

Carrie Nelson Performance Summary and Report: 2017-2018 Academic Year

Summary:

I work as a Writing Consultant in SCAD's Writers' Studio as part of the Academic Resource team. In this role, I am dedicated to upholding SCAD's mission, specifically in terms of "emphasizing learning through individual attention in a positively oriented university environment" as my primary responsibility in the Writers' Studio is to provide students individual support to achieve their writing goals. I assist students with their writing needs and create relevant writing materials targeting undergraduate, graduate and ELL students to support their academic, creative, and professional success.

Accomplishments:

Of the 6 Rs, my most significant work-related accomplishments regarded *retention*, *reputation*, *research*, and *results*.

My primary job as a Writing Consultant directly correlates to *retention*. In this capacity, I meet with students one-on-one to support their writing needs. I help students at all stages of the writing process, from brainstorming and prewriting to revising and editing. I also work with students on any writing-related projects, whether they are personal, professional, creative or academic. Since Fall 2017, I completed 821 appointments and saw 404 students, showing that nearly 50% of my clients returned to work with me again. This return rate, coupled with the positive responses to the Writers' Studio's surveys, show that the students find my services indispensable and many students believe it is a vital component to their success at SCAD.

The daily support I provide students also directly relates to *results* by increasing "retention, degree completion, [and] student satisfaction..." I work closely with students, providing individualized attention, to help them complete their written projects. I help students plan, write, edit, and polish their class assignments and work with numerous graduate students on their theses; this work also leads to retention and degree completion. Furthermore, I provide a safe, welcoming, and encouraging space where students feel supported, prioritized, and cared for, and this contributes to their satisfaction, which is documented in my department's surveys. One student who I worked with biweekly, Ho Hua Lin for MOME 503, emailed me to report, "I really appreciate your help for spring quarter, thank you for helping me with my essay and I finally got A in the class!"

Outside of my appointments, I also lead workshops for the Writers' Studio. My workshops often result in students scheduling appointments to meet with me one-on-one. This past year, my creative, graduate, and résumé and cover letter workshops all resulted in students seeking individual appointments, and I even had one student attend a second workshop simply because he liked my teaching and presenting style; I believe this bolstered *retention* within my own department but also for SCAD as a whole.

A large percentage of the students I worked with are graduate students, and my work with them contributes to *retention* and *results* as well. 48.5% of the students I see are graduate students, and they comprise 63.5% of my scheduled appointments, and around 30-40 of the students I've worked with have completed their theses or final projects this the 2017/18 academic year.

Several of my students wrote me letters and notes, thanking me for my assistance, and sometimes even crediting me for their success. This is one of the most rewarding aspects of my job, and I believe speaks to the *results* I provide. I am particularly proud to report that four of the graduate students I've worked with have chosen to continue pursuing their education by getting their PhDs. I am still working with two of the students, but the other two have not only been accepted, but have received fully funded fellowships to Texas Tech University and Carnegie Mellon. To quote one of these students, "I want to say that you helped me craft an incredible essay where I was able to tell my story in the most effective way possible. You have impacted my writing in such a way that I feel confident your advice will help me throughout finishing my thesis at SCAD and going to the next chapter of my career towards a PhD in Transition Design." – Eugenia Perez, MFA in Graphic Design and Visual Experience.

In terms of *reputation*, 48.5% of the students I saw were graduate students and several more were students working on their résumés and cover letters. I often help the graduate students with the written portion of the thesis or final project. Spring Quarter I saw 97 graduate students in 194 appointments, several of which lasted for an hour. Our work together directly impacted the quality of their written materials and contributed to the students successfully graduating, securing employment, and representing SCAD in the world, thus enhancing the university's reputation. Outside of theses and final projects, I've helped students and faculty work on materials for scholarships, grants, conferences, competitions, and publication, all of which has allowed these students and SCAD's name to succeed in the world. To quote an anonymous survey response, "Carrie is great at helping me learn what I need to do to write a scholarly paper that will help me achieve a goal of having my thesis published. She understands the topic and is able to give valuable feedback that I know will have a positive impact for my academic future."

In terms of *research*, I work with my coworkers to plan and execute mission-focused workshops and support services for the students to expand and enhance their writing abilities and knowledge. This academic year, I led two workshops in the Fall, three in the Winter, and three again in the Spring. All of these workshops were well attended. I took the initiative to target these workshops to best serve the needs of SCAD's students. Each quarter I researched SCAD events and analyzed trends in our appointment statistics and reports to target our workshops to students' needs. I conducted an Introduction to Academic Writing workshop in the Fall Quarter because that is when most of the freshman start. I held a Résumé and Cover Letter writing workshop in the Winter to complement the Career Fair, and finally a Graduate Writing workshop in the Spring Quarter because that is when many graduate students are trying to complete their theses. Additionally, I worked on developing an interactive exercise for these workshops as one of my objectives to engage students in the learning process. I updated past workshops and created new ones to include activities to bolster and reinforce the lessons I taught in the workshops. Furthermore, I created worksheets, other supplemental materials, lesson plans, and modules for these workshops for future use.

I also requested books and created materials to add to the Academic Resource Center's library so that my department was offering supplemental materials to our students in addition to our standard services. I did this research to ensure that our materials were up to date – especially in the area of citations – as well as relevant to the diverse writing needs SCAD's students face.

Another area I researched was conversation activities to support the conversation group my department offers. As a large portion of SCAD's students are English Language Learners, I researched activities to best educate and interest them in practicing and improving their language skills.

Outside of the 6 Rs, other noteworthy work I've done this year has involved collaboration, promotion, and professional development.

In terms of collaboration, I was a member on the Library and Academic Resource council this year. I welcomed the opportunity to work with faculty members and act as a liaison for my department. My team and I successfully created an event that highlighted the services the Jen Library and Academic Resource Center provide. I specifically suggested materials and activities for this event and created the poster to publicize it. This event was called the "Hidden Gems of the Jen Library." It was held in the Winter quarter and around 70 students attended.

Additionally, I volunteered for CAS this year and participated in two of their events along with my supervisor. Both of these events enhanced students' professional writing and presenting skills to help prepare them specifically for Career Fair but also for their job hunting skills in general. I also collaborated with Res Life to create two writing-related events that were held in the dorms. They were attended by approximately 10 and 20 students respectively. All of these events were an opportunity to not only support SCAD's students but enhance the Writers' Studio's visibility.

Within my department, I volunteered to cover a number of the Coordinator of Writing Service's responsibilities as the position was vacant from July 2017–June 2018. I took over management of the Writers' Studio's email account and collaborated with the Coordinator of Tutoring to train our tutors. We developed six tutor training sessions. I delivered one session with the coordinator for all Academic Resource Center's tutors and three on my own specifically for the Writing and English Language tutors. These training sessions expanded our tutors' professional development and enhanced their tutoring knowledge and skills. To develop these training sessions, Ben Barbour and I analyzed data from tutoring surveys and reports and researched the material to present. I received positive feedback and enjoyed building good relationships with the tutors to act as a reliable and trustworthy ally and mentor.

In regards to promotion, I was responsible for a portion of my department's communication by managing the email and Facebook page. I used both platforms to promote our extended learning opportunities. I created flyers for each of our workshops and events and emailed every department monthly to keep faculty up to date about the workshops and activities we offered. This effort increased the visibility of my department by informing faculty and attracting students to the Writers' Studio's services and events.

I also had some exciting opportunities to participate in professional development this past year through SCAD's HR department and a workshop with Kevin Carroll. Both events were beneficial, and I appreciate how they allowed me to connect with members of departments outside of my own and explore new ideas to improve and implement in my work, specifically regarding student engagement and collaboration. These activities were particularly helpful in giving me insight in improving my workshops beyond the lecture-based format, which is one of my main objectives, and I am very appreciative of the opportunity to participate.

Overall, the 2017-18 academic year has allowed me to not only to continue to serve but build on my service to SCAD's students and staff. I am proud of the support I provide the students and the success they achieve. I am excited to continue working to develop new ideas, activities and events to foster that success, and believe my objectives this year have been an important step in doing so. I look forward to building on this work to support the success of my students, my department, and SCAD as a whole.

Objectives

1. To contribute to SCAD's 2020 goal of Q2A3, I will redesign a minimum of three current Writers' Studio workshops to include interactive components designed to enhance learning and build writing and communication skills.

My first objective this year focused on improving the workshops the Writers' Studio offers. Our workshops are of particular interest to me because I believe they are a great way to deliver essential information to students while also informing them to our services in ways that attract students' interests, enhance their understanding, and complement what they are learning in their coursework.

For the first component of this objective, I decided to create interactive exercises for our workshops to engage students and illustrate the writing lessons. To do this, I did formal and informal research. I first researched current writing advice and pedagogy to make sure I was up-to-date on best practices in the field of education and composition. I also reached out to friends, professors, and colleagues and read blogs and other informal narratives to explore people's stories about what writing advice they believed worked best. Based on this research, I began brainstorming ideas for my objective.

My main goal was to take my writing advice from theory and put it into practice so that students could get concrete examples and better understand the concepts I was teaching. I was successfully able to add interactive components to at least one workshop each quarter. I created new activities for the "Introduction to Academic Writing Workshops" in the Fall 2017; the "Writing Resume and Cover Letter" Workshop in Winter 2018 (This workshop was presented again in the Spring Quarter); and the "Writing Effective Dialogue" and "Introduction to Graduate Writing Workshop" in Spring 2018.

While the activities varied from workshop to workshop, they successfully engaged the students and sparked discussion and critiques. Perhaps the most successful activities were attached to the Dialogue workshop from Spring 2018 (I say this because every student in attendance stayed after the workshop was over to finish my activities. We went over because there was so much discussion after each part). Another reason I believe the Dialogue workshop was particularly successful was because for this topic, the students' background and skill level did not matter as much. For example, my Introduction to Academic Writing workshop attracted both freshman and new graduate students, and I learned from this example it was important to target my workshops specifically. Thus, I created the Graduate Writing Workshop in the Spring Quarter where I focused on more specific and advanced aspects of writing. I now believe that the Introduction to Academic Writing should be targeted to freshman/ undergraduate writing students, and it might need a new title or promotion plan to attract the appropriate audience. I also received a lot of varying levels of students at my resume and cover letter writing workshops, and believe it is worth exploring whether or not all (or at least most) of our workshops should separate graduate and undergraduate students.

My main takeaways are from this objective are that it is worthwhile developing interactive exercises for the Writers' Studio's workshops to increase student engagement. I believe this is important because it requires the students to be active participants in their learning experience (as opposed to passive recipients of the information) and turns the learning experience into a collaborative process. Furthermore, I believe examples and exercises are crucial to demonstrate effective writing. It is one thing to simply tell a student when they should use proper punctuation, but it is better to go through examples to show when, where and why punctuation

is used properly so that the students can explore, question, and realize the rules for themselves.

I have created modules for the workshops with copies of the worksheets and activities I used as well as brief instructions, lesson plans, and advice for future use, and I look forward to continuing to work on this component of the workshops to make them as effective as possible in the future.

2. In accordance with SCAD's 2020 goal of Q2A1, I will raise awareness of EL tutoring by creating a promotional plan, schedule, and materials for SCAD students, faculty, and staff.

A large percentage of the students who visit the Writers' Studio are international (55% of the students I saw reported English was not their first Language), so my second objective this year was tailored to making international students aware of and have better access to our services – specifically the services offered by our English Language tutors.

The first part of this plan involved promotion, and I created several flyers – both digital and printed – that detailed our services, specifically those geared towards international students. These services included appointments with our English Language tutors, Conversation Group, and Critique Group in the Spring. I created a schedule to email these materials to all departments at SCAD every quarter and sent monthly emails about workshops and events for international students. I made a specific point to email the ESL department regularly and forwarded them copies of attendance to conversation group at two points during every quarter.

I also updated our instructional presentations and promotional material to include information specifically on our services for international students. This included PowerPoints presented to professors, classes and in our tutor training and handouts distributed at orientation and other events. I worked with Ben Barbour, the Coordinator of Tutor Training, to make sure all tutors were aware of the English Language tutors and knew they could promote them if they thought it would benefit a student.

Unfortunately, despite my best efforts to promote our services to international students, it was not enough to significantly increase use of our English Language tutors or clear up confusion between Writing and English Language tutors. Thus, I believe the effort to increase attendance in our activities for International students and use of English Language tutoring services extends beyond the mere promotional, and that this objective should be revisited with other initiatives in mind.

Helping our international students is an effort that is very near and dear to me, so I hope that with more information, assistance and advice, I can revisit this objective and make sure that the international students have access to the appropriate help they need to succeed at SCAD.