



Nebraska Wesleyan University



Cooper Center

We work *Better*
when we work *Together*

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ANNUAL REPORT

2021-22
EDITION





ABOUT US

The Cooper Center is the Academic Resource Center at Nebraska Wesleyan University. We support collaborative learning through one-on-one and small group peer tutoring across disciplines. We also provide workshops on a variety of writing and study skill topics, host all campus events that promote collaborative learning within our community, and support faculty with writing curriculum development.

MISSION & VISION

Vision

To foster academic success by creating and empowering confident and effective learners.

Mission

To serve as a multidisciplinary and collaborative academic resource for all members of the Nebraska Wesleyan community. We work with groups and individuals at all levels of proficiency, across disciplines, during any stage of their academic careers.

LEADERSHIP

The Director of the Cooper Center is Melissa Hayes, Ph.D. This year, she assumed the Director role after previously serving as the Assistant Director and the Coordinator of Adult and Graduate Support. Dr. Hayes has been with the Cooper Center since 2016. Her background and expertise are in 20th century American Literature, and Rhetoric and Composition.

In 2021, Tracy Ensor, MAS, joined the Cooper Center as the Assistant Director. Her background and expertise are in applied science, educational outreach, and program management.

Both Cooper Center administrators oversee the undergraduate peer tutors and are considered “embedded consultants” by directly serving the student population through in-class workshops and one-on-one writing tutoring with Adult and Graduate students.

PEER TUTORS

This year, 43 CRLA-certified undergraduate peer tutors offered 200+ tutoring hours per week for their peers across disciplines. Peer tutors utilized both in-person and online options for their appointments in Writing, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Human Anatomy and Physiology, Math, Accounting, Music, Nursing, Modern Languages, and Computer Science.

In addition to the peer tutors, this year the Cooper Center employed one student staff assistant and three welcome/help desk workers.

Our efforts to hire staff that reflect the NWU community have been successful. This year we employed a diverse group of students. Our staff included persons of color, neurodiverse thinkers, those of varied abilities, LGBTQ+ individuals and Allies, and first gen students.



Training

All peer tutors complete online and in-person training before the Cooper Center opens for the fall semester. We utilize "Tutor Essentials" online tutor training, developed by Purdue University and certified by the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA). All tutors who complete this training are lifetime CRLA certified tutors. In-person training reiterates the Purdue/CRLA curriculum and helps tutors identify tutee needs and learning styles, pedagogical strategies, and time and session management. Weekly staff meetings throughout the year continue their professional development with topics such as coaching, compassion, educational theory, and fun activities.

Additionally, peer tutors participated in a bias education and DEI training in the spring semester. This four-hour training was provided by Inclusive Communities of Omaha and was opened up to faculty, staff, and students in the Social Work program.



NEW AND NOTEWORTHY



New Location

The Cooper Center is now located on the 1st floor of the Cochrane-Woods Library. Over the summer of 2021, Dr. Hayes was able to upgrade the former PC lab with new paint, refreshed cabinets, collaborative/mobile furniture, bookshelves, a writing and study resource area, and a coffee bar. The Cooper Center now houses the public printing stations in the library and collaborates with Digication to staff the welcome/help desk in the area. The new space is easily accessible and more visible than the previous 3rd floor location.



Welcome/Help Desk and Extended Hours



The former Digication help desk is now the Cooper Center welcome/help desk. The desk was staffed Sunday from 4-10 pm and Monday-Thursday from 10 am to 10 pm by both Digication and Cooper Center students. We also extended our hours due to the convenience and accessibility of our new location and to serve more students.



Advisory Board

The Cooper Center Advisory Board (CCAB) was reestablished this year after a four-year-long hiatus. Meeting twice during the spring semester, the group revised mission and vision statements, developed strategies for campus promotion, and increased faculty and staff involvement. Bylaws are in the process of being drafted. The CCAB executive committee is President Bill Motzer, Vice President Bryce Swiggum, and Secretary Kate Slama.



25th Anniversary Celebrations

In 2021, the Cooper Center celebrated 25 years at Nebraska Wesleyan. The homecoming campus tour featured the Cooper Center, where staff highlighted the new space and promoted this milestone anniversary. In October, an all-campus Open House was attended by students, faculty, and staff as well as the current and past presidents of the Cooper Foundation. We also hosted a 25th Anniversary Virtual Alumni event in January with past Cooper Center peer tutors and administrators. Sheryl Rinkol (former Asst. Dir.) and Dr. Rick Cypert (former Dir. and Founder) were in attendance, along with many former peer tutors from the past 25 years.

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY



Study-A-Thon

The Cooper Center hosted a new campus wide community event. As a complement to the Write-A-Thon, the Study-A-Thon was held on the Tuesday of Culmination Week in the fall and spring semesters. Peer tutors across the disciplines provided breakout sessions throughout the evening. Students utilized a Pomodoro study room, took a yoga break, and relaxed with therapy dogs. This event was well received with over 100 students in attendance in the fall and over 80 in the spring.



Writing Pedagogy Pilot Program

Social Work faculty collaborated with the Cooper Center on a pilot program to incorporate writing praxis and feedback techniques in social work assignments. We plan to continue this partnership with Social Work and feedback will help develop training that can be used across campus.



Website Overhaul and Promotional Video

The Cooper Center requested significant revisions to our NWU website for better user interface and navigation. We partnered with Marketing and Communications to create a clear, concise story enhanced by infographics, photos, and other resources. In addition, a new promotional video anchors our site on the Cooper Center landing page.



In the Media

Articles in *Archways* magazine and on the NWU website featured the Cooper Center. The Cooper Center was also tagged in posts by the official NWU Instagram account to help promote our services and special events. Through these updates and promotional efforts, the Cooper Center added 59 new followers on social media, a 27% increase from last year.



Student Success Strategic Planning

Melissa and Tracy have been involved in various strategic planning initiatives. Melissa is a team leader for the Student Success Initiative. Tracy is a member of the Student Success and Incubator/Innovation Hub teams. The Cooper Center has a vested interest in developing innovative approaches to how NWU supports student success. Melissa and Tracy have worked closely in the SSI team process and have written action plans that will be presented to the Ad Council and the Board of Governors.

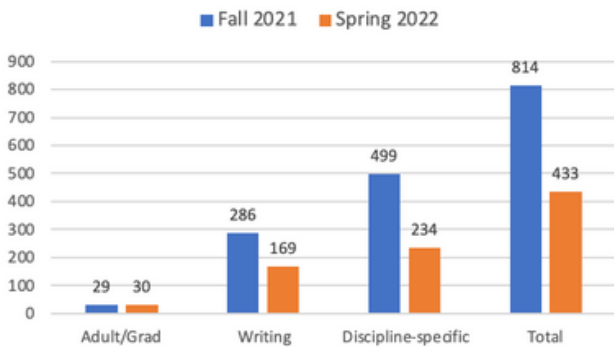
YEAR AT A GLANCE

In 2021-22, a total of 416 unique clients visited the Cooper Center, which is 23% of the total population of NWU students.

During staffed welcome/help desk hours, the Cooper Center received a total of 2,906 visits for use of public printing, to ask questions about tutoring, or to seek information about our services,

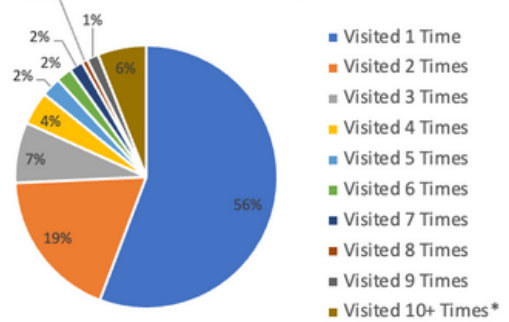
Of the 1,247 client appointments, 65% took place during the fall semester.

Appointments by Semester



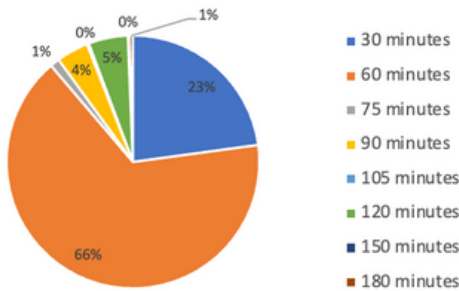
44% of clients visited two times or more. Six students visited more than 30 times each.

Number of Visits per Client



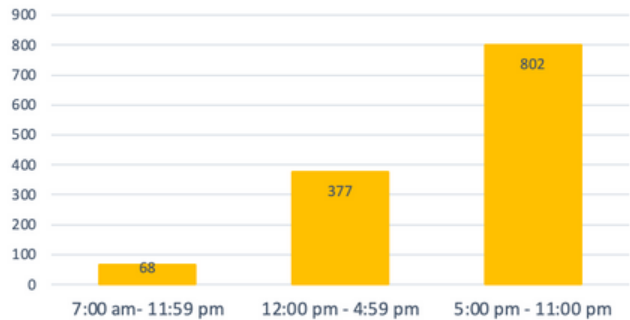
The most common appointment length was 60 minutes.

Appointments by Scheduled Length



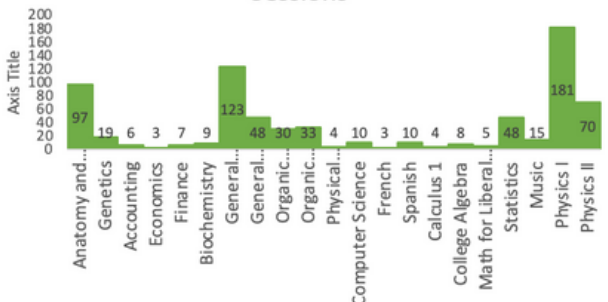
Students prefer evening sessions - 64% of all sessions began at 5:00 pm or later.

Appointments by Starting Time



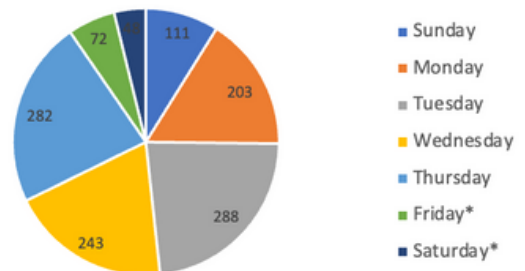
Of discipline-specific appointments, the most popular courses were Physics (34%), Chemistry (34%), and Human A&P (13%).

Total Appointments in Discipline-Specific Sessions



Weekday appointments were equally popular amongst clients, with weekend appointments less utilized (*no writing appointments available on Fridays or Saturdays)

Appointments by Day of the Week



OUTREACH

One of the ongoing goals of the Cooper Center is to increase awareness of our services for students, faculty, and staff. We strive to promote the power of collaborative learning, create a safe space for all campus members, and foster a culture of help-seeking. We do this through all-campus outreach events, custom workshops, promotions, and relationship building within departments.

- New Location
- Reinstated Advisory Board
- 25th Anniversary Celebrations
- Website Overhaul and New Promotional Video
- Write-A-Thon & Study-A-Thon



- In-class workshops to Archway, Integrative, and Success Seminars.
- Tailored presentations and custom workshops to Nursing, Business, Social Work, HHP, Athletics, Pre-Health Club, etc.
- Participation in Involvement Fairs, STEM for You, International Student Orientation, PAWS series, All Faculty meetings, Ambassador meetings, etc.





FUTURE GOALS

2021 - 2022 has been a foundational year for the Cooper Center. As we look towards future growth, we have identified the following goals and projects as priorities:

- **Learning Center Leadership Certifications (LCLC)**
 - This nationally-recognized credential through the National College Learning Center Association (NCLCA) provides learning center professionals with a set of standards by which to foster their future growth and development. It also validates individuals' expertise in the field of learning assistance through external review. Melissa and Tracy plan to apply in 2022-2023. https://nclca.wildapricot.org/leadership_cert
- **Learning Center of Excellence (LCE) Certification**
 - This learning center certification through NCLCA promotes professional standards of excellence for learning centers and encourages centers to develop, maintain, and assess quality programs and services to enhance student learning. We plan to compile our application in the 2022 -2023 year. https://nclca.wildapricot.org/LCs_of_excellence
- **Update registration and assessment software**
 - Our current software lacks the features necessary for the LCE certification. We plan to update this software as soon as funds allow.
- **Summer Welcome/Help Desk Staffed**
 - Our staff assistant, Alannah Ventura, will staff the welcome/help desk for 15 hours per week beginning mid-June 2022 through the start of the fall semester.
- **Nebraska Writing Center Consortium Annual Conference** (Melissa is current NWCC President), September 2022
- **NCLCA Conference and proposed presentation**, October 2022
- **Return of in-person Archway seminar workshops**
 - AWS instructors will bring students to the Cooper Center
 - AWS syllabi will be kept on file at Cooper Center
 - AWS instructors will be encouraged to schedule supplemental workshops (thesis statements, intros & conclusions, paragraph structure, revision, etc.)
- **Campus-wide outreach program**
 - Schedule face-to-face meetings with Athletics, Housing, Greek Life, SAS, Honor Societies, Clubs, etc.
 - Encourage presentations by Cooper Center peer tutors in classes across disciplines
 - Create a stronger presence in programs such as LSAMP and Wesleyan Honors Academy

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