

UWC Spring 2021 Email Archive

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Wednesday, April 14, 2021, 10:11 AM: Important Survey

Dear UWC

In Fall 2020, spurred by a national racial reckoning that intensified in the summer of 2020, the Learning Centers (LC) adopted a Commitment to Antiracism (available at [this link](#)). In order to better understand how we are fulfilling that commitment and where growth and improvement are needed, we have developed this racial climate survey for student employees of the LC.

Racial climate encompasses a wide array of attitudes, behaviors, policies, norms, and culture that influence the sense of belonging, comfort, and welcome that Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) perceive and experience on campus. We are particularly interested in knowing how the racial climate in the LC impacts your interactions with LC faculty, professional staff, student employees, and clients. Although this survey is focused on race, we also want to emphasize that the LC condemns all forms of discrimination and values the many forms of diversity that exist on campus and in our programs.

Your responses to this survey will be anonymously obtained and recorded through QuestionPro, a secure online survey tool. All data will be stored in a secure location accessible only to the research team. The results of this research may be presented to student employees, administrative staff, and faculty of the JMU Learning Centers; to JMU administrators; at professional conferences; and in scholarly manuscripts. Aggregate data will be presented representing averages or generalizations about the responses as a whole. Open-ended responses will be described holistically, or if shared individually, stripped of any potentially identifying information. Final aggregate results will be made available to participants upon request.

We estimate that the survey will take 15-30 minutes to complete. If you are willing to help us with this important work by sharing your perspective, please access the survey at this link: (*Editor's note: talk to Lucy*). Additionally, if you have any questions or concerns about this project, please reach out to Lucy Bryan Malenke, LC faculty member and the head of the research team, at malenklb@jmu.edu.

With Gratitude,

Jared

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

Wednesday, April 7, 2021, 11:43 AM: Vaccine Clinic and Other Reminders

Dear UWC

I hope everyone is enjoying the warm weather and feeling more hopeful. I know I am. On that note, you should have received an email this morning inviting you to participate in Friday's vaccine clinic at the Convocation Center. They have opened it up to student employees, which is great news!

A few other reminders:

- It's time to help us recruit students for the fall WRTC 336 course, which will be taught by Kurt Schick. If you have any friends who might be interested in becoming a UWC consultant, please encourage them to email me.
- Let's also note that we are getting to the point in the semester in which we will see higher levels of stress in clients. Remember to be as understanding as you can, allow them to vent if necessary, and, if applicable, alert them to other campus resources. Here is our Field Manual entry on working with stressed/distressed students: https://www.jmu.edu/uwc/tutor-resources/_consultant-field-manual.shtml#stress
- If you haven't done so already, please complete the surveys I sent out last month.
 - This is an opportunity to have input about future professional development: xxxx
 - Also, after some discussions with UWC staff, we have decided to include preferred gender pronouns in WC Online and the Meet the Team page. In order to do that, I need each of you to provide your preferred pronouns.
- Lastly, our **closing all-staff meeting is on 4/23 from 2:30 to 3:30** in Zoom.

Jared

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

Tuesday, March 16, 2021, 11:41 AM: UWC Professional Development

Dear UWC,

After reading through your responses to the anti-racism module, hearing reports on small group meetings, and having individual conversations, I am aware that the experiences of the professional development module were mixed. I apologize if the material UWC faculty selected made anyone uncomfortable or confused. I know some of you felt it was very beneficial and useful, but we would like to be as inclusive as possible and meet the needs of all consultants. I wanted to give you the opportunity to give us anonymous feedback on your experiences, so that we can continue to develop and revise our materials. Professional development is always something we are trying to improve and adapt to meet the needs of our staff and clientele. Please offer us your honest input: xxxx

And now a few reminders about best practices. Because I am teaching the WRTC 336 course, I get an additional window into UWC sessions. I am mostly seeing evidence of effective sessions, attentive consultants, and happy clients.

I did notice at least one pattern I would like to address. Please remember to read the appointment form and the prior session reports before your session starts (understanding that you might not have time if they book minutes before the hour/half hour). If you read those, you will already know if the client has been to the UWC before, how those sessions went, and what the writer's current concerns are. That way, you can refer to those concerns directly. For example, if the client said they were concerned about the credibility of their sources, you can ask, "I see you are concerned about the credibility of sources. Would you like to focus on that today or are there other concerns?" If you just ask, "What do you want to work on?", that shows that you did not read the appointment form. Prior session reports might tell you about recurring writing issues for this writer and techniques that worked well. This information will help you. I know schedules (and lives) are hectic now, but I do want the 336 students to see best practices in action. On that note, it's always good to read over the Roadmap and Field Guide in [consultant resources](#) for a refresher.

Lastly, please note that timesheets are due!

Thanks again for your great work!

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

Wednesday, February 10, 2021, 12:41 PM: 336 Observation Phase

Dear UWC,

I wanted to make sure everyone understood how to handle observations from the 336 students. Many of you have been observed in the online context, but some have not. While the observers will have audio and video off during the session, you should be ready to check in with them after the client leaves the session (and perhaps before via chat). Please read over the following guidelines I sent to the 336 students, so that your expectations are the same as theirs. If you have any questions, please let me know.

"336:

1. Log into the [UWC scheduler](#) to see which consultant shifts overlap with your availability. You can also read about consultants on the [Meet the Team](#) page. Use the email list I sent out to contact a consultant you'd like to observe.
2. Rudy Barrett (UWC faculty) has given each of you access to the scheduler, so that you can click on the appointment you are planning to observe and access the session. Turn your mic and camera off unless you are talking to the consultant before the client arrives or after the client leaves. You should plan to get to the session a few minutes early and stay for a few minutes afterward. After the session, you can ask the consultant any questions you'd like. This is a great opportunity to get clarification and learn from them.
3. Your observed sessions should be a mix of 30 min and 60 min sessions. Keep in mind that some students book two 30 min sessions in a row instead of booking 60 min. If the student books two 30 min sessions in a row, that counts as a 60 min session for the purposes of the apprenticeship. This also means that if you are

planning to observe a 30 min session at 2:30, you should make sure that the student did not book two back-to-back 30 min sessions starting at 2 (because then you would be jumping into the middle of an hour session).

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

Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 12:15 PM: UWC Social Media Survey

Dear UWC,

As part of her GAship with the UWC, Lacie Knight is going to oversee our social media. In order to make our social media presence effective, she needs your input. Please read the following message from Lacie and fill out her survey ASAP. Thanks!

Hello all,

I am Lacie Knight, one of the Graduate Assistants in the UWC. I am currently working on creating social media posts for the center and would love to begin with posts featuring our awesome consultants.

To streamline contact, I have created the following form to obtain all of the information needed for the posts. Please fill out the form by this Friday 2/12/21.

Here is the link - xxxx

Please contact me by email if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you and I look forward to learning more about you all!
Best,
Lacie

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

Thursday, February 4, 2021, 8:01 PM: Pro Dev and Timesheets

Dear UWC,

As we near the end of our first full week of operations, I just wanted to check in and make sure everyone was clear on professional development responsibilities and timesheet procedures.

Professional Development

- Please sign up for a small group by the end of the day tomorrow. A few of you have yet to sign up: *[Editor's note: for the link, check your February 4 email]*.
- As I said during the opening all staff meeting, you have two weeks from that meeting to complete the Anti-racism Module in the UWC Canvas page. That means you should have it complete by the end of the day Friday, 2/12. Remember to put three hours on your next timesheet to account for the work you did on the module.

- You'll have three required meetings with your small pro dev group over the semester. Your faculty facilitator will arrange these with you. Remember to put each of these on your timesheets.
- We will have a closing all-staff meeting on April 23 at 2:30 p.m.

Timesheets

- Most of you got these in on time. Several of you did not. You will get a reminder from Joan each pay period when timesheets are due. In that reminder, she will give a specific time that the timesheets are due to me. Please take note of that time/day, and submit your timesheet on time. Every late timesheet causes stress and adds work for me and the administrative team.
- Please make sure the file you attach is a single Excel page for the correct pay period with all of the relevant information filled in. When I have to send them back to you, this delays the whole process. If you do have to resubmit for a correction, please retype your "I certify I worked..." statement in the email.
- When I officially submit your timesheet, I am Ccing you on the message to the admins, so that you have confirmation.
- If you are new, please take some time to read through the timesheet tutorial. In addition, please read through the UWC policies for missing shifts and other work-related situations: <https://www.jmu.edu/uwc/tutor-resources/consultant-field-manual.shtml> If you have any questions, please reach out to me. I know this is a lot to keep track of.

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

Wednesday, February 3, 2021, 9:22 AM: Timesheets and Pro Dev Signup

Dear UWC,

If you haven't submitted your timesheet, I need it right away. I am turning them in soon. Also, please sign up for a small professional development group. Once you get into a group, your faculty leader will help establish your meeting times. There is a max of 8 people per group. Please signup by the end of the day: *[Editor's note: for the link, check your February 3 email]*.

Let me know if you have any questions. Hope you are enjoying your first week back on the job!

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

Wednesday, January 27, 2021, 9:43 AM: New Timesheet Instructions

UWC peer consultants:

In advance of our Friday meeting (2:30 p.m. this Friday), please review the instructions and training for using the new timesheets. This is important if you want to be paid on time. Here is additional information and the links from Joan Fahrney:

JMU has rolled out a new student time sheet for 2021 to be shared with the tutors as soon as possible. Below is the JMU link to the new time sheet itself as well as the link to Payroll's new training PowerPoint on completing the new time sheet. They must submit the correct form to get paid – no exceptions per Payroll.

[Student and Wage Employee Timesheets \(Calendar Year 2021\) *NEW*](#)
[Timesheet Instructions](#)

Jared Jay Featherstone, MFA
Associate Director, University Writing Center
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[Editor's note: Joan sent the following addendum to the email above at 9:58 AM]

Note to all: The instruction link from Payroll does not include how to submit electronically to your supervisor, only how to complete the form correctly to get paid. You are welcome to ask Jared about this in training tomorrow if you need, but know that detailed instructions for you will be included in each Payroll announcement put out in Canvas and if you do have questions, I'm happy to address them.

Friday, January 22, 2021, 2:07 PM: UWC Hours and Opening Meeting

Dear UWC,

I hope you are all having a good first week of class. If you haven't already, please log in to WC Online to check your assigned shifts. If there is an error, please email Rudy ASAP. Faculty and GAs will start 1/25. Peer consultant shifts begin Monday, 2/1.

Also, remember that our opening all-staff meeting is Friday, 1/29 2:30-3:30. We'll discuss pro dev plans, new timesheets, and best practices for online consulting. You'll find the Zoom meeting information below. Have a good weekend!

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

Monday, January 11, 2021, 2:23 PM: Spring 2021 UWC Schedule

Dear UWC,

I hope you are all having a good first week of class. If you haven't already, please log in to WC Online to check your assigned shifts. If there is an error, please email Rudy ASAP. Faculty and GAs will start 1/25. Peer consultant shifts begin Monday, 2/1.

Also, remember that our opening all-staff meeting is Friday, 1/29 2:30-3:30. We'll discuss pro dev plans, new timesheets, and best practices for online consulting. You'll find the Zoom meeting information below. Have a good weekend!

Jared Featherstone is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting. Topic: UWC Opening All-Staff Meeting Time: Jan 29, 2021 02:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) Join Zoom Meeting: *[Editor's note: check your January 22 emails for the Zoom address]*

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

Thursday, January 7, 2021, 7:12 PM: Quick Surveys and Some Reminders

Dear UWC,

It's time to start getting organized for the spring semester. That means I need your scheduling information. Please fill out your preferred shift times ASAP: [redacted] Also, if you haven't filled out the brief surveys I sent out last week (and I see that many of you have not), please do:

- Survey about your experience with UWC faculty
- Survey about your experience with WC Online and online consulting

Important dates:

- 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.

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

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_b8bclaJQrIN3SZv

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