Greetings from the Director

The WID Interns
Hit the Press

Beginning this fall, five Writing in the Discipline (WID) interns joined the AUM WAC staff. These interns work with students in designated content-area courses to help them improve their writing skills.

They also interact regularly with the faculty who teach the courses to support them with writing-intensive instruction.

The articles in this special issue of The WAC-ky Times highlight their experiences in this pilot semester of the WID intern program.

It’s Time for Spring Training

The first four sessions of Writing-Intensive Faculty Development Institute (WFDI) offered in Spring 2012 have been determined and are posted on the WAC website.

Faculty can select from Wednesday morning or Thursday afternoon options:

- **Session I:**
  - Wed, February 8 (9 AM to 12 PM) or
  - Thurs, February 9 (1 to 4 PM)

- **Session II:**
  - Wed, February 15 (9 AM to 12 PM) or
  - Thurs, February 16 (1 to 4 PM)

- **Session III:**
  - Wed, February 22 (9 AM to 12 PM) or
  - Thurs, February 23 (1 to 4 PM)

- **Session IV:**
  - Wed, February 29 (9 AM to 12 PM) or
  - Thurs, March 1 (1 to 4 PM)

Participants who complete all four sessions receive a $400 stipend that is entered into their departmental accounts.

Send an email to Jenny Good (jgood@aum.edu) to register for the WFDI sessions of your choice.

The next six sessions of the WFDI will occur during the first semester of writing-intensive instruction.

Turnitin.com: A Statement from the WAC Committee

The Writing Across the Curriculum Committee strongly endorses and encourages the use of turnitin.com as a tool for preventing plagiarism in student writing.

Not only does this database assist instructors in detecting plagiarism, but it also serves as a deterrent to plagiarism, as well. Moreover, when a case of academic dishonesty is challenged by a student, the report from turnitin.com can serve as indisputable proof. For these reasons, the WAC Committee urges all faculty members to learn to use this very helpful database.

Instructors can train themselves to use turnitin.com, but for those who would like some guidance in learning the system, the Learning Center is happy to provide short training sessions of 15-20 minutes.

Call the Learning Center at 244-3470 to make an appointment with Writing Consultants Sarah Fredericks or Catherine Bailey.
Focus on Physical Education: An Interview with Dr. George Schaefer

By Chris Ross

Even though the WAC program is in its infancy, its importance is astoundingly great. I sat down with Dr. Schaefer of the Physical Education Department for a one on one interview about the WAC program.

1. How are you finding your first semester as a WI instructor?

I enjoy what I do and I love working with students. Something I like to do as a professor is to reflect on my performance. The WI course I teach has enabled me to enhance my focus on my own effectiveness as a professor, while helping students become better writers in the process. Overall I am enjoying it.

2. What do you think the importance of the WAC Program is?

I feel the program is going to be an enormous asset for AUM. It has highlighted that writing isn’t what it used to be, and that the level of writing in general is decreasing. It is important for students to understand that writing is crucial and required for their future professions. The program has emphasized on the need for more focus to be placed on writing, especially in planning and organization.

3. What changes, if any, have you made to the way you teach the WI course?

I haven’t really changed much at all to be honest. The process that students must go through to complete the WI assignment is more in depth and requires more attention, but that’s it really.

4. What are your thoughts on WID within Physical Education, and the importance of teaching AUM students this process?

Overall students need to learn how to write at a higher standard. Once they graduate and move into the professional world they are a reflection of AUM. What I look for in my students is growth. Not only growth from freshman to senior year, but also from the first day of class to the last. I believe it’s pivotal to ensure all my students’ writing evolves so that they will be more than capable writers within their discipline.

The WID Internship Through the Eyes of a Nursing Student

By Kelli Heaton

As I send out mass emails to my students in writing-intensive courses concerning an upcoming paper, I cannot help but feel like an invisible entity. The students know of me and my purpose as a WID intern, but few have physically seen me. All they know is that I am willing to give constructive criticism on their papers, helping them improve their writing skills along with sending out reminders concerning important due dates.

As fate would have it, I became a WID Intern for the same class in which I’m a student – Theoretical Concepts of Professional Nursing Practice. At first, I was worried about how exactly this would all play out: Would my fellow classmates in the Nursing program (whom I have now come to accept as my extended family) find it difficult to talk to me because I was a student that worked directly with Dr. Morris?

As my introduction was made in class as the WID Intern, I was not met with weird looks, but rather I was greeted with interest and acceptance. Nothing had changed between them and me. There wasn’t any distance between us. I was their peer. We had worked together in the past, and we would continue to work together in our futures within Nursing, whether in or out of writing-intensive classes.

I found that the WID internship provided a truly interesting viewpoint. I would be able to relate to the students’ frustrations concerning confusion on assignments and be able to truly share in that “aha!” moment. I would be able to know exactly how they felt because I would be feeling it too.

I believe that being a WID intern has allowed me to have a very special connection with my Nursing “family.” I believe sharing courses with the students I support gives them the advantage that no other students have – I can completely empathize and understand. This advantage allows barriers to be broken down and the common goal of writing improvement to be reached quickly and easily.
Reflections from the Science WID Intern

By Rachael Humber

Upon entering the Writing Across the Curriculum program as an intern, I did not expect to find so many opportunities. I quickly found mentors among the WAC staff and the writing intensive professors. Most importantly, I have had the privilege to become a mentor myself and meet several outstanding students within the School of Sciences.

I have a strong belief that networking is important to my future career, and being a WID intern for the WAC program has allowed me to build relationships within my college.

So far, my favorite assignment has been the journal entries assigned by Dr. Rosine Hall. This assignment requires that each student choose a news article related to their field, summarize the article, and then share their opinion about it. I find it fascinating to read about the different interests and opinions among the students of the science department here at AUM.

The most vital component of the WID internship is being able to work with students within my field of study. When tutoring in writing, it seems as though it would be difficult to be stretched between the School of Sciences, Business, and Education.

The WID internship is set up in a way that the tutor for each school is studying the same materials as their designated students. The students know who to go to for help, and the interns can really get to know their students. Because of the structure of this program, I think that I am learning just as much as the students in my tutoring sessions.

Stranger in a Strange Land: Where Liberal Arts Meets Business

By Daniel Brown

When I learned over the summer that I was selected as one of AUM's five Writing in the Disciplines Interns, I was overjoyed. There would be an intern for each one of AUM's five schools of study.

Being a major from the School of Liberal Arts, I thought for sure that I was going to be selected to represent and assist my own school; however, I could not have been more wrong. Instead, on what felt like the opposite end of the spectrum for writing, I was selected to assist the School of Business.

I thought to myself, “I have never taken a business class in my academic career. How am I ever going to represent the School of Business?” But I have learned so much working with the students from this school.

When I began serving as a WID Intern this semester, not only did I have to assist students, but I also had to teach myself the specifics for business writing. Naturally, reading the handbook entitled Business Grammar, Style, and Usage by Alicia Abell was quite some help, but the biggest learning experience has come from interaction with the students that I have worked with, specifically the international students.

My work with the international students has been the highlight of serving as a WID intern. Not only have I helped them strengthen their foundation in writing, but I have learned so much from them as well. I never really understood the challenges that students who speak English as a second language face when writing, but through this process, I have come to fully understand these challenges.

Helping students to overcome the challenges of a language barrier when writing in their discipline has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my academic career, and I look forward to working with them in the future.
Helping Students Articulate Professional Philosophies

By Julie Combs

As a WID intern assigned to Education and Liberal Arts classes this semester, one of the classes I support is Dr. Clara Young-Whites’ Foundation of Education class.

I decided to interview Dr. Clara Young-White about one of her writing-intensive assignments, an assignment that asks students to articulate their philosophies of education.

When I asked Dr. Young-White to elaborate on how she modeled the writing process through this assignment, she responded as follows: “I implemented the outline portion first as a stepping stone and felt this really helped the students prepare to write a well-developed paper.”

The introduction of the assignment began early on in the course, according to Dr. Young-White. During the discussion of course content, covered through reading of chapters in the required textbook, she highlighted certain topics and connected the course material to the assignment, emphasizing an understanding of the course content first.

Next, she asked the students a series of questions pertaining to their beliefs about education, instruction, and learning. She then had the students create an outline based on their responses.

At this point students contacted me for guidance. I reviewed the students’ outlines and spoke with several students who were very appreciative of receiving assistance and guidance from a peer.

After they drafted their papers, I communicated with students in the class again, giving them suggestions on how to improve their paper from areas of organization and content development down to specific support in grammar and mechanics.

Overall, Dr. Young White believes the WAC instruction has been successful. The students have improved their skills as writers; they are more cognitively aware of their writing process and seem to follow directions better since the implementation of the program.

Auburn Montgomery is an equal opportunity educational institution/employer.