UWC
Spring 2020
Email Archive

April 27, 2020, 11:22 AM: Almost Done!

Dear UWC,

Thanks again for adapting and continuing to serve the JMU community this semester. We have a lot of sessions booked today, and we've been much busier recently. I am still waiting to find out the budget for our summer schedule, but I will keep you posted.

A few reminders. Only faculty and GAs are working during finals week. Please file session reports for all of your sessions (we need those survey stats!).

I wanted to give a special shoutout to our graduating consultants. I know this has been a strange way to end your UWC and JMU career. I was thinking that, if graduation does happen on schedule in August, perhaps there's a way for us to gather graduating UWC-ers during that time. I will be in touch about that. Otherwise, please feel free to come back and visit as soon as it is safe. For now, I wanted to give everyone the opportunity to give your own shout out/toast to our graduating consultants, so I am listing them below (please let me know if you should be on this list or if you are on this list in error). You can use GroupMe, email, or social media to send a note to these fine consultants. We are sad to see you go.

> Amanda Bortell
> Keiva Brannigan
> Carly Guido
> Austin Jones
> Gabby Katz
> Shanna Kelly
> Nico Penaranda
> Rochelle Podolsky
> Elizabeth Ren
> Caroline Ryan
> Caroline Shawver
> Christine Swartz
> Serina Tehranchi
> Kerry Smith
> Hannah Snyder

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

Wednesday, April 15, 2020, 11:01 AM: Canceling Friday's All-staff Meeting

Dear UWC,

Thank you for all of your amazing work. You have adapted to ever-changing conditions and continued to be a positive influence on JMU students. You have kept me informed of technology and client issues, which helps me respond to the center's needs. You've continued to mentor incoming consultants, despite multiple hurdles. I am grateful to be working and, even better, to be working with an inspiring group of colleagues.

Looks like traffic is picking up a bit this week, which is nice to see. Speaking of this week, the all-staff meeting we had schedule for Friday is cancelled. I think it is best to handle pro dev in small groups, and we have been asked to save money wherever we can.

Several of you have expressed interest in summer work. I am still waiting to hear if our budget proposal was approved. Once I received approval, I will notify those of you who expressed interest and begin putting together a schedule.

We are still planning to honor our excellence awardees for this year and also our graduating consultants. Stay tuned for details on that.

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

Wednesday, April 8, 2020, 9:01 PM: UWC Faculty Office Hours

Dear UWC,

One of the many things we miss about our normal, pre-pandemic UWC is being able to interact with each other regularly. Though we are continuing the small pro dev groups, we thought there was still some disconnect. In order to try to reestablish some sense of community and enable the casual mentoring that makes the UWC such a great place, the UWC faculty are opening up office hours for drop-in questions or conversation. You can come with a question or just come to vent. You can come to just talk to some humans who aren't your family. Here's the rundown:

- Jared: Mondays 10-11 - https://jmu.webex.com/meet/feathejj
- Rudy: Thursdays 11-12 - https://jmu.webex.com/meet/barretrl
- Kevin: Wednesdays 12:30-1:30 - https://jmu.webex.com/meet/jefferkx
  or https://jmudukes.webex.com/meet/jefferkx (he'll be in one of the rooms)

You can, of course, email us anytime, but we wanted to offer these hours for real-time interaction.

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

Monday, April 6, 2020, 4:55 PM: Missed Appointments

Dear UWC,

We've had a few incidents in which a consultant inadvertently missed an appointment because it was booked just before or after the hour. Please note that you should be logged in to WC Online for the duration of your shift. Also, you should refresh the screen periodically to make sure someone has not booked the appointment. Please keep me informed of technical issues (whether they are on your end or the client's).

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

Thursday, April 2, 2020, 3:09 PM: Online Tutoring Madness

Dear UWC,

Thank for keeping us alert about technical issues with WC Online. I suspect a number of these are on the user end, related to audio preferences and firewalls. However, I know some of these issues just seem to be glitches in the system. I'm guessing that, with so many writing centers going fully online, the system may be under some strain. In addition, you probably saw the UWC's bulk email that went out to student yesterday. We may see an increase in traffic.
Here are two things we'll try in regard to the tech issues.

1. Rudy is going to add some basic tech information (audio/firewalls) to the confirmation email users receive when they book an appointment. We'll also suggest that the log in and get familiar with the interface PRIOR to their session start time.
2. If things go awry during your session, my strong suggestion is to have the client email you their document and then meet you in WebEx to discuss. In case you didn't know, you each have a personal WebEx room with a unique address. Just log into WebEx via the student portal: jmudukes.webex.com

Once you are logged in, you'll see an address below your name. You can just send that address to your client. Many students are now getting familiar with WebEx (because many courses are using it), so we may have fewer tech issues. Just in case you have issues in WC Online, you might want to give the student your WebEx room address at the start of the session ("in case we get disconnected").

Also, please don't allow these issues to stress you out. We have enough going on. Do your best to uphold UWC standards for your sessions. Do your best with the tech. Keep us informed of issues you are having, and we will try to help. I thank you all for rolling with these changes and continuing to fulfill our mission of empowering student writers.

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

Thursday March 19, 6:04 PM: Getting Ready for Monday

Dear UWC,

As I mentioned in my last message, the UWC faculty wanted to provide you with additional guidance for online sessions. As you now know, we will be online for the remainder of the spring semester, so it is even more important that we develop our online consulting skills. That said, we understand there is a learning curve for those new to online consulting. Do your best, use the new Online Consulting Roadmap, and please check in with me or your small group faculty mentor when you have questions. Be sure to sign in to your online session a few minutes before the start time. If the student logs in and you aren't there, they may just sign off.

Before your first online shift, please read through the following page: https://www.jmu.edu/uwc/tutor-resources/online-consulting-roadmap.shtml. You might also keep the page open during sessions for quick referencing. The idea was to give you some concise guidance that can be immediately applied. Also, you might consider ways to preserve the strong community you have built. For instance, you might have the GroupMe or another chat group open to talk to other consultants on your shift (please don't chat during your actual sessions).

In other news, all-staff meetings will be converted to small group meetings. It will just be to unmanageable to handle in WebEx with JMU's limited bandwidth. Your faculty mentor should be in touch with you soon to make arrangements. I'm brainstorming about ways to roast/toast the graduating consultants--please message me with ideas about how to do this virtually.

We will be back in touch about mentorships and hiring interviews. Please keep yourselves and others healthy and safe.

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

Saturday, March 14, 2020, 3:36 PM: UWC Operations [after Spring Break]

Dear UWC,

I hope everyone is feeling healthy and optimistic. You've now heard from JMU and from the Learning Centers. Fortunately for you and the UWC clients, we are well-equipped to move our services online. Here are some details:

During the week of Monday 03/16 to Sunday 03/22, the UWC will not be having any writing consultations. You are not scheduled to work during this time.

When we return on Monday 03/23, the UWC will re-open in an online-only capacity. Each of you will have your scheduling options changed to "Online Appointments Only" and will keep the same hours as your existing in-person shifts. More details to follow on shifts and expectations, but, for now, just expect to work your normally scheduled shifts online.

For many of you this will be your first time online tutoring, consult the resources in the UWC consultant field manual for detailed instructions and best practices. In addition, we will create a Canvas module with additional resources for online tutoring. Feel free to reach out to faculty or colleagues with questions.

The university's [official communications](#) have suggested that the online-only model will last until at least April 5th. We will have additional information for you as we know more.

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

Tuesday, February 18, 2020, 11:21 AM: Two Reminders

Consultants, please consider attending the following Learning Centers workshop this Friday: Wondering how to translate your LC skills to future employers or graduate programs? Curious as to how your skills can transfer to future careers? **The Learning Centers is hosting a learning opportunity on February 21 from 2-3 in our space to talk about how you can market the skills you have learned in your LC job to future employers and graduate programs.**

Laura Hickerson, the Assistant Director for Employer Engagement from Career and Academic Planning will be joining us for this conversation. Back in the fall we sent out a survey to all LC student staff asking what you wanted to learn and this was one of the hottest topics. We hope that you'll turn out for this valuable opportunity!

Also, please be more vigilant in checking your hourly projection sheet before your turn in your timesheet. I had several timesheet errors in which the hours on the timesheet did not match the hours on the projection sheet for the pay period. Each time this happens, I have to contact you to figure out why they numbers are different. This takes up time, especially when I have over 40 timesheets to process. Also, please use the UWC Timesheet from the Learning Centers Canvas page (it's at the bottom of the list after you click "Files" from the left side navigation). It should have "Jared Featherstone" printed under supervisor printed name. This saves me a lot of time and carpal tunnel problems

Hope you are having a good week!

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

Monday, January 27, 2020, 10:36 AM: Hourly Projection Sheets and Session Reports

Colleagues, I just want to remind you that the hourly projection sheets are past due. If you haven't turned yours in, please do so by 5 p.m. today. Also, as we enter the first full-schedule week, remember to prepare for your sessions by reading past session reports and remember to file a session report for every session you conduct. Thanks!

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

Tuesday, January 14, 2020, 1:18 PM: Pizza (and other first meeting notes

Colleagues, I hope your break was restorative and pleasant.

Indeed, we will have pizza for all, so please arrive with an appetite. Also, please bring your planners, calendars, laptops--whatever you use to keep track of your schedule. We'll be

scheduling small group meetings, going over important dates, and, if time permits, completing the hourly projection sheets.

New hires (people who were just hired in the fall), please send a photo (high resolution, just you, no red cups) and a short bio. Check out the Meet the Team page for examples. Consider including any information clients might find useful (such as fluency in another language or experience in particular writing genres).

Looking forward to seeing everyone Friday!

Jared Jay Featherstone, MFA
Associate Director, University Writing Center
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