Growing Big by Staying Small

The owrc’s vision of collaborating communities

Flexible Collaboration

The center flexibly collaborates with a wide range of teaching and learning groups at UW Seattle to provide services that enhance the University’s culture of writing, improve students’ critical thinking, and expand the written articulation of that thinking.

Committed Faculty
The Odegaard Writing & Research Center features tutors with the skills needed for collaboration in a constructive environment featuring

- Writer Demography charts
- Tutor Interdisciplinarity charts
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- Tutor Interdisciplinarity charts
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Professional Development Programs
In order to foster tutors’ individual growths and better equip them with the skills needed for collaboration in a constructive environment as well as to remain current in the latest professional practice, the center invests a significant amount of effort in empowering its tutors in the context of the organizational hierarchy.

- Tutor Development Portfolio
- Initial training in Writing Center Pedagogy
- Peer-led tutor development workshops
- Quarterly peer observation matrices
- Free-standing formative conferences
- Tutor led project development task groups
- Quarterly faculty workshops
- Tutors in writing procedures
- Assistant Director’s mentoring programs
- Tutor-building professional development
- Participation in scholarly conferences

In Fall 2014, a newly hired faculty noticed a gap in knowledge about personal statements. Writers did not have a solid understanding of what personal statements were supposed to achieve, while tutors also did not have a clear sense of what academic departments expected from applicants. So she formed a task group dedicated to addressing that knowledge gap. The group invited advisers from six academic departments to speak on a panel to the whole tutoring staff and led subsequent workshops to translate the shared information into tutoring strategies. The panel & workshop series served four purposes: 1) addressed questions and explained common, standardized language opportunities for increased personalization and transparency towards students, 2) provided knowledge to support students as they navigate the larger university context, 3) engaged former tutors to identify ongoing professional learning.

The coexistence of growth and core values is made possible through professional development programs, interdisciplinary collaboration, writer empowerment, and flexible collaboration.