

Student-focused Writing Center marks 35th anniversary

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<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/21043/student-focused-writing-center-marks-35th-anniversary/>

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh's Writing Center will celebrate 35 years of students serving students on Monday, Sept. 17.

To mark the anniversary, the University community is invited to enjoy a slice of cake in the Reeve Memorial Union Concourse from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Writing Center staff will be joined by members of the Oshkosh Gaming Society, who will offer passersby the opportunity to join in at three tables of games.

The Writing Center opened its doors on Sept. 17, 1977, to work with students enrolled in the state-mandated remedial English course. Staff members shared office space in the basement of Radford Hall with the *Advance-Titan*.

Since then, the Writing Center has grown to serve thousands of students in a range of programs and disciplines. In 2010, the center relocated to the newly renovated and expanded Student Success Center (formerly Elmwood Commons).

"The Writing Center is student-centered and, in many ways, student-run," said Crystal Mueller, center director. "After an intensive training period, students who work in the center not only help their peers succeed at the University but also model skills and strategies that students can use in their careers and even personal lives after graduation."

The center has thrived, tripling the annual number of visits with student writers, she said. Five Chancellor's Award for Excellence Award winners in the past four years have been Writing Center student employees.

Each year, the Writing Center works with writers Student writers from about 55 different departments in about 450 different classes.

"More than ever, students are asked to write assignments for classes, and the Writing Center works to help them succeed. In addition, about 20 percent of the writing students bring to the Writing Center is not for a class, such as resumes, applications and personal writing," Mueller said.

UWO student Arielle Smith, a current writing consultant and writing fellow, said her work with the center has made her a more precise and capable writer.

"I have so much more insight into the writing process, and I have learned much from simply talking with the writers we work with," she said. "We do valuable work with students, and they keep coming back. This week alone I had four students reschedule appointments with me specifically. When students return, we can see exactly how we have helped them, and that is the best part. We are helping students—not just to better a single assignment—but to better themselves as writers."

Mueller said UW Oshkosh graduates who were employed as writing consultants frequently report that their work at the center was one of the most significant experiences they had at UW Oshkosh.

“Through their positions of intellectual leadership, they gained the satisfaction of helping their classmates learn to improve their own skills, and they gained confidence, attitudes and skills that have carried well beyond their University experience,” she said.

Today, Writing Center alumni work for nonprofit organizations like the Christine Ann Center and publications like *Marie Claire* magazine. Others have taught or currently teach in other countries, such as Japan, Nicaragua and Taiwan.

Writing Center staff members look forward to continuing and expanding their support of writers and have begun online consulting for online/hybrid and distance education students, Mueller said. They partner with other departments and areas on campus, such as offering support to the Intensive English Program through the Office of International Education. They also have begun to strategize support for the new University Studies Program, beginning in fall 2013.

- Did you work in the Writing Center? Did you visit the Writing Center? We'd love to hear from you. Share your memories by writing to wcenter@uwosh.edu.