

SWCA IDEATE

Planning Guide



To support writing center certification

Introduction

The SWCA IDEATE (Ideas for Developing Excellence Among Tutor Educators) Planning Guide is designed to be used by any writing center to discuss, plan, implement, and revise sets of writing center documentation of widespread value to the program and the larger institution. This guide supports Southeastern Writing Center Association (SWCA) certification process by providing background and concepts for writing centers during the application and/or planning process.

Planning Guide Definitions

PROGRAM: Any related service that supports and extends tutoring

TUTOR: Writing center staff members (often graduate and undergraduate students)

STRATEGIC PLAN: An organizational document that outlines, plans, or assesses writing center activity, sets priorities, and establishes outcomes (often linked to funding, budgeting, and annual reporting documents)

VISION: Often a brief statement (one sentence) that establishes the long-term directions of the writing center, usually aspirational

MISSION: Often a longer statement (three to four sentences) that establishes how the writing center implements its programs

VALUES: Inspirational statements, terms, or activities that guide writing center activities and decision-making

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FIELD	DOCUMENT(S)	DESCRIPTION	RECOMMENDATION OF BEST PRACTICES	RATIONALE for WC PRACTICE
Letter of Application	Brief Cover Letter of Application	The letter should state the intent and contents of the submission portfolio. It should give a brief overview of the writing center contexts (i.e. number of students at the school, number of writing center staff, etc.). It should also give a brief explanation of the supporting materials packet (see below).	A one-page maximum is recommended for the letter. It is important to be concise and offer a brief preview. The rest of the submission will go more in-depth. Think of this document as a title page or cover letter for the submission as a whole.	The document should help the committee understand and communicate the work the writing center does.
Memorandum explaining institutional and writing center contexts	A Memorandum	The memorandum should contain an in-depth explanation of the writing center and institutional contexts and any relevant information pertaining to the relationship between the institution and writing center educational practices.	A two-page maximum is recommended for this memorandum. Make sure to be thorough and include both institutional and writing center contexts.	The document should explain the relationship between institutional goals and writing center practice. In addition, it should link writing center initiatives, programming, and goals with larger institutional strategic planning.
Brief preview of supporting materials	A brief preview of supporting materials	The preview should outline and synthesize the contents of the supporting materials packet. It should also give a brief explanation of each of the documents in the packet and their significance.	A two-page length suggestion is recommended for this document. The preview should not only support the packet but be a stand-alone document for future reference.	Demonstrate how writing center documents function individually and complement one another as a collective whole.

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Supporting Material Packet	<p>A series of submissions that must include writing center tutor education documents (eg, sample modules, syllabi, lists of readings, samples, prompts, videos, or other supporting texts)</p>	<p>The packet should discuss briefly the sufficient evidence that the writing center meets the guidelines put forth by the SWCA Research & Development committee.</p>	<p>The documents suggested by the SWCA Research & Development committee are: proposals, staff training exercises, consultant and consultation related documents, staff education outcomes, sample writing center workshops, etc. Inclusion is recommended for anything that you deem as helpful to your submission.</p>	<p>Design writing center materials to support and guide day-to-day and long-term work. Establish clear and replicable tutor education goals, needs, and directions. Communicate the link between tutor education and writing values.</p>
Letters from Two Separate Campus Community Members	<p>Two letters written from campus community members</p>	<p>These letters should be written by two separate campus community leaders that engaged in writing center facilitated events (i.e. workshops).</p>	<p>A one-page maximum is recommended for each of the letters. The letters should show how the writing center adds value to campus life. It should express specific examples of what the writing center did and how it helped improve campus life.</p>	<p>This document should explain the writing center's engagement of the institutional community in shared value, communicate approaches to the development of a shared mission and vision, discuss shared values, and show institutional commitment.</p>
Description of the center's approach to tutoring and supporting writing	<p>A one-page document</p>	<p>This description should be an in-depth discussion of the writing center's approach to tutoring <i>and</i> supporting writing for the institution in which it is based.</p>	<p>A one-page maximum is recommended for the document. It is also recommended that the document includes preliminary expectations and consequential outcomes for the writing center's approach.</p>	<p>This document should provide an overview rationale for approach to tutoring and examine writing center programming related to tutoring (such as outreach in various forms.)</p>

SWCA Research & Development Committee

Designers: Russell Carpenter, Scott Whiddon, Courtnie Morin, Lucas Green, and Kevin Dvorak

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