internet if a student does not have them
- Consultants can use the UWC as a study space during business hours if there is room to remain distant and you are wearing your mask
- No eating in the LC this semester!
- New consultant bios!
- Proof of visit: Before the close of the session, take a screenshot of your session that includes time and date. One way to do this is to ask the consultant to verify the session in the chat window. They will type a sentence like this: "I certify that Jeff Smith participated in a 40 minute writing consultation on May 23, 2020."
- Timesheet submission protocol
- Continue the email submission system we used in spring
- Be on time!!!!
- This opening all-staff meeting will be included on your first timesheet after we open 9/1-9/15
- Put the all-staff meeting and your online consulting module hours on the timesheet for Tuesday, 9/1 from 1-5 p.m. (to help me keep track)
- Shift cancellation, illness, leave time
- Professional development
- Mentors for new consultants
- Lucy's "Office Hours" - 10:30-12:30 on Tuesdays (Lucy's webex room: <https://jmu.webex.com/meet/malenklb>)

- GroupMe, add new people, volunteer to post administrative announcements

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Monday, August 3, 2020, 11:52 AM: The UWC Needs Your Input!

Dear UWC,

I hope you are all staying healthy and hopeful this summer. As we begin to get ready for a very uncertain fall semester, I need to know how you are feeling about our reopening. Please take a few minutes to complete the following survey by the **end of the day Wednesday**. Learning Centers faculty are working together to make decisions that align with JMU's policies but also enable you to feel safe. In order to do that, we need your input.

<https://forms.gle/dKnpJKLfQ8B2Dzcd6>

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