

Faculty Academic Writing Network 2020 Proposal

Rational

One of the challenges for faculty members at many institutions, Stockton University included, is making writing and publishing a priority while maintaining excellence in teaching and contributing to university service. There are many types of writing interventions designed to increase writing productivity. Three common interventions include writing support groups, writing coaches, and writing courses. To meet this challenge, a writing teaching circle was created to increase writing productivity and complete the writing projects of its members. The writing circle was led by Dr. Melissa Zwick during AY 2015/2016 and co-led by Drs. Melissa Zwick and Lauren Del Rossi during AY 2016/2017 and AY 2017/2018 and was funded through the Institute for Faculty Development. Due to the success of the writing teaching circle we are proposing to expand into a faculty academic writing network (FAWN). We will use the experiences and assessment gathered during the 2-year FAWN pilot to develop a permanent solution, a Faculty Academic Writing Center.

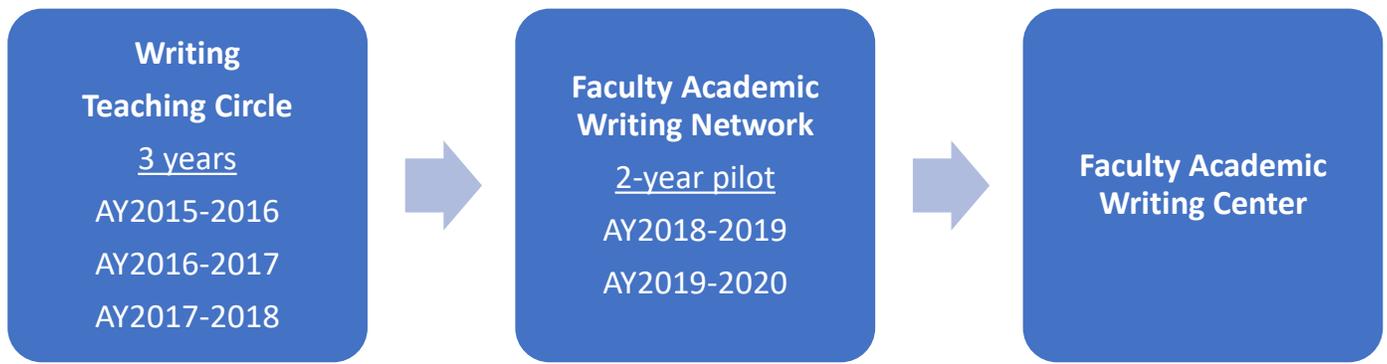


Figure 1: Schematic describing the current and proposed phases of faculty academic writing support at Stockton.

Writing Teaching Circle Background

Participants

At the beginning of each academic year, faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjunct) were invited to submit a letter of intent to join the writing teaching circle. The letter of intent included a brief description of the writing project (type, content area) and the stage of the writing process (haven't started, first draft complete, introduction completed, etc.). Each year the circle has included approximately 15 members from across all schools and ranks (Table 1 and Table 2).

Table 1: Writing teaching circle members by school.

	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
ARHU	1	0	0
BUSN	1	2	0
EDUC	1	0	2
GENS	3	1	2
HLTH	4	4	5
NAMS	2	2	4
SOBL	4	4	3
Total	16	13	16

Table 2: Writing teaching circle members by rank.

	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018
Adjunct Professor	3	1	1
Assistant Professor	4	6	7
Associate Professor	9	4	5
Professor	0	2	3
Total	16	13	16

Framework

The framework of the writing circle allows for a variety of writing support strategies to be implemented throughout the year. Many different interventions have been and are currently utilized. These include a monthly writing group, weekly show-up-and-write sessions, critical friends, shared writing journal, and workshops facilitated by experts in the field.

Writing Circle Meetings

Members of the writing circle typically meet once a month, which results in 4 meetings per semester. Participants bring two pages of writing to the meeting and the circle reads and provides the author with feedback on how to improve their writing.

Designated Writing Times/Show-Up-and-Write Sessions

In addition to the monthly meetings, a classroom is reserved one day a week for members to use as a quiet space to write in or for critical friends to meet. The circle also utilized the library as a show-up-and-write space. One challenge that the circle has faced is that any time slot that we choose inevitably excludes some faculty members. This resulted in faculty members not joining the writing circle or some writing circle participants not able to make every monthly meeting. When participants are not able to make face-to-face time, this can result in those participants having decreased productivity.

Shared Writing Journal

Documenting time spent writing is a common tool utilized by writing groups. The writing circle used GoogleDocs to log writing goals and accomplishments throughout the year. Each member had a page within the larger file which could be viewed by all members of the group.

Critical Friend

Each writing circle member is assigned or chooses a “critical friend(s)”. Critical friends are available to critique writing samples, provide support outside of the writing circle and know the work of the critical friend more closely than other members of the writing circle. Writing circle participants are typically paired with their critical friends based on similar writing projects (books chapters, manuscripts, dissertations, etc.) and similar disciplines. Critical friends have worked best when both participants have been dedicated. An expanded faculty writing network would enable participants to find the best critical friend “fit.”

Blackboard Writing Course

During the AY2017/AY2018 each member received a copy of *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks* by Wendy Belcher. Dr. Belcher provided the facilitators of the circle with her syllabus for a writing course. This year the writing circle is reading one chapter per week and completing weekly writing assignments. Participants upload assignments to the Blackboard page and receive feedback from other members. An expanded faculty writing network would be able to provide more than one Blackboard class per semester, thus serving the needs of many kinds of writing groups.

Writing Workshops

Each year the writing circle has hosted two campus-wide writing workshops. During AY2015/2016, Dr. Tara Gray, University of New Mexico (<http://www.taragray.com/index.html>) led two Publish & Flourish: Become a Prolific Scholar workshops. These workshops focused on 1) increasing productivity by a factor of three, 2) writing prose that is clearer, simpler, better organized, and more compelling and 3) learning to work smarter, not harder. In addition, all participants received a copy of Tara's book, *Publish & Flourish: Become a Prolific Scholar*, and a yearlong membership to the Textbook Author's Association (TAA).

During AY2016/2017, Dr. Amy Benson Brown, Academic Writing and Coaching, (<https://www.academiccoachingandwriting.org/>) led a workshop open to the entire campus community, Writing Compelling Journal Articles and a workshop for members of the writing circle, FIRST Strategies for Stellar Academic Writing. All participants received a yearlong membership to the Textbook Author's Association (TAA). Both workshops were very well attended by faculty from across all schools (Table 3).

Table 3. Workshop participation by school.

	2015/2016	2016/2017
ARHU	1	1
BUSN	3	2
EDUC	3	1
GENS	4	3
GRADUATE STUDIES	0	1
HLTH	8	11
LIBRARY	3	1
NAMS	7	9
SOBL	6	8
Total	35	37

Impact

Data collected from the past two writing circles have illustrated the positive impact the writing circle and writing workshops have had on the faculty participants. The majority of writing circle participants (92%-AY15/16, 100%-AY16/17) reported that they wrote more during this academic year than in previous years and 66%-AY15/16, 83%-AY16/17 of participants reported that they submitted more for publication. All participants from both years reported that the writing circle helped set better writing goals, improve the quality of their writing, and encouraged them to write more than they would have otherwise (see appendix). During the AY15/16, members reported that they submitted a combined 25 writing projects for publication. During the AY16/17, members reported that they submitted 17 writing projects for publication. This number is most likely a low estimate because only 6 of the 13 members completed the survey.

Both campus-wide workshops had significant attendance (approximately 35 participants per year) from all schools including the library and administration. The majority of participants stated that they would recommend the workshop to a colleague (100%-AY15/16, 96%-AY16/17) and written comments were overwhelmingly positive (see appendix). Thus, the writing circle and the workshops hosted by the circle have already demonstrated a significant campus-wide impact.

Faculty Academic Writing Network (FAWN)

Need

Writing and submitting writing projects for publication is a pillar of academia and an important component of being a faculty member at Stockton. It also clearly addresses the strategic LEGS theme of Learning: Delivering high value added learning experiences and **promoting scholarly activity** (S1). Membership in the teaching writing circle and robust campus-wide attendance at writing workshops hosted by the writing teaching circle demonstrate a clear need for services and activities that support and enhance faculty academic writing. Currently, the writing circle is the only group at Stockton focused on providing support for academic writing projects. These writing projects include research manuscripts, grant proposals, books, book chapters, conference papers, dissertations, essays, and Stockton reports.

The resources of the circle have been stretched to capacity; ideally a writing support group caps at 6 participants. We have 16 participants this year; we have turned away faculty members. We are still receiving emails from faculty interested in joining the current circle. At our Fall 2017 meetings, we have not been able to read all pieces of writing that the participants submitted for review.

We believe that this important faculty service warrants a more permanent solution. The IFD funds teaching circles for three years, therefore the writing teaching circle will not continue after the current academic year. Despite the documented successes of the circle, two main issues have emerged 1) the budget is not large enough to continue bringing in high-caliber speakers. The textbook author association (TAA) offset a large portion of the cost, but typically only subsidizes one workshop per institution. We were fortunate to leverage an additional workshop, which is not an option in future years. Additionally, the amount of time needed to maintain the organization, meetings, workshops, etc. is beyond the capabilities of one or two faculty members without a course release.

Goal

We propose the creation of a faculty-run network for academic writing to meet two main outcomes.

Outcome 1: Increase faculty scholarly writing productivity.

Outcome 2: Increase the number of grants, manuscripts, books, etc. submitted for publication by faculty.

This network would be coordinated by a faculty member and offer a variety of support services and workshops to faculty. This network will serve as a 2-year pilot program to further demonstrate the need of a permanent faculty academic writing center. This network has the potential to impact faculty from across the entire campus in their scholarship with ancillary benefits to teaching and service (see appendix for assessment data). The creation of a network will address the 2020 Learning outcome: Delivering high value added learning experiences and **promoting scholarly activity** (S1).

Participants

At the beginning of each academic year, all faculty (full-time, part-time, adjuncts, and staff) will be invited to submit a letter of intent to join FAWN. The letter of intent will include a brief description of the academic writing project (type, content area) and the stage of the writing process (haven't started, first draft complete, introduction completed, etc.). We anticipate between 15-25 interested members in the pilot years. The requested one course release per faculty Fellow leader per year (for two leaders) would provide the Fellows with the time (one course release per semester) to address the needs of this many faculty in each of these two pilot years (see description below).

Faculty Fellows to Oversee Network

This proposal recognizes the significant time and resources needed to implement a successful faculty academic writing network. Dr. Melissa Zwick facilitated the first writing teaching circle but needed to enlist a second faculty member, Dr. Lauren Del Rossi to be able to continue to plan and host workshops and effectively coordinate the writing circle for the subsequent two years. Because we have proposed a significant increase in the number of activities, there will be two

individuals to oversee the network each receiving a course release per person for the academic year, spread across the fall and spring semesters. Provost Vermeulen has generously agreed to provide financial support from the Office of the Provost for the Faculty Fellow course releases and to implement the call for proposals for those positions. The requested one course release per Faculty Fellow leader per year (for two leaders) would provide the fellows with the time (one course release per semester) to address the needs of this many faculty in each of these two pilot years.

During the spring 2018 semester the IFD director, in conjunction with Dr. Aleksandra Hultquist and Dr. Melissa Zwick, will solicit applications from faculty members who are interested in overseeing the network during AY18/19.

To be able to begin this program during AY 2018-2019, we will request that the administration in conjunction with the SFT union create and announce two additional Faculty Fellow positions (see Provision 6 below). This would allow for two course releases per year (one fall and one spring) for the two pilot years. After year one of the pilot, the SFT union and administration could negotiate compensation for an ongoing position to be ready by year three if a permanent center is created.

Provision 6, page 2, Stockton Faculty Fellows Program MOA

“In cases approved by the Provost, deadline dates can be waived so that a Faculty Fellow opportunity can be announced after November 1 of each year but before March 1 of each year for a fellowship in the following academic year.”

Network Activities

The faculty members selected to oversee the network would be responsible for coordinating the following activities:

1. Facilitating weekly and/or monthly writing groups. These groups would be organized by the faculty writing fellows, but implemented by the groups themselves. They might be interdisciplinary for the sake of productivity, discipline specific for discreet projects, proposal writing projects, or some mix. These groups encourage accountability and provide shared knowledge by discipline (Table 5).
2. Organizing quiet times to write. These will be facilitated by the writing faculty fellows and take the form of regularized “Show-up-and-Write” sessions, where faculty work side by side or on an online forum on their own projects. These sessions encourage standardized writing times and accountability (Table 4).
3. Planning writing workshops and retreats. Workshops would be organized on a specific theme, such as “Planning for the Semester,” “Handling Stalled Projects,” “Writing Your Peer-reviewed Article” etc. They would be offered by both the writing faculty fellows and guest speakers. Retreats would take the form of gathering in a dedicated writing space for single or multiple days. Faculty would work on their own projects side-by-side with time to provide feedback and emotional support. Workshops and retreats provide dedicated writing time, organizational help, and discipline-specific support (Table 4).
4. Faculty writing consultations. This would consist of one-on-one meeting times with peers and/or one of the writing faculty fellows organized on a specific need. Consultations provide guidance and support.
5. Maintain a list of resources. This list would consist of both on and off-campus support in final stages of publishing, such as editing, formatting, ESL editing, etc. It would also consist of other support resources, such as information regarding outside fellowships and grants and community-run opportunities to write. This list offers problem-solving and provides necessary means to complete research and publication.

Table 4. Proposed FAWN activities and timeline for a typical semester.

Activity	YEAR	SEMESTER	WORKSHOP DATE
Semester Planning Workshop	2018	Spring	1/13/2018
January Write-In	2018	Spring	1/27/2018
Revising your Article	2018	Spring	2/10/2018
February Write-In	2018	Spring	2/24/2018
Science Writing	2018	Spring	3/10/2018
March Write-In	2018	Spring	3/24/2018
Book Proposal Workshop	2018	Spring	4/7/2018
April Write-In	2018	Spring	4/21/2018
Summer Planning Workshop	2018	Spring	5/15/2018

Table 5. Proposed FAWN activities for a typical week.

DAY	TIME START	CLASS
Monday	4:30 PM	How to Write Your Article in 12 Weeks
Tuesday	4:30 PM	Science Writing Group
Wednesday	4:30 PM	Productivity Group
Thursday	4:30 PM	Dissertation to Book
Friday	4:30 PM	TBA/Online Support Group Check-in

Space/Facility Requirements

The network will utilize spaces that were available to the writing circle. Campus classrooms and meeting spaces will be reserved to hold weekly or monthly writing groups and campus-wide workshops. When these spaces are unavailable the network will utilize the faculty lounge or the IFD space. The library will continue to be utilized for show up and write sessions. We can put in a request with the Space Committee for a dedicated space in the future.

Partnerships

The network will initially utilize the IFD to coordinate the funds and oversee the faculty member in charge of the network. Typically, faculty writing centers are housed in university faculty development centers, so this is a natural fit. We have initiated dialogue with the current director of the IFD and Dr. Douglas Harvey is willing to assist in this area.

We will also continue to explore potential future partnerships with the grants office and the library as needs arise. The mission of other centers at Stockton, such as the Murphy Writing Center and the Student Writing Center do not coincide with the mission of the Faculty Academic Writing Network and would therefore not be utilized.

Library

Funds will be used over two years to establish a library of faculty writing resources (Table 6).

Table 6. List of potential resources for a faculty writing library.

	Productivity and Academic Writing	
Robert Boice	Professors as Writers: A Self-Help Guide to Productive Writing	24.95
Paul J. Silvia	How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing	14.95
Helen Sword	Air & Light & Time & Space: How Successful Academics Write	24.95
Eviatar Zerubavel	The Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Thesis, Dissertations, and Books	20.50
Joli Jensen	Write No Matter What: Advice for Academics (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing)	15.00
Daniel Hall	Real Fast Writing: How To Write Faster 25 of the Hottest, Easy-to-Implement, Under the Radar Strategies	12.99
Patricia Goodson	Becoming an Academic Writer: 50 Exercises for Paced, Productive, and Powerful Writing	41.00
William Germano	Getting It Published: A Guide for Scholars and Anyone Else Serious about Serious Books, Third Edition	20.00
	Dealing with Writer's Block	
Roseanne Bane	Around the Writer's Block: Using Brain Science to Solve Writer's Resistance	15.95
Jane Anne Staw	Unstuck: A Supportive and Practical Guide to Working through Writer's Block	21.99
	Working within the Norms of Scholarly Writing	
Helen Sword	The Writer's Diet: A Guide to Fit Prose (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing)	15.00
Helen Sword	Stylish Academic Writing	20.29
Laura Belcher	Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks	94.99
William Germano	From Dissertation to Book	17.98
Gerald Graff & Cathy Birkenstein	They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing	35.98
Beth Luey	Handbook for Academic Authors	25.99
Joshua Shimel	Writing Science: How to Write Papers That Get Cited and Proposals That Get Funded	36.95
Stephen B. Heard	The Scientist's Guide to Writing: How to Write More Easily and Effectively throughout Your Scientific Career	21.95
Barbara Gastel & Robert A. Day	How to Write and Publish a Scientific Paper	35.00
Angelika Hofman	Scientific Writing and Communication: Papers, Proposals, and Presentations	44.95
Susan Rabner & Alfred Fortunato	Thinking Like Your Editor: How to Write Great Serious Nonfiction and Get It Published	16.95
Michael Larson	How to Write a Book Proposal	19.99
	Total Cost	\$598.30

Assessment

The writing circle measured the effectiveness of the both the circle and the campus-wide workshops using survey instruments designed to gauge writing productivity and the effectiveness of the circle and workshops provided. We have extensive data available for review (see appendix) and have used the data to improve productivity and guide the activities offered by the circle. Briefly, workshop evaluation results indicated that participants thought the time invested in the workshops was well spent and that they would recommend them to a colleague. Written comments were overwhelmingly positive, and the majority of attendees took away valuable tools to increase writing productivity such as learning practical approaches, strategizing how to make writing a priority, and recognizing that there is collegial support. Participants in the writing teaching circle indicated that they submitted more work for publication than they would have without the support of the circle.

Similar survey instruments will be developed and used to assess the specific outcomes for each activity offered by the writing network. These data will be used to refine, and tailor future activities offered by FAWN. Additionally, data on faculty academic writing submitted for publication, the use of campus facilities (classrooms, etc.), and faculty participation at events will be collected and used to support the creation of a Faculty Academic Writing Center.

Budget

Budget estimates are based on the actual cost of workshops that the writing teaching circle hosted (Table 8). We would like to host Dr. Wendy Belcher (<http://www.wendybelcher.com/>) for the first workshop and have used her speaker fee as a guideline for the following year.

* Provost Vermeulen has generously agreed to provide financial support from the Office of the Provost for the faculty fellow course releases (\$24,000, Table 7), therefore these funds are not included in the 2020 budget.

Table 7. Faculty Fellow funding from the Office of the Provost.

	AY2018/2019	AY2019/2020
Course Release		
Fall Semester	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
Spring Semester	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00

Table 8. Proposed 2020 budget.

	AY2018/2019	AY2019/2020
Campus-wide Workshop		
Speaker Fee	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00
Hotel	\$242.00 (121.00 x 2 nights)	\$242.00 (121.00 x 2 nights)
Travel (Airfare)	\$300.00	\$300.00
Refreshments	\$335.00 (lunch for 30) \$126.00 (breakfast for 30)	\$335.00 (lunch for 30) \$126.00 (breakfast for 30)
Library		
Writing Resources	\$300.00	\$300.00
Total	\$7,303.00	\$7,303.00
Two-year Total	\$14,606.00	