

Ten Ways to Work with the Writing Center to Support Your Students

1. Help us make sure students know about us by showing them our website: <https://www.writingcenter.udel.edu/>. You might note that we have a link to a Powerpoint show on our homepage--it includes a voiceover that provides a 10 minute intro to our services. Feel free to show it to your students!
2. Emphasize that seeking feedback on coming up with ideas, organizing thoughts, and refining language for specific audiences are normal things to do! You might even mention feedback you have found useful as a writer/scholar. We don't want anyone to think writing centers are only for "bad" writers.
3. Remind them frequently during the semester that they can visit us at any stage of the writing process. In fact, meeting with a writing tutor early on (while brainstorming ideas, for example) can save a writer a lot of time and angst later in the process. Usually, a successful piece of writing is successful more because the meaning is clear and compelling than because the commas are all in the right places.
4. Support our Oral Communication consultants by suggesting that students meet with them to plan and rehearse in class presentations--either in person ones or virtual ones.
5. Point out that we offer three different kinds of appointments--in person, real-time online, and asynchronous tutoring. We do this to accommodate students' busy schedules and to reach students who do not spend a lot of time on the Newark main campus.
6. When suggesting students use the writing center, ask them to take a little time to think about what would be best to ask the tutor to focus on with them. They could use your assignment sheet to review their draft and come up with some specific questions for their tutor.
7. Encourage students to make appointments in advance and use those appointments as little deadlines for themselves. We get really busy around midterms and at the end of the semester. Planning ahead will make it more likely they can get an appointment.
8. Consider how a student might feel if you "mandate" that they go to the writing center because their writing doesn't meet your expectations. We don't want them to resent visiting us--that doesn't make for a productive meeting! Suggesting our services to everyone, and even offering incentives like an extended deadline, a "do-over" on an assignment, or forgiving a missed reading response or other small assignment is likely to foster the kind of enthusiasm and openness that makes for a good tutoring session.
9. Highlight our non-tutoring services, like workshops and writing groups.
10. Always talk about writing as a process--it's an activity, not just a finished product. And it's a lifetime process, at that--communication is something we all continue to learn more about every day.