



## Writing, Learning, and EAL Services ANNUAL REPORT April 2015 – March 2016

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**Writing, Learning, and English as an Additional Language (EAL) Services** are delivered in the SFU Library through both the Student Learning Commons (SLC) and the Research Commons (RC). The SLC offers services primarily for undergraduate students, and the RC offers services tailored for graduate students. Both streams of programming include two main categories of service: consultations and workshops.

The SLC offers three types of consultations: general consultations on writing, learning, and English-language topics; Conversations Partners; and Back on Track Learning Plans.

Both the SLC and RC offer three types of workshops: those that are open to the general student population; program/course-integrated workshops, tailored to a specific university course or program; and facilitated groups, which involve more group discussion than presentation of material.

This report provides statistical information and a summary of highlights for all of these areas of service.

### SUMMARY STATISTICS FOR 2015/2016

- Overall, **Writing, Learning, and EAL (English as an Additional Language) Services** delivered:
  - **3214 consultations** (2694 through the SLC, including WriteAway; 520 through the RC)
  - **690 Learning Plan appointments** for students in the Back on Track Program
  - **1381 Conversation Partner visits**
  
  - **162 open workshops with an attendance of 1388** (93 workshops through the SLC, with an attendance of 643; 69 workshops through the RC, with an attendance of 745)
  - **126 course/program-integrated workshops attended by 3359 students** (115 workshops through the SLC, attendance 3217; 11 workshops through the RC, attendance 142)
  - **147 facilitated groups with an attendance of 1087**

Further details about the focus and campus location of these services are provided in later sections of this report.

## NEW FOR 2015/2016

The following programs and services were newly launched or piloted in 2015/2016:

**English as an Additional Language – new offerings.** In 2015, Simon Fraser University officially opened the *Centre for English Language Learning, Teaching, and Research (CELLTR)*, offering the Student Learning Commons, and in particular Tim Mossman, EAL Coordinator, a number of opportunities to collaborate on existing and new EAL programs and services:

- **Free Pizza and Movie Nights**, a collaboration with Co-op Education, Career & Volunteer Services and CELLTR, held monthly in the new CELLTR space.
- **Core University English Immersion Experience**, a one-week program for EAL students. CELLTR helped to coordinate and promote this program offered late August 2015 and during Reading Break, February 2016.
- **Business 441 Student Project**, a collaboration with Business instructor, Jason Ho, and CELLTR Director, Valia Spiliotopoulos, on a project that required BUS 441 students to develop and manage a digital campaign consisting of website development, Facebook Ad, and Google AdWords, to promote the SLC's 'Let's Talk' conversation group, to business students in Spring 2016.
- **Social: English Conversation Partner Program**, a new opportunity for Conversation Partners to mingle together, share snacks and participate in activities, in the new CELLTR space.
- **Screencasts**: Quincy Wang, CELLTR Web and Multimedia Designer, and Tim began creating a screencast called *Improve Your Communication Style*, to be released Fall 2016.

**French Writing Support:** In collaboration with the French department. SLC's first Graduate French Writing Facilitator, Julia Galmiche, offered tutoring in French writing, with Amanda Goldrick-Jones providing supervision and training. In Spring 2016, Julia began offering French writing workshops, which were well attended.

**Video Tutorial Series:** Cynthia Wright led a project – with involvement from several other SLC team members - to develop a series of videos on core learning and study skills topics. A co-op student with expertise in video graphics was hired to work on the project for eight months, beginning January 2016, producing six videos.

**New SLC Web Site Design:** We re-designed and re-organized our web site toward enhanced learner-centredness. Special thanks to temporary Learning Services Associate, Rebecca Whitmore, who took a lead role on this project, and to Nina Saklikar and Janis McKenzie of the SFU Library eBranch department, for providing consultation and implementing the changes.

**Peer Assisted Study Sessions (PASS):** Donna McGee Thompson and Ruth Silverman began preparations for a Summer 2016 pilot of the PASS model in one course, Computing Science 120. PASS is otherwise

known internationally as Supplemental Instruction (SI), and Supported Learning Groups (SLGs). PASS sessions are regularly-scheduled, facilitated review sessions led by students who have successfully completed the supported course in a previous semester, and who are paid for taking on this role. Donna and Ruth have completed official SI Supervisor training.

**Back on Track Graphic Novel:** After receiving a compelling proposal from a former Back on Track student to write a graphic novel, **Underdawg**, highlighting pivotal experiences for many BOT students, the SLC hired the student (funded by Student Services) and a graphic artist, to work on the project. Donna McGee Thompson and Ruth Silverman served on an editorial committee together with colleagues from Student Services. We expect to launch the novel in Spring 2017.

## STUDENT LEARNING COMMONS SERVICES (Primarily Undergraduate)

**Consultations:** The Writing, Learning, and EAL team delivered 2694 one-on-one consultations through the Student Learning Commons in 2015/2016. Table 1 shows the distribution by consultation focus and campus. Consistent with previous years, the most highly sought area of focus by far was for help in Writing (95%).

**Table 1. SLC ‘general’ consultations by focus and campus. April 2015 - March 2016. N = 2694**

	Writing	Learning	EAL (Speaking)
<b>Burnaby</b>	2284	77	49
<b>Surrey</b>	170	1	0
<b>Vancouver</b>	105	7	1
	2559	85	50
<b>%</b>	95%	3.2%	1.8%

571 of the Writing consultations were delivered online through **WriteAway**, a provincial online tutoring consortium. With Writing Services Coordinator, Amanda Goldrick-Jones, in the role of WriteAway Institutional Coordinator and Tutor Trainer for SFU, our participation in WriteAway remained very strong in 2015 – 16, with seven Graduate Writing Facilitators contributing a total of up to 30 hours per week, the highest in the consortium. We continue to strategically increase the scope of the service, reaching out to new programs or courses each year. Programs currently accessing the service include writing-intensive courses offered by distance education, Academics First (varsity student-athletes), Back on Track programs (students in academic difficulty), and select courses in a number of

*Can't say enough good things about the WriteAway service, everything has exceeded my expectations. Thank you!*

-SFU student

departments.

**The Conversation Partner Program:** EAL Peer Educators met weekly for one term with more than 150 students who speak English as an Additional Language over the year (1381 hours of direct service volunteer hours).

**Open Workshops:** The SLC offered 93 open workshops, attended by 643 students on such topics as *Top 5 Things to Know about University Writing; Improve Your Concentration and Reading Effectiveness; and Critical Thinking*. Further details are provided below in Table 2.

**Peer Education:** Fifty-eight carefully selected SFU students served as Peer Educators for one, two, or three semesters, providing thousands of hours of service to fellow students through one-to-one meetings and small group activities related to Learning, Writing, and English communication. Amanda Goldrick-Jones and Ruth Silverman continued as Co-Divisional Supervisors for the Learning & Writing Peers at Burnaby. Tim Mossman, EAL Services Coordinator, continued in this role for EAL Peers, and Cynthia Wright, SLC Surrey Coordinator, for Peers at SFU Surrey.

*I always wanted to say "THANK YOU SO MUCH" to all Student Learning Commons staff. All workshops and consultations are really helpful.*

-SLC student client

Peer Education aims to provide a professional development opportunity for the students who volunteer in these roles. In addition to receiving in-depth and ongoing training on topics relevant to their responsibilities, Peer Educators also receive support for self-selected *Personal and Professional Development* goals, such as public speaking or project management. Support for reaching these goals is offered by **Peer Coaches**, experienced Peers who advance with training into this role. Several Peers assumed the coaching role each term.

**Program/Course-Integrated Workshops:** The SLC delivered 115 workshops that were tailored for, and integrated into, specific courses, disciplines, or programs, reaching 3217 students. Examples of new integrated workshops offered this year include:

*Knowledge café, writing workshop, GERO 406 (Vancouver).*

*Goal Setting for New Years' Resolutions, Residence.*

*Transition to College or University, Dogwood 25 Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Program.*

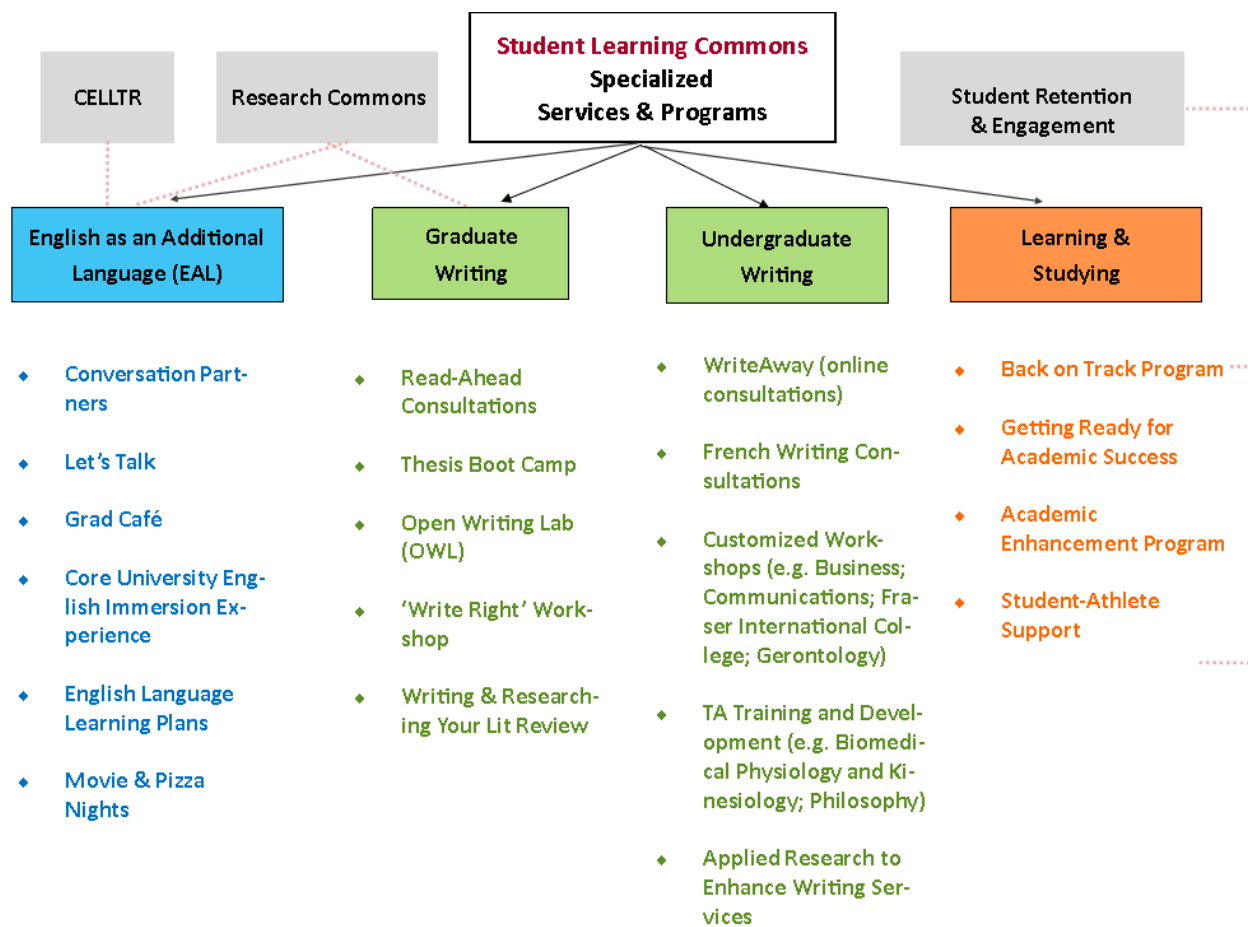
Other program-integrated workshops were offered as part of the partnerships described in the next section.

*A really helpful overview for university!!*

~Participant in *Getting Ready for Academic Success* workshop

## SPECIALIZED SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

In addition to offering consultations, open workshops, and integrated workshops through both the SLC and RC, our team delivers a variety of *specialized Writing, Learning, and EAL services and programs* for more targeted audiences or purposes. The following table gives an overview of the programs and services offered this year, many of which are described in more detail elsewhere in this report.



**Partnerships:** The *Academic Enhancement Program* (AEP), launched in 2006, is a collaborative program between the School of Computing Science (CS) and the SLC, co-developed and co-coordinated by Donna McGee Thompson, and Diana Cukierman, Computing Science Senior Lecturer. The AEP is a suite of student academic success activities run within, and tailored to, courses in lower-division Computing Science, and more recently Engineering Science. Activities include two workshops designed and delivered as part of the course requirements for core first-year courses, and an “AEP elective” activity. For more information on the AEP program, please visit, <http://www.sfu.ca/computing/undergraduate/student-life/academic-enhancement-program.html> .

This year, the AEP delivered 19 workshops reaching 653 students. To date, more than 5,000 students have been served. The AEP team also conducts research on student learning in the disciplines of computing science and engineering, which is approved by the SFU Office of Research Ethics, and supported by several grants, most recently from the SFU Teaching and Learning Centre.

**Academics First Program:** The SLC continued to deliver academic success activities as part of the Academics First Program, which supports first-year student-athletes. Graduate Facilitators delivered several workshops tailored for this group. Ruth Silverman developed and provided training for nineteen (19) new Student Athlete Learning Coaches in September 2015. These upper-division varsity athletes with strong academic achievement provide academic coaching to first-year varsity athletes.

**Back on Track (BOT):** The SLC continued to be one of the major partners in the SFU Back on Track (BOT) program. This three-semester program offers students who have been required to withdraw from the University a second opportunity to achieve academic success in an environment with high levels of support and accountability. In 2015-16, the SLC BOT team delivered 690 **Learning Plan** consultations: one-hour, one-on-one meetings with students entering the BOT program that identify the particular challenges and relevant strategies and resources for the individual student. A team of Graduate Learning Facilitators delivered the majority of these consultations across the three campuses with Learning Services Coordinators at Surrey and Burnaby also participating as needed. Graduate Learning Facilitators (and occasionally Coordinators) also delivered 31 **Getting Started** sessions, which include group discussions about academic experiences and two self-assessments. SLC Learning Services Coordinators at Burnaby and Surrey also co-instructed, with colleagues from Health and Counselling Services, 33 sections of the program's courses, **BOT 120** and **BOT 140**, with an average of 25 students per section. These 12-week courses guide students through a series of topics and self-management strategies associated with student success.

*Great program...a saving grace to a lot of people, including me. I hope Back on Track continues to run and help students get back on course. Keep it up!*

*~Student in the Back on Track Program*

## RESEARCH COMMONS (Graduate-Student Focused Services)

The graduate writing team is coordinated by Writing Services Coordinator, Renee McCallum, and delivers services primarily through the Research Commons, headed by Nicole White. This year the team continued to build several programs launched just prior to the start of this reporting year. These included **Write Conversations**, delivered several times per term, offering graduate students an opportunity to discuss a particular area of writing in a small group setting; **Open Writing Lab**, which gives graduate students a dedicated space and time in which to write with consultation services on hand; and **Write right: Expectations and the writing process for graduate students**, a full-day workshop for graduate students.

This team delivered 520 consultations this year through the Research Commons, 349 of which were through the Read-Ahead service, which provides in-depth support for graduate students writing theses, projects, or any piece of writing with a longer deadline.

The graduate writing team also continued to play a major role in the **Thesis Boot Camp**, delivering both group sessions and one-on-one consultations to participants. This three-day intensive workshop offers graduate students an opportunity to dedicate focused time on their thesis while working in a comfortable environment with writing and research support on site. The Thesis Boot Camp was offered five times this year, three times in Burnaby, once in Surrey and once in Vancouver. Each offering had 25 - 30 students attend.

*We would like to express our sincerest gratitude to all the amazing people who have guided us and continue to help navigate the essay writing process. Your valuable insight and assistance is critical to our success and so greatly appreciated*

~Instructor of graduate course, on behalf of class.

They also offered several **workshops** tailored to graduate students through the Research Commons. Topics included *An Introduction to Graduate Writing*; *Writing and Researching Your Literature Review* (co-led with a Librarian); *Drafting*; and *Time Management for Graduate Students*. Statistics are included in the Summary Statistics section on page 1.