Sabancı University Writing Center QUESTIONNAIRE
Editing Service for Faculty at Writing Centers or Other Units in Higher Education

Dates: Posting on EWCA & MENAWCA Listserves, Nov. 2 & Nov. 3, 2009; Collection, Nov. 9, 2009
EWCA: ewca-listserv@sabanciuniv.edu; MENAWCA: MENAWCENTER@LISTSERV.TAMU.EDU

Total responses obtained from EWCA & MENAWCA members: 32, in form of interaction with the respondents through threads.

Questionnaire Forms taken as base: 18

81 University Writing Center Website URLs were scanned and information about “Editing Service for Faculty” was collected. Results indicated that 5 universities out of 81 offered editing for faculty, however implementations varied considering guidance/support in the editing stage of the writing process versus editing -- implying the fixing of faculty papers of any kind --by writing center faculty or tutors. The understanding from the web search was that editorial support to faculty at some universities could be in practice not necessarily under the name of an announced/ official/ institutional program or project, but at various degrees and format depending on needs.

18 respondents answered the 4 questions on the questionnaire sent to EWCA & MENAWCA Listserves promptly, filling in their honest views, informative comments, and sending at the same time explanatory letters or supplementary texts. It was a great opportunity to exchange ideas.

We are grateful to all the individuals who contributed most professionally and graciously, but we’re revealing neither their posts/ titles nor their names in this document other than the names of their institutions in alphabetical order. If there is interest for further dialogue, names/ mail addresses can be provided only with the respondents’ consent.

The answers to the questions and additional comments are presented below.

With Great Appreciation of Sharing,
Dilek Tokay
SU Writing Center, Istanbul, Turkey

Q U E S T I O N N A I R E  R E S P O N S E S

Q 1. Is editing service for faculty an institutional need at your university?

- YES: 12
  1. Editing is provided only for a foreign language.
  2. Yes, editing support is provided for TAs and the novice, but not for the senior faculty.
  3. Editing support is given in the same manner it is done for the undergraduates as there is a need.
  4. Editing is done for new and younger faculty; sometimes for mid-career faculty, occasionally for senior members.

- NO: 6
  1. Administration won’t agree with the practice even if some faculty may want it.
  2. At faculty level, written skills expectations should be high.
  3. Though claimed, it is superfluous.
  4. Editing is not an institutional but a personal need for some faculty.
  5. The grants office does provide some kinds of grant prep assistance, but this is slanted toward meeting federal regulations than linguistic editing.
Q. 2. Does your Writing Center provide an editing service for faculty at your university?

YES: 4 - Comments:
1. Yes, only unofficially.
2. In the same way service is provided for undergraduates.
3. Very few of the WC members with special know how do it when need arises.
4. Some non-native speakers of English especially make use of this service.
5. We try to have faculty use the WC in the same way as we encourage students to use it, i.e. as a resource for help through the writing process. However, we have made exceptions and provided straight editing services.

NO: 14 - Comments:
1. Maybe only at a personal basis and occasionally in urgent need.
2. It would be contradicting our mission.
3. We provide the same type of writing support to faculty as to students, but with the few faculty that come in, it always turns out to be more editing than anything else.
4. Some members of the center provide the service privately.
5. Writing tutors help faculty edit their work, working with them, but not for them. In other words, it’s not a drop-it-off-and-we’ll-fix-it but, as it is for students, a teaching/tutoring relationship.
6. No editing service for faculty; however, we edit many documents for staff in our unit, the Center for Academic Success Programs.

Q. 3. If editing faculty papers is not a component of your Writing Center’s mission statement, is this service provided by another Unit, run by professional editors?

YES: 3 - Comments:
1. Departments have their own professional editors.
2. Freelance editors in link with the university work for this service.
3. A number of departments have editing services of their own, and, of course, the grant-writing and publications departments have editors.

NO: 16 - Comments:
1. Writing Center’s main goal is giving guidance and support for all stages of writing. Editing is included in this, but it is teaching editing, not doing editing. Doing editing for the faculty and TAs, but teaching editing to undergraduates would be double standards.
3. We do provide editing for first year doctor students and students enrolled in our writing courses. After completion of our courses, they have access to low-cost editing which we recommend to them.
4. No campus unit would be considered appropriate for editing at my university. However, different units hire proofreaders/editors on a freelance basis. I would be concerned about offering editing/proof reading services to faculty. I have no qualms about offering writing reviews.
5. Our mission statement does not specify this service, but it does include serving the faculty and administration to further the mission of the University when requested.

Q3

YES 12%
NO 88%
Q. 4. If neither of the practices above is present at your university, which of the two [1. the writing center or 2. a unit providing editing for faculty] would be considered appropriate at your university, provided that there is a need? Any other alternative?

1st Writing Center: 4 - Comments:
1. Writing Center could provide GUIDANCE if it had sufficient professional staff, but NOT merely EDITING.
2. Writing Center is the only unit giving support and guidance for the improvement of writing at undergraduate & graduate level.
3. Probably the WC. It is not easy to open up new units at the university. The WC is already there, but would need more funding.

2nd Unit: 2 - Comments:
1. Departments deal with this issue for discipline-specific content and formats.
2. A body of professional editors—journalists/medical doctors/lawyers/hard core science experts do it.
3. Some units may already have this service informally without having the Writing Lab/Center know about it.

N/A: 12 - Comments:
1. I couldn't say which alternative would be most appropriate, in terms of faculty making good use of expertise, but the WC is a student service, so unless staff is increased, I can't see taking away from student services to edit faculty work.
2. The Teaching Resource Center offers workshops on writing for publication, as does the office for sponsored research. However, neither “does” editing. Faculty are on their own with this, some hiring outside editors and others working with colleagues.
3. People would pay a freelance editor, probably.
4. A “Writing Studio,” for graduate students and faculty outside the Writing Lab would create minimal confusion about the kind of work done in each place [See Other Comments].
### OTHER COMMENTS

1. To elaborate: the editing we do is usually with the faculty member, in the same way we work with student writers. Sometimes we do edit/proofread and send back to faculty. Each case is different. We are also part of a larger effort on campus to help faculty with research grants, so we often work on those while in process.

2. We do provide editing for first year doctor students and students enrolled in our writing courses. After completion of our courses, they have access to low-cost editing which we recommend to them.

3. A modification of our one-year technical academic writing program, made available to new and young faculty (older faculty are too busy); followed by referral to local editors’ money is not a problem for our engineering faculty.

4. We see our role as helping students to learn how to write more effectively, and also helping faculty to help their students. On the other hand, it is collegial to help a colleague, if it doesn’t take up much time, and I think it is also useful in that it models for faculty how they might work with their students on developing the students’ writing!

5. With faculty members working at the WC this semester, technically we could do editing for faculty, but that would have to be done when we have faculty working with us permanently, and when we have more funding. We would have to advertise for it that way as well (editing only for faculty but not for students). This would be an added service to the university from the WC. Certainly needed at our institution.

6. I think it is probably a dangerous precedent. If faculty have it, why shouldn’t PhD students who are trying to publish, and if they have it, why not MA students? Indeed, why bother at all trying to teach people to write if you have staff who can rewrite their papers for them, focusing on grammatical accuracy.

7. There is no editing for faculty as part of our Writing Lab activities. However, we do keep a list of people (mostly tutors, former tutors, and other English graduate students) who work privately as editors and tutors, and who are paid directly by their clients and sometimes their client’s department. We have held workshops and provided editors for faculty and professionals—but, again, this is outside the normal work of the Writing Lab and has been paid for separately.

8. The development of a “Writing Studio,” for graduate students and faculty, where they could have longer consultations about their work, whose tutor/editors should have expertise in the specific disciplines who use it would be another alternative for a unit. But I would place this outside the Writing Lab/Center’s mission, so that there would be minimal confusion about the kind of work done in each place.

9. Having spent time with several visiting scholars from China, I can say the expectation that a Writing Center would provide editing for faculty was quite strong.

10. Because we are an English speaking university in an English speaking country, faculty are hired with the expectation that they can do and publish research in English. However, both native and non-native English speakers at times struggle with both general and disciplinary linguistic features. Still, the campus approach has been a teaching one, people such as writing tutors willing to work alongside/with writers but not to simply do the editing for them. This might need to be quite different in countries where the universities operate in English but it is not the mother tongue for most faculty; however, still this is trickier than it might appear. To simply translate is not simple; disciplinary and other features are not opaque, and language is not transparent, so writers/readers need to work together as they, to quote Joe Harris, “do things with texts.”

11. Faculty would welcome an editing service; however, our administration would not, given that we are in a State which has many higher education funding issues.

12. No editing service for faculty; however, we edit many documents for staff in our unit, the Center for Academic Success Programs.

13. No campus unit would be considered appropriate for editing at my university. However, different units hire proofreaders/editors on a freelance basis. I would be concerned about offering editing/proof reading services to faculty. I have no qualms about offering writing reviews.

14. All-technical universities generally don’t have many full time faculty members in their English departments, relying on the much less expensive part-timers. This means that the English department members usually give writing support in the form of editing papers (meaning only a grammar check), sometimes as part of their job description, more often on-request.

15. Many science/engineering faculty members have their own native speaker editor, or if they have budget (they often do) they use translation houses in the big Japanese cities, or more recently the emerging Indian translation houses. Generally these services are poor in quality and high in price, but often the consumers may not able to assess quality.


An additional PDF document can also be provided.

For further interest in personal experience, contact can be established with the scholar’s consent.

16. I do not know that the College has identified editing for faculty as a need in any official way. This is just the personal opinion of me and my WC colleagues: Unofficially, yes. We provide editing service for faculty. We try to have faculty use the WC in the same way as we encourage students to use it, i.e. as a resource for help through the writing process. However, we have made exceptions and provided straight editing services.

17. I couldn’t say which alternative would be most appropriate in terms of faculty making good use of expertise, but the WC is a student service, so unless staff is increased, I can’t see taking away from student services to edit faculty work.

18. In response to No. 4. I think either or both options would be considered appropriate, but formally implementing them would require approval processes and funding that I think the University is not yet ready to address. We are a design school, and we have only begun struggling with definitions (for us) of formal research within the last three years or so. Previously, exhibitions, such as an art show or a juried gallery exhibition, unaccompanied by written documents were being considered our primary research, but this is changing. Because we are in the process of change, many aspects of research processes and procedures in our University have not yet been formalized.
19. The Writing Lab is open to all members of the university community. Faculty and Staff are welcome to bring in drafts of their work in progress or work for their course blackboard sites, syllabi, handouts, and essay questions. Faculty members are especially welcome and invited to discuss ways to encourage writing in their courses.

20. Editing for faculty is not mentioned but guidance to the faculty, staff, and community is provided.

21. Interesting question, but at faculty-level, particularly in Humanities faculties, written expression skills are expected to be such that an editing service seems superfluous. Colleagues may help if need may be!

22. This service might exist at our university in some units without any information in official records.

23. No editing, but guidance can be given to faculty, provided that the Writing Center has sufficient number of qualified tutors and faculty. Freelance editors can provide this service in link with the University, charging money part of which creates a pool for university funding of tutor or TAs to attend international conferences or some students receive undergraduate scholarships.

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<th>RESPONDENTS’ UNIVERSITIES</th>
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<tr>
<td>American University of Beirut, Lebanon</td>
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<td>American University of Paris, Paris, France</td>
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<td>Bahcesehir University, Istanbul, Turkey</td>
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<td>Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey</td>
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<td>College of the North Atlantic- Qatar (CNAQ), Qatar</td>
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<td>Hellenic American University, Athens, Greece</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kochi University of Technology, Mianokuchi, Tosayamada-cho Kochi-Ken, Japan</td>
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