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Using assessment to leverage collaboration with the campus writing center

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USING ASSESSMENT TO LEVERAGE COLLABORATION WITH THE CAMPUS WRITING CENTER

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BACKGROUND

- University of Dayton Roesch Library and the Writing Center will integrate services in Fall 2014.
- New service and space will be branded as the Knowledge Hub.
- Research consultations by faculty librarians
- Writing consultations by student peers.

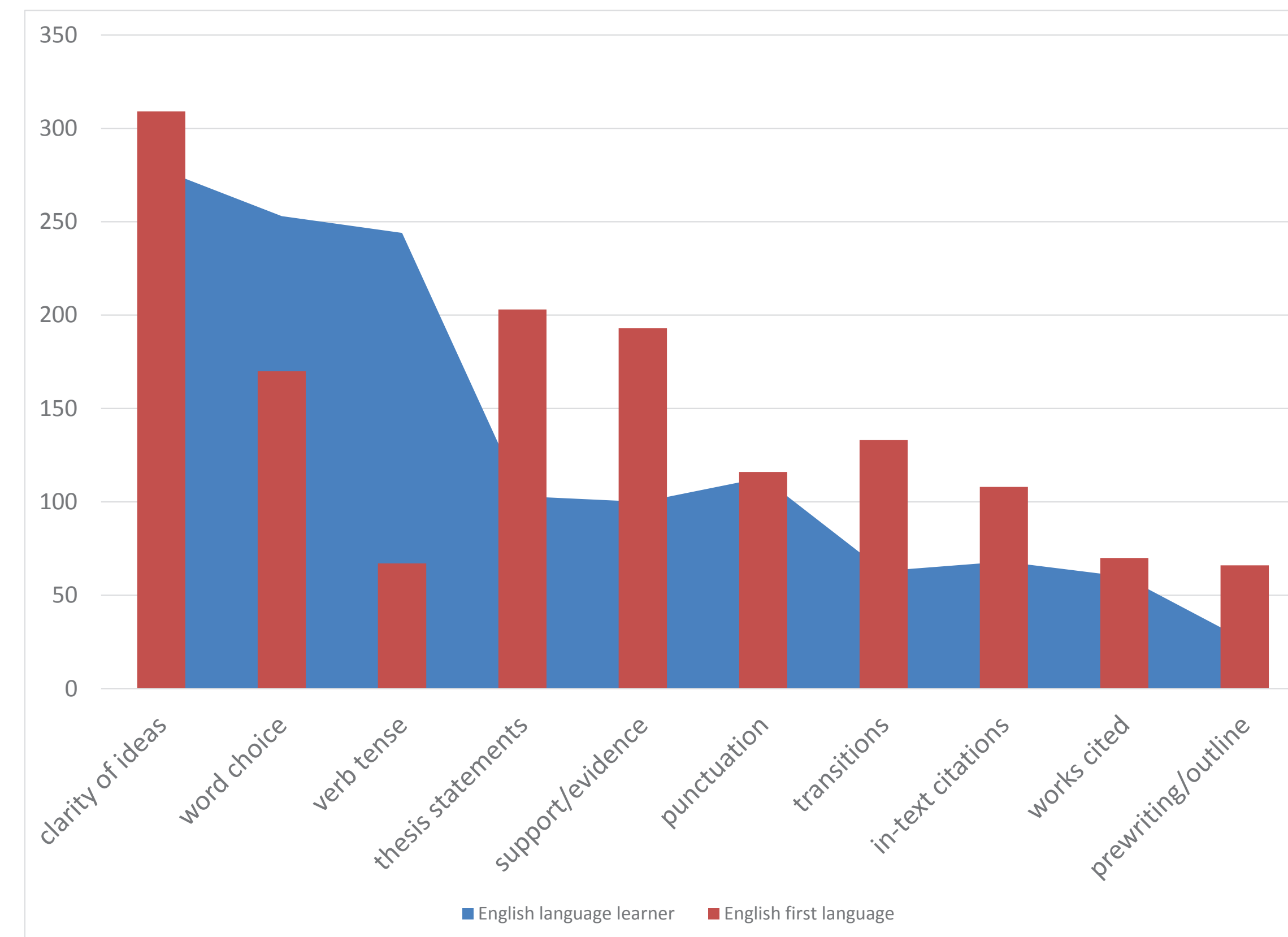
PURPOSE

- What help does the writing center provide? Who does the writing center serve?
- What does this information mean for an integrated service approach?
- More specifically, how do writing centers address the evaluation, integration and attribution of sources?

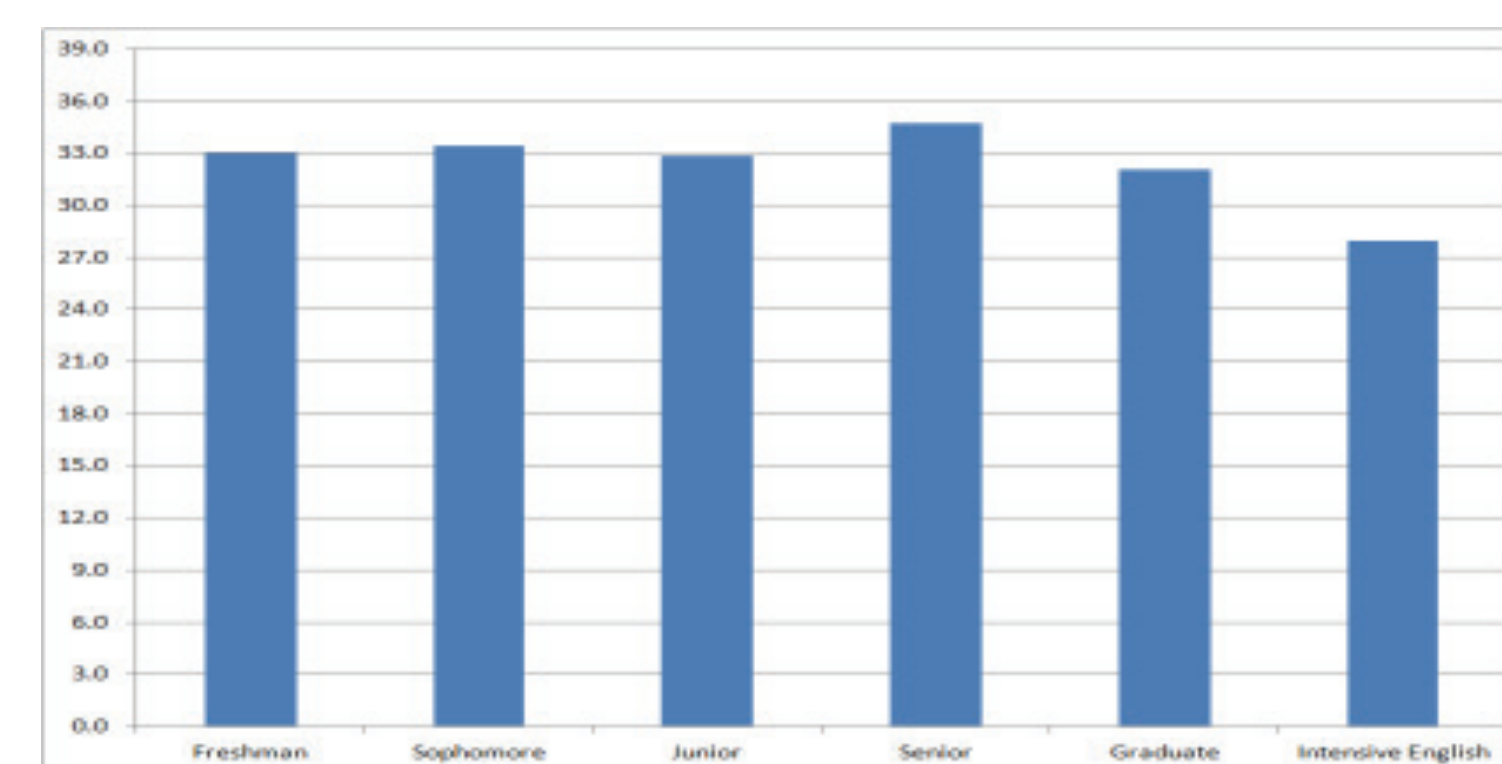
METHODOLOGY

- Analyzed 1,200 writing center consultant reports from Fall 2013.
- 80% of all face-to-face consultations.
- Reports transcribed and coded for analysis.
- Elements included class rank, language ability, course information, date, time, and areas of help.

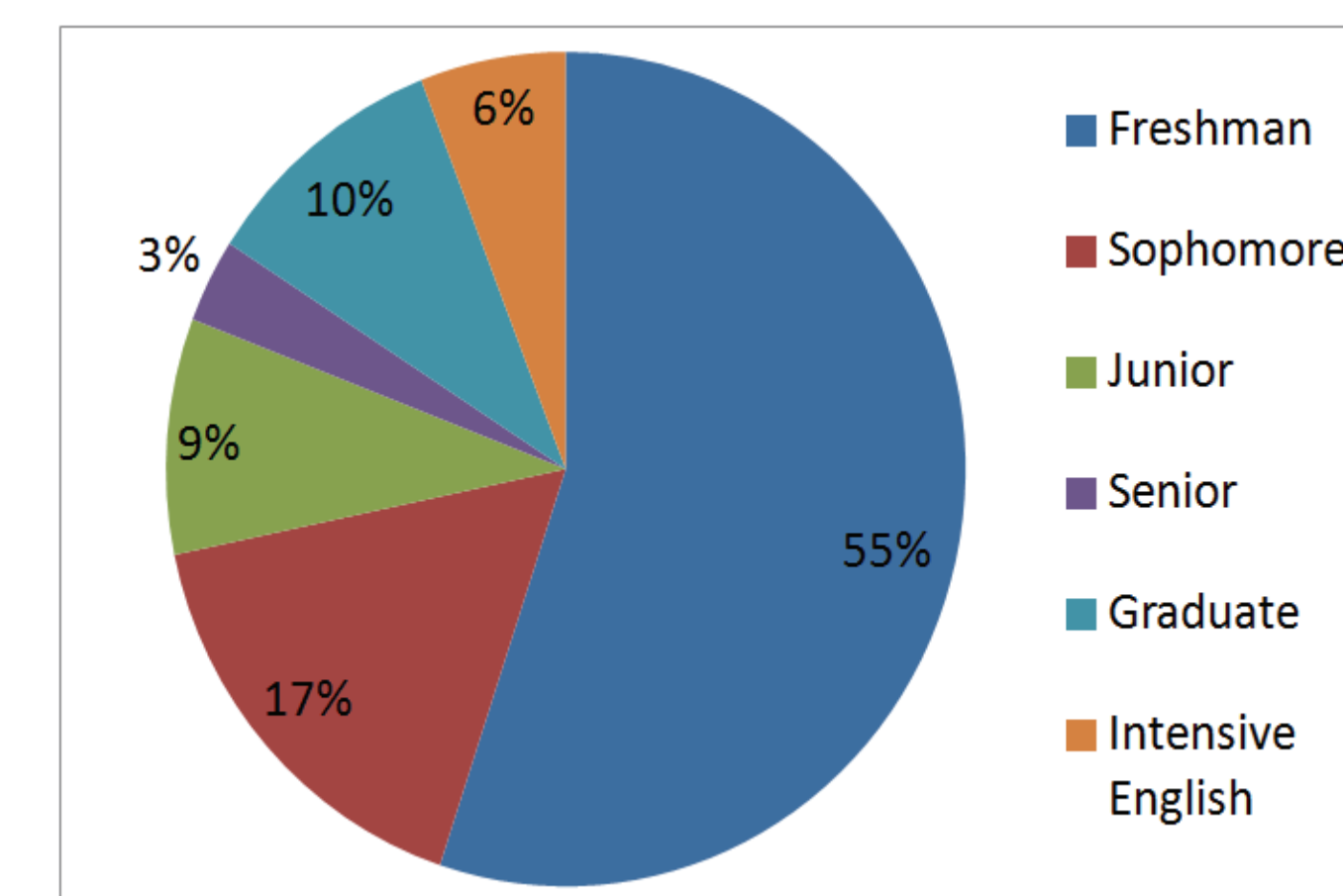
FINDINGS



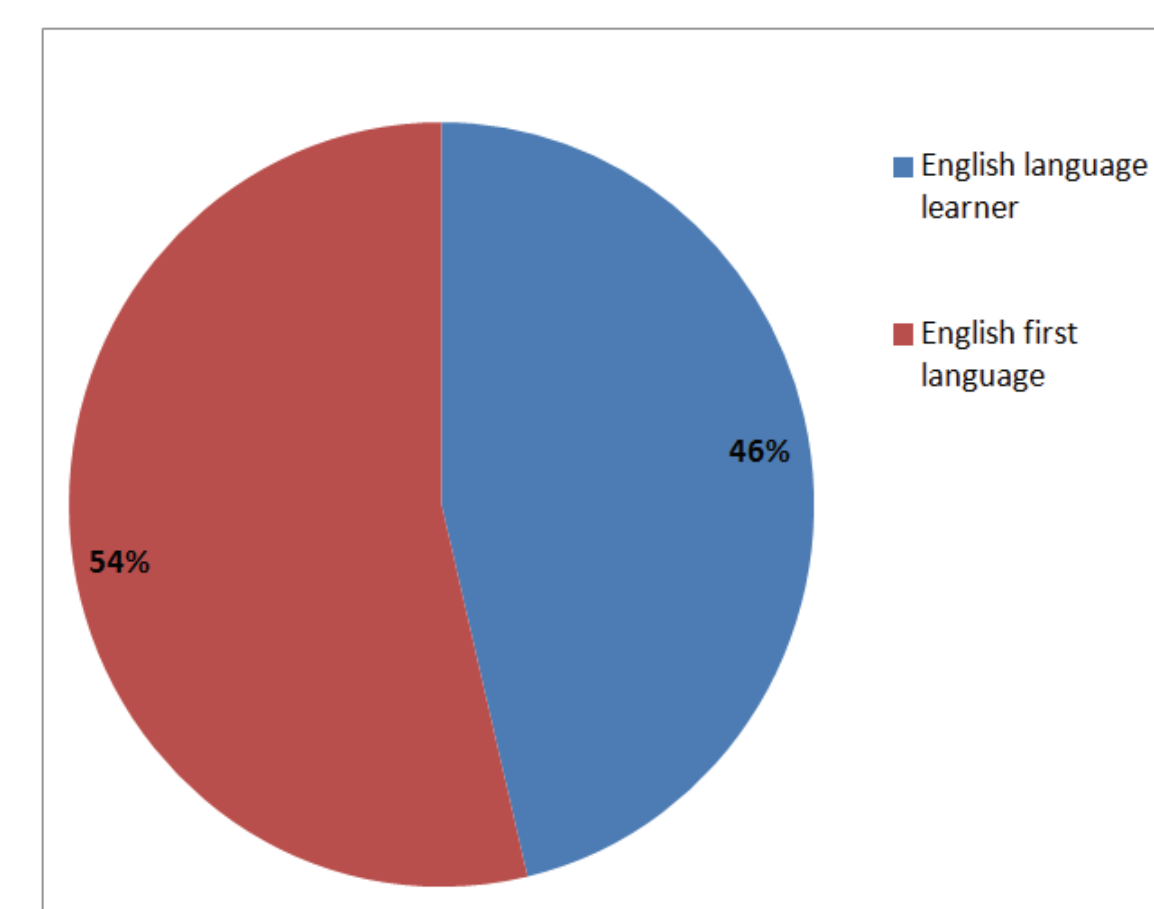
Consultants provide most help with clarity of ideas, word choice and sentence structure.



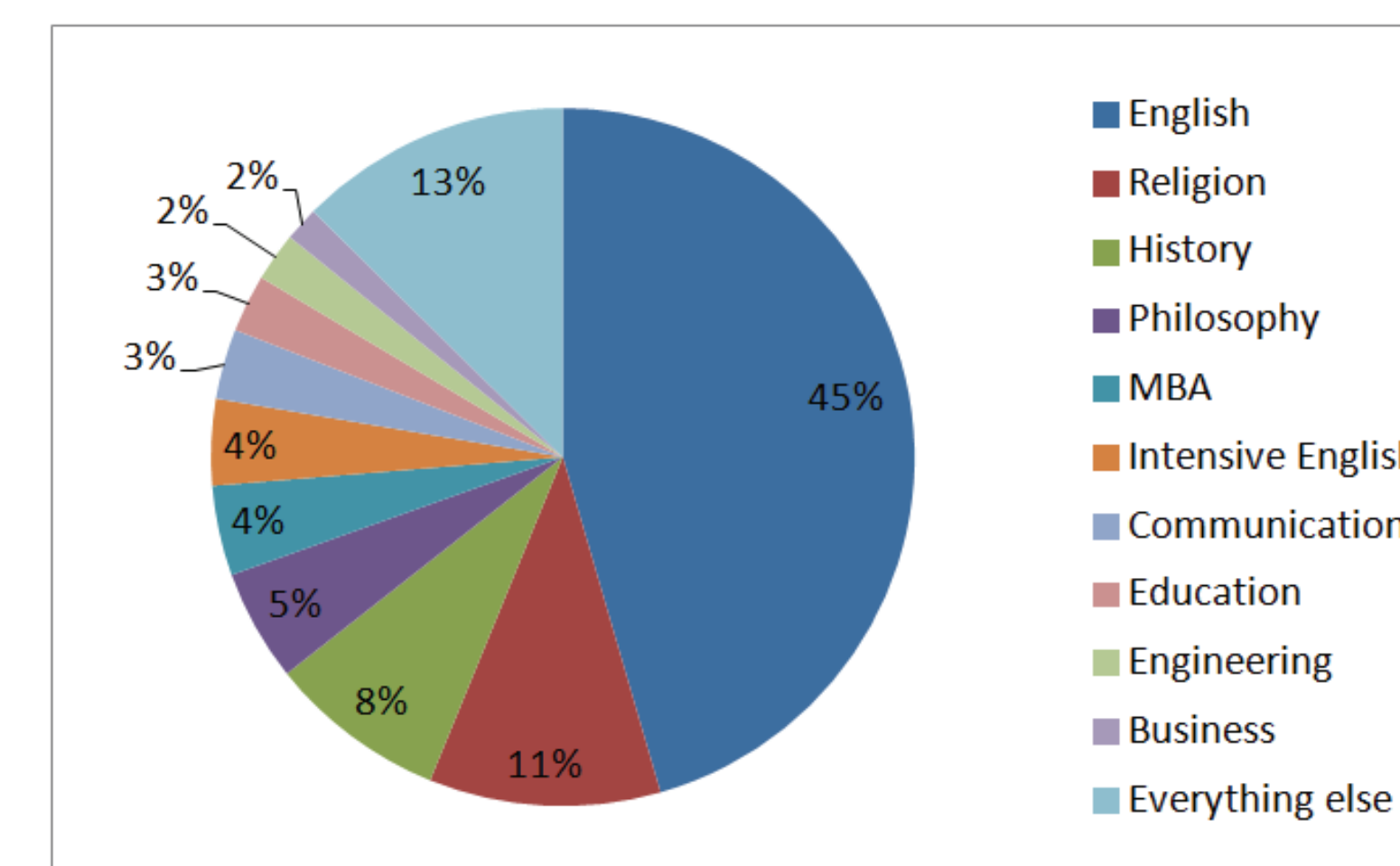
Consultations ran roughly same length of time — 30 minutes — regardless of class rank.



First-year students largest group seeking help at writing center.



Disproportionate use of writing center by international students.



Students seeking writing assistance mostly for work related to their English courses.

OBSERVATIONS

- Collaboration potential in thesis statement development, use of supports/evidence, citation styles.
- Writing assistance does not seem to mirror reference experience in terms of international student population or disciplinary breakdown.

CHANGES

- More hands-on training with writing consultants to recognize weak research efforts for referrals to librarians.
- Detailed descriptions about what librarians do and how they can help.
- Improved communication between library and writing center.
- Changes to library and writing center data collection practices.

NEXT STEPS

- Explore further collaboration to help students document and cite sources.
- Analyze Fall 2014 consultant reports for changes after integration.
- Consider aligning data collection practices with writing center.
- Possibly develop workshop series with writing center.