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.

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.