Interested in the Online Writing Resource Center? Have ideas or resources to share? Want to partner with us?

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http://sites.newpaltz.edu/owrc/
Online Writing Resource Center

The Online Writing Resource Center is a website that focuses on “Writing Across the Curriculum.” This site is designed to be a resource for faculty across all disciplines who value strong writing skills, but lack the time to foster these skills during their own class time.

Why Teach Writing Across the Curriculum?

As the National Commission on Writing has noted, “Writing is a ‘threshold skill’ for both employment and promotion,” an observation that holds true across industries and occupations. Time and again, research has demonstrated that businesses are clamoring for employees who, in the words of one corporate executive, can “investigate, analyze and report their findings in a professional manner.” Because writing skills are so crucial to student success both inside and outside of academia, Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) initiatives have become central components of higher education curricula. Whether physics, sociology, or business majors, undergraduate students are increasingly expected to complete an array of both low-stakes writing assignments as well as formal essays and reports.

What does the site contain?

- Instructional videos
- Printable handouts for each lesson
- Self-assessment activities
- Links to other valuable writing websites

http://sites.newpaltz.edu/owrc/

Who used the material?

At SUNY New Paltz
- Faculty teaching Composition II, Business, Biology, Sociology and Literature Courses

At Sullivan Community College
- A faculty member teaching fitness courses.

Approximately 200 students were assigned material from the website.

What did we learn?

- Faculty, especially those who do not teach writing & may not be aware of existing resources, do feel there is a need for a site where they can access effective teaching materials.
- Faculty found the handouts, activities, and links to other resources helpful.
- Faculty reported that students in lower-division courses responded well to the material. However, more advanced writers reported less satisfaction, finding the resources too basic.

If SUNY decides to embark upon a truly comprehensive Online Writing Resource Center, these areas should be addressed:

SUNY-Focused
Instead of trying to be everything to everyone, how can the site focus on SUNY-specific concerns such as writing in the various GE categories?

Tutoring & Writing Centers
How can this site be integrated not only into classrooms but also tutoring centers?

Maintaining the Site
What resources would be required to maintain such a site?