Dear UW Faculty,

The Writing Center is pleased to announce our first annual Spring Professional Development Series. The Spring PD Series is intended as a semester-long series of workshops and round-table discussions to help both new and seasoned educators to develop and improve upon their use of writing in the classroom. This spring, we are excited to have support from Kelly Kinney, the English Department Chair, Nancy Small, the Director of Writing Programs, and Rick Fisher, Associate Lecturer and the past Writing Center Director.

The Spring PD Series consists of two pre-semester workshops which cover pedagogical approaches to incorporating writing into the classroom followed by monthly round-table discussions that focus on practical advice for using writing as an effective teaching and learning tool on a day-to-day basis.

In addition to learning from experienced educators in workshops and round-table discussions, participants in the Spring PD will have access to comprehensive support from the Writing Center’s skilled consultants. Writing Consultants are trained to provide support to faculty by facilitating topic-based, in-class writing workshops; by developing structured peer-review activities; and by providing one-on-one support to student writers throughout the semester. Each participating faculty member will have a Writing Consultant assigned to one of their writing-intensive classes, and a meeting between faculty and their assigned consultant will be arranged to ensure that the consultant understands the specific writing-related expectations of the instructor’s course.

Participants who apply to attend the Spring PD Series should first ensure that they are able to attend both pre-semester workshops as well as the three round-table discussions. Registration is limited to fifteen (15) participants, and preference will be given to faculty teaching in the COM USP or who are teaching writing-intensive courses, though applications will be accepted from all faculty who wish to better understand effective ways to use writing as a teaching and learning tool in the classroom.

By applying for the Spring PD Series, you are committing to attend all associated meetings and events during the Spring 2018 semester. Further, you are agreeing to participate in a post-semester assessment of student learning, which will be discussed in detail during the first scheduled workshop. Participants who attend the entire PD Series will also be assigned a dedicated Writing Center consultant for one writing-intensive course in the Fall 2018 semester.

To apply, visit the Writing Center’s web page at www.uwyo.edu/writingcenter. For more information, you may contact me by email or phone (below). For details regarding workshop and round-table dates and times, see the attached schedule.

Sincerely,

Matt Drollette, Interim Director
The Writing Center
Coe Library, 302
mdrollet@uwyo.edu
Office: 307-766-5250
www.uwyo.edu/writingcenter
Writing Center Spring PD Series
2018 Schedule

Pre-semester Workshop #1: “From Syllabus, to Assignments, to Evaluation”
- Facilitated by Kelly Kinney
- January 16th, 2018 11:00a-2:00p
- Coe Library, 302 (The Writing Center)
This interactive workshop will lead participants through heuristics for connecting their course objectives to their assignments and evaluation criteria. By showcasing the recently revised English 1010 curriculum as a model for meeting 2015 University Studies Program COM guidelines, the workshop will help participants imagine how they might create or redesign communication- and writing-intensive courses appropriate for their own disciplines and purposes.

Pre-semester Workshop #2: “Designing Effective Writing Assignments”
- Facilitated by Nancy Small
- January 18th, 2018 11:00a-2:00p
- Coe Library, 302 (The Writing Center)
This workshop will focus on both high stakes and low stakes writing assignments to support student engagement and learning. Participants will draft one low stakes prompt and will begin designing and/or drafting one higher stakes prompt broken down into smaller phases and opportunities for formative feedback. We'll concentrate on writing prompts that actually engage and measure the skills that the instructors intend, with designing prompts that anticipate and manage grading loads.

Early-semester Round-table Discussion: “Providing Formative Feedback in Writing and In Person”
- Facilitated by Matt Drollette
- February 7th, 2018 1:00pm-3:00pm
- Location TBA
This roundtable discussion will focus on providing formative feedback, or feedback that encourages writers to revise carefully and critically. Building on Writing Center pedagogy, this roundtable will provide a venue for teachers to discuss process-oriented feedback strategies that encourage exploration and higher-order learning while avoiding types of feedback that have been proven to discourage critical, engaged revision. During this round-table, we will invite Writing Center staff to discuss the benefits of collaborative learning, which should give faculty insight into designing effective peer-review activities as well as a better understanding of the best practices related to the student-teacher writing conference.

Mid-semester Round-table Discussion: “Assignment Design and Facilitation”
- Facilitated by Nancy Small
- March 7th, 2018 11:00a-1:00p
- Location TBA
Participants will bring in one high stakes and one low stakes writing assignment, as well as (if available) student work in response to these assignments. We'll reflect over what work we intended to solicit, what we received, and how to potentially amend or revise the assignment prompt for future use. We'll also discuss the reality of how low stakes assignments are working in your class and how you're managing the feedback cycle.

Late-semester Round-table Discussion: “The Role of Technology in Writing and Communication”
- Facilitated by Rick Fisher
- April 11th, 2018, 11:00a-1:00p
- Location TBA
This discussion will encourage participants to think about technology as an aspect of many types of effective contemporary communication. Multimodal communication presents both opportunities and challenges for teachers, and this session will encourage dialogue about how to thoughtfully encourage students to engage (and disengage!) with technology.