

To: Sue Abbotson, Chair of UCC  
 From: Mike Michaud, Chair of Writing Board  
 Date: 5/10/17  
 Subject: Annual Report (2016/2017)

I am pleased to submit this report summarizing the activity of the Writing Board (WB) and Writing Board Chair for the academic year 2016/2017.

### **Writing Board Membership (2016/2017 & 2017/2018)**

The table below indicates Board membership for this past academic year and the year ahead. The numbers in parentheses indicate year of service in two-year term.

| Position                            | 2016/2017                          | 2017/2018                              |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Chair                               | Mike Michaud (1)                   | Mike Michaud (2)                       |
| Director of (Writing)               | Becky Caouette                     | Becky Caouette                         |
| Director (Writing Center)           | Claudine Griggs                    | Claudine Griggs                        |
| Director (FCTL)                     | Jeanne Haser-Lafond                | Jeanne Haser-Lafond                    |
| Coordinator (First Year Seminar)    | Julie Urda                         | Julie Urda                             |
| Faculty (FAS) (2) -- 1 Math/Science | Deb Britt (2) & Sarah Knowlton (1) | Deb Britt (1) & Andrea Del Vecchio (1) |
| Faculty (FSEHD) (1)                 | Martha Horn (1)                    | Martha Horn (2)                        |
| Faculty (SOSW) (1)                  | Jen Meade (2)                      | Stefan Battle (1)                      |
| Faculty (SOM) (1)                   | Murat Aydogdu (1)                  | Jiyun Wu (1)                           |
| Faculty (SON) (1)                   | Deborah Kutonplon (2)              | Deborah Kutonplon (1)                  |
| Faculty (Adams Library)             | Tish Brennan                       | Tish Brennan                           |
| Faculty (Comp/Rhet)                 | Mike Michaud                       | Mike Michaud                           |

Blue = Ex Officio  
 Green = Rotating  
 Green = New Members

## Writing Board Meeting Dates (2016/2017)

- Fall 2016: 9/21, 10/19, 11/130
- Spring 2016: None (chair on sabbatical)

## Writing Board Budget Allocations

First Pages (10/17/16): \$89

Faculty Development Workshop (1/11/17)

|                |                     |
|----------------|---------------------|
| Honorarium     | 1,000.00            |
| Mileage        | 59.92               |
| Donovan Dining | 2,070.00 (estimate) |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>3,129.92</b>     |

SSTW Panel Presentation (3/29/17): \$114.15

Estimates for WID Workshops (5/2017):

| Department    | Date              | Room        | Attendees | PDR     | Food (est)     | Totals         |
|---------------|-------------------|-------------|-----------|---------|----------------|----------------|
| English (230) | 5/31<br>(9-1pm)   | SU 307      | 3         | \$450   | \$100          | \$550          |
| Nursing       | 5/24<br>(9-1pm)   | 163 Fogerty | 5         | \$750   | \$150          | \$900          |
| History       | 5/22<br>(9-1pm)   | SU 307      | 3         | \$450   | \$100          | \$550          |
| Social Work   | 5/30<br>(1-430pm) | TBD         | 5         | \$750   | \$100          | \$850          |
| WID Summit    | 5/19<br>(9-1pm)   | SU 307      | 10        | \$1,500 | \$250          | \$1,750        |
|               |                   |             |           |         |                |                |
|               |                   |             |           |         | <b>Totals:</b> | <b>\$4,600</b> |

**TOTAL: \$7932.92**

## **Review of Writing Board Activity**

This year, the Writing Board sponsored and hosted three main activities on campus:

### **1. First-Pages**

This was the fourth year the WB teamed up with the First-Year Writing Program and Writing Center to host a Writing Week event and exhibit, First Pages (10/17/16). We had ten readers and thirty-two first-pages submitted. Participants read their First Pages and briefly discussed the challenges and opportunities of professional and academic writing. We heard from a diverse group of faculty from across the college. Attendance was around 15-20. First Pages continues to be a great event.

### **2. Faculty Development Workshop (FDW)**

This year marked the 21st year that the WB has hosted the Faculty Development Workshop, entitled this year "In the Margins, But Not Marginal: The Art of Effective Instructor Feedback." Our speaker was Dr. Neal Lerner of Northeastern University. He shared research on how to respond in an effective and efficient manner to student writing. Fifteen part- and full-time faculty members (and five Writing Center tutors) led break-out sessions in the afternoon. Appendix A contains a participation count as well as participant feedback. Appendix B contains screenshots of faculty panels from afternoon sessions.

### **3. WID Discussion**

This year the WB collaborated with COGE and the college assessment coordinator and First-Year Writing program to host a discussion on WID (2/8/17). A detailed summary of this meeting can be found on the COGE webpage or [here](#).

While I was unable to attend this discussion as I am on sabbatical, I would like to note that it was the culmination of the work of an ad hoc committee, the WID Planning Group, that I convened on 2/2/16. Members of this ad hoc committee include

- Mike Michaud (Writing Board)
- Becky Caouette (FYW Program)
- Claudine Griggs (Writing Center)
- Ron Pitt (VPAA)
- Jim Magyar (COGE)
- Maureen Reddy (Assessment Coordinator)
- Sue Abbotson (UCC)

I look forward to additional discussion of WID with this group.

## **Review of Chair's Activity**

The WB Chair's responsibilities include leading the WB and devising and facilitating professional development opportunities for faculty. Towards these ends, I'd like to share my primary activities from this year.

### **1. Summer Seminar for Teaching Writing (SSTW)**

The 2016/2017 academic year marked the sixth of the SSTW. Technically, the SSTW is offered under the Faculty Center for Teaching Writing (FCTL), but I teach it in my capacity as WB chair.

During 2016/2017, seven faculty participated in the SSTW:

- Young, Benjamin (Physics)
- Hawk, Brandon (English)
- Meade, Jennifer (MSW)
- Abrahamson, David (Math and CS)
- Chaudhuri, Tanni (Sociology)
- Thayer, Jeremy (BSW)
- Del Vecchio, Andrea (Physics)

At the conclusion of the yearlong seminar, these faculty shared their experiences with implementing best practices in the teaching of writing at a Panel Presentation event on Wednesday, March 29, 12:30-2:00pm. I'd like to thank them all for their time and effort. I'm pleased to report that year seven of the SSTW is about to begin, with full financial support again from the college and a class of ten faculty signed up. The main work of the 2017/18 seminar will take place during the week of May 15-19, 2017.

### **2. Co-Op Workshops and Ongoing Professional Development**

During the 2016/2017 academic year, I continued to offer professional development on writing and pedagogy by teaming up with the FCTL and the First-Year Seminar program to lead co-op workshops. Two were offered in fall (none were offered during spring):

9/16/16: Introducing the Writing Process

10/21/16: Giving Effective Feedback in FYS

### **3. Additional Developments**

Despite the fact that I was on sabbatical during the spring 2017 term, the work of the WB chair is ongoing and so I'd like to note several developments that are currently in the works:

- a. WB Budget: Dr. Pitt and I are in the process of learning whether the WB should have its

own dedicated budget and, if so, what that should entail.

- b. This year we continued the practice of a reduced budget for the FDW with additional funds being allocated towards professional development for faculty throughout the academic year. Towards these ends I have planned a number of targeted professional development workshops for the end of this academic year. Since the WID initiative on campus was a largely unfunded mandate, I now see the money the WB is allocating towards the sorts of workshops described below as the college's effort to ensure that faculty are able to meet their department WID obligations.
  - i. History Department (adjuncts): I am holding a half-day professional development workshop with adjunct faculty members from the RIC History Department on 5/22/17. We will address basic matters of writing pedagogy as they relate to the teaching of history and general education courses.
  - ii. College of Nursing: I am holding a half-day professional development workshop with the faculty who teach Nursing's entry-level WID course, N226 on 5/24/17. We will address the curriculum of this course and best-practices in writing pedagogy.
  - iii. College of Social Work (MSW): I am holding a half-day professional development workshop with members of the MSW program on 5/30/17. We will discuss best-practices in writing pedagogy as they apply to graduate-level teaching.
  - iv. English 230 (adjuncts): I am holding a half-day professional development workshop with English Department faculty members who teach the department's professional writing course on 5/31/17. We will discuss curriculum, outcomes, assessment, etc.
  - v. WID Summit: I am holding a half-day professional development workshop with graduates of the SSTW to offer ongoing professional development and foster continued dialogue about teaching writing in the disciplines to those faculty who have already received basic training in writing pedagogy (5/19/17).
- c. Adjunct Professional Development: I have a meeting set up with the leadership of the RIC adjunct union to discuss professional development offerings for the 2017/2018 (6/6/17).
- d. WID Assessment: I will participate in a WID assessment discussion/conversation hosted by Maureen Reddy, the college's assessment coordinator (5/24/17).

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In closing, I'd like to thank the members of the Writing Board for their good will, good ideas, and good company. I'd like to thank our departing members, Sarah Knowlton, Jenn Meade, and Murat Aydogdu, for their service, and I'd like to welcome our newest members, Andrea Del Vecchio, Stefan Battle, and Jiyun Wu. I'd like to thank the Sanchez administration for its ongoing support of the work of the Writing Board. In particular, I'd like to thank outgoing VPAA Ron Pitt for his years of support of writing initiatives on campus. Dr. Pitt's leadership has been instrumental in our accomplishments and on behalf of the Board, I wish him the best in his

retirement.

Thank you for the opportunity to once again share this annual report of the Writing Board.

## Appendix A

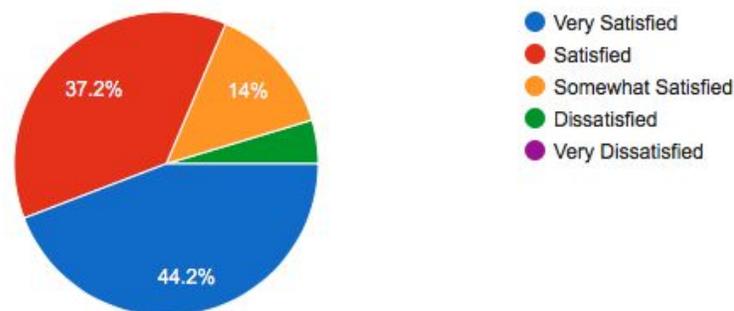
Signed In: 71

### Feedback

This year for the first time we administered an online survey to request feedback on the Faculty Development Workshop. We received 43 responses and asked just four questions. Here is what we learned:

### How satisfied were you with the morning workshop featuring Dr. Neal Lerner?

43 responses



### Write-In Responses

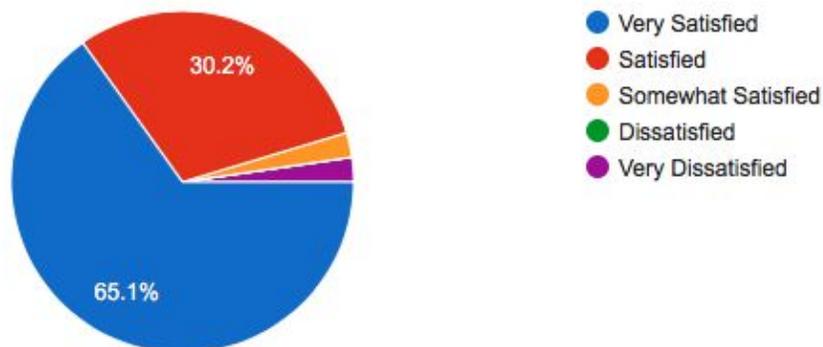
- He clearly prepared for his talk. Maybe most of the preparation was shared with other similar talks to similar groups, but no matter. It was appropriate for us.
- Neal was great! I loved the interactivensess of his presentation.
- I wish he had had more time to present. His presentation seemed to be cut short by the morning break-out session.
- I felt it could have gone on longer--there seemed a lot more he could have done. It was very engaging with the way he had everyone working in groups and giving feedback, rather than just lecturing.
- I was a little late to the event, so missed his first 15 minutes or so (roughly). I thought he was engaging and very personable, and he shared critical information. My only wish is that he had managed his time a bit better (all those slides he zipped past looked enticing).
- Good to write and look at student writing with people from other schools--good conversation and interesting to hear about Meaningful Writing study
- **\*\*Way\*\*** too long on the three introductions and ended up cutting out tons of his planned material on effective feedback to students.

- I had already seen his presentation in June, so it was somewhat repetitive for me. Too bad he didn't budget his time better.
- He ran out of time for discussion of what could have been very interesting: his work on the "meaningful" writing project.
- Honestly, I felt disappointed that he spent so little time on the topic of providing student feedback, the purported subject of the days' workshop. I am not even sure why we did the exercise that we did, comparing the three paragraphs, or why he talked the meaningful writing project when he had just done that last summer.
- Interactive presentation was effective
- Only not "very" because he clearly had to abbreviate his information. Perhaps in future give him more time or schedule him for 3 times: overview (what he gave), research results, and Q&A. I know that's asking a lot of him, but it would give us the most information. I look forward to reviewing the slides. Will we also get his email as part of that (to ask questions if they arise)?
- I would have preferred it if Dr. Lerner had spent a bit less time on analyzing introductions. If he devoted more time to concepts such as comments being for feedback vs. grade explanation and had he gotten to a more detailed analysis of students' favorite assignments, I think his opening presentations would have been enhanced. He did more of this in his breakout session and I found this to be more beneficial. He was an excellent choice as a presenter.
- He was not as good as I expected. Didn't feel like I took away any new ideas to try in my teaching. (However, someone who went to his breakout session said he was much better there and shared many good ideas.)
- Neal was an effective speaker. Given my own interests and needs, I would have preferred that he spend more time presenting the "how to's" and less time on the small group work at the tables.
- I'd have liked more specific strategies about grading/feedback and peer review.
- Too bad that he was only able to give part of his presentation. The PowerPoint slides and handouts on peer writing techniques, moves, etc. that he flashed through at the end of his presentation interested me the most. Luckily, I then attended his workshop and was able to flesh out the missing details that I was seeking.
- Time management seemed to be a bit of an issue. I wish he spent more time on the actual topic. Overall, it was a good workshop.
- Too much time spent on first activity left little time to get into the whole topic for the day
- As always, excellent presentation to engage us in an important topic.
- His experience of writing in multiple disciplines is priceless. No question he couldn't address. Excellent and gave realistic advice and direction.
- The issue of effective instructor feedback is an important one that interests me a great deal. I definitely learned new strategies in regard to responding to student writing.
- He is a very engaging, but not "exaggerated" speaker. Timing could have been better: skipping the topics highlighted by the last 25% of his slides was disappointing.
- I was looking for tips, and that is not at all how the morning was structured. He also seemed flustered and always watching the time. It seemed more of a push for his

research than any real help. Not at all impressed. If his seminar is an example of his teaching it was a big yawn. Hard to stay focused. Group exercise was not in any way helpful. None of us at our table thought it was good.

## How satisfied were you with the break-out sessions featuring local RIC faculty?

43 responses



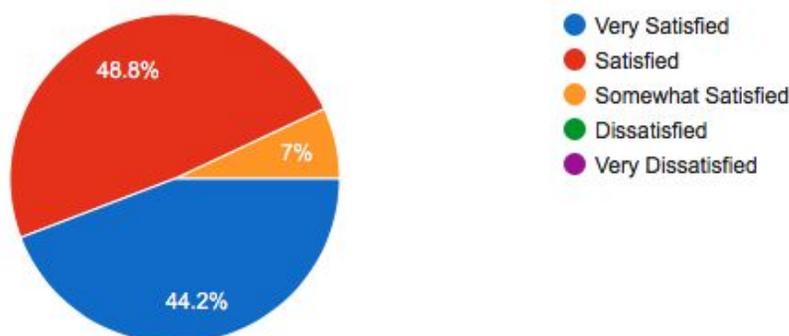
### Write-In Responses

- The one in ALG 107 in the first session was not very useful--I think the presenters learned more than those attending. The afternoon session in ALG 105 was very good though--nice succinct presentations that gave food for thought. Could the initial workshop maybe be split into two sessions (morning and afternoon--that would break it up so it didn't go on too long in one shot) with just one set of break-outs in the middle that are more presentational than workshop. Many of our faculty are doing interesting things in the classroom and it is useful just to hear what these are--no need for discussion (other than asking for clarification)
- Again, more time management issues--sessions did not start on time; not all presenters were able to present in one session.
- Helpful session presented by panel of faculty
- Hearing from the Writing Center tutors was very helpful. I'd love to get a monthly email blast from Claudine with tips and whatnot.
- I actually didn't attend any of faculty sessions; I went to the Q&A with the presenter and then got caught up in a conversation after lunch and didn't go to the sessions. I was interested in the one run by the nursing professors, but was afraid it wouldn't be relevant to me (in the Humanities).

- Dr. Lerner's open session was much more productive and informative and he responded to our questions with helpful and insightful information. I was a break-out presenter for the second session and we only had three participants but they were engaged and we had a pleasantly interactive session. I do think that folks may have avoided our session because in the description, we asked them to bring a piece to work on, and that may have been a disincentive.
- I was highly pleased that students were included as presenters and were (appropriately) treated as colleagues by attendees. Most excellent.
- Great ideas in both breakout sessions!
- The question and answer session with Dr. Lerner was very instructive and beneficial. He touched on subjects there which I had hoped he would have dealt with in more detail in his opening presentation. The breakout session was more driven by the participants questions and concerns. The second breakout session with five professors sharing their thoughts and experiences was also very instructive and beneficial. This collegiality, learning what other instructors have tried, failed, and succeeded in doing was most helpful and gave one the impression we were not just soldiering individually. Some helpful suggestions and ideas were shared.
- My RIC colleagues are a humble, relaxed, highly intelligent, skillful, collegial bunch of people; it's a delight for me to learn with them.
- I enjoyed the students being there from the writing center. Great feedback.
- I attended the break-out session that Dr Learner facilitated. The local faculty were really engaged with him and each other. Discussion continued into the lunch period and after.....
- Again, excellent leaders, good participation, sent us notes afterward--couldn't have been better.
- In Session A, it was interesting to hear the suggestions and concerns of the Writing Center Tutors. They were very useful. In Session B, it was interesting to hear from faculty from different disciplines share strategies about giving feedback on student writing. The strategies were very useful, and I hope to incorporate some of them into my class.
- Went to Lerner's follow-up session and asked about some of those "missing" topics. He seemed a bit reluctant to delve into them.
- These were great. I felt badly that there were only a few in our session.

## How satisfied were you with the food/meal options (e.g. breakfast, lunch, afternoon)?

43 responses



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### Write-In Responses

None.

### **What additional suggestions or feedback can you provide to help us improve this event and attract more faculty to attend? We welcome input on future topics to be covered, format, food, etc. Thank you!**

- WID, especially in Ds that are not inherently writing-oriented.
- I thought it was a great day and learned much. Thanks to the Writing Board for putting it together. My only complaint was that Donovan wasn't prepared. This has happened at a couple of other events I've attended over the past couple of months, so you should let them know about the lateness of the service.
- Muffins and Bagels were not my thing--could have used a pastry. The tacos were an EXCELLENT innovation. Need more regular coffee--they had twice as much Decaf, and none was drinking it!
- 1. All RIC food blows. Try anything you like; it won't matter. 2. When you said you were going to ask for digital feedback, it was all I could do to rein in my inner middle schooler and not simply flip you off. 3. After that comment, no way that this particular survey is anonymous.
- Would it be possible to put the "local" workshops in the middle of the event so that it's not so tempting to leave after lunch?
- Thank for the days' offerings. The topic was an important one. The room temp was perfect and the taco lunch was fun, too. I am glad I went as it always great to be with

others who are excited about encouraging student writing. I did come away with renewed energy, confirmation that I am basically on the right track with teaching, plus some golden nuggets of new ideas to try. Thank you again. Possible future topics - rubrics; peer review - perhaps these have been done before but it seemed that there were questions surrounding these. Also - more time to review scaffolding.

- Loved the taco bar - nice change! Thank you for great professional development!
- Breakfast could have used some fruit that was not an in-hand fruit - berries, melons, etc. would be nice. Other than that, it was superb. It seemed that most faculty had not been served a taco bar before and very much enjoyed it. As a person who lived for decades in the southwest, I would suggest adding a black bean salad to the options. I had one at the Dom, so know they do a good job. I appreciated the veggie option for the protein; I am not vegetarian but like the choice and they did an excellent job with it - very tasty! I also sampled the chicken and found it tasty - I had feared it would be bland, but not the case (and not too spicy for RI'ers! ^\_^ ). This is my first time attending, so I don't know what's been covered, but perhaps assignment creation/scaffolding, involving undergraduates in research and research writing, communications with students, teaching diversified classrooms (including educational background and language proficiencies), more ways to involve students in class discussions, and peer review processes/structurings. You may have addressed these in past meetings, but I heard them all mentioned and would attend myself if any of these were the topics. The format was strong. I did hear that some people planned to leave at 2 since the eval was going to be online, so if this will be the format, you might want to give an incentive for the final 1/2 hour (door prizes such as books?). Overall, this was an excellent mini-conference. Thank you to everyone who was involved.
- I'm not sure why more faculty members do not attend. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn more, obtain helpful ideas which one can bring back to the classroom, and to find out other instructors are struggling with similar concerns.
- The event was well planned and implemented and I have no significant suggestions for improvement. The room was comfortable, the break out sessions relevant and engaging, and the speaker knowledgeable. On the picky side, Donovan should have had the food for lunch ready at noon, I'd like there to be an urn of hot water for tea, more vegetables at lunch, a bowl of fruit should be available all day for dessert and snacking, and there should be a lot less salt in the meats (people who want more salt can always add it themselves). Let's help each other eat healthfully!
- Pitchers of water
- Alcohol.....jk!
- Wine and cheese reception at the end
- The interactions between faculty that Dr. Lerner facilitated during his presentation (pages 1-4 of his handouts) was excellent. This then led to a lively discussion in his workshop from 11-12. The workshops do not always flow so seamlessly from the keynote presentation. He was the continuity. Are there other ways to link the various components of the FDW?
- Food is always the same, very carb heavy, but I understand budget constraints.

- I am a tea drinker. There was no tea (which is generally the case) until after the event started. Otherwise, great food!!!
- I like the emphasis on writing across the disciplines. This professional development opportunity gives teachers valuable feedback to use in their classes. In turn, students could benefit in many of their classes; and even in their future careers.
- Loved having students there from the writing center. Very helpful
- I knew the taco bar would be a hit. I think the shorter "advertised" day was attractive to some. Those with a few more questions or a little more networking/schmoozing to do had the opportunity to extend it over the coffee and treats. Lots of community chat among colleagues; a bit of interactive work; and good ideas to think about. Who could ask for a better day?

## Appendix B

### Session A (11-11:50am)

| Room    | Title  | Name   | Description   |
|---------|--|--|---|
| Alg 106 | Writing Center Tutors Give Feedback on Instructor Feedback                           | Claudine Griggs (English) & Writing Center Tutors*   | A panel of Writing Center tutors will discuss their experiences with instructor feedback—both as RIC students and as tutors working to assist clients.                            |
| Alg 107 | A Read-Around Discussion of Student Writing in the Disciplines                       | Martha Horn (Elem Ed), Carolyn Obel-Omia (Elem Ed), Murat Aydogdu (Finance), Jiyun Wu (Management) | Faculty from across disciplines will share strategies for effective feedback by reading and discussing samples of de-identified student writing.                                  |
| Alg 108 | “Can I Talk To You About My Grade?” The Interpersonal Aspects of Instructor Feedback | Julie Urda (Management), Deborah Siegel (Social Work), Jeremy Thayer (Social Work)                 | Discussion leaders will lead a lively conversation on the challenges and opportunities of providing students with oral feedback (and negotiating their feedback on our feedback). |
| Alg 109 | Q & A with Dr. Neal Lerner   | Neal Lerner (Northeastern University)  | Participants will have the opportunity to meet Dr. Lerner and share questions and thoughts about effectively responding to student work.  |

### Session B (1-1:50pm)

| Room    | Title  | Name  | Description  |
|---------|--|---|--|
| Alg 106 | Writing Center Tutors Give Feedback on Instructor Feedback                       | Claudine Griggs (English/Writing Center) & Writing Center Tutors*   | A panel of Writing Center tutors will discuss their experiences with instructor feedback—both as RIC students and as tutors working to assist clients.   |
| Alg 107 | “You Gotta’ Build It Into the Process!”: Working Feedback into Assignment Design | Deborah Kutenplon (Nursing) & Wendy Doremus (Nursing)   | In this hands-on workshop, discussion leaders will teach how to design and scaffold assignments to boost learning and get more of what you want from students. Bring an assignment to work on! |
| Alg 108 | “If There’s One Thing I’ve Learned About Giving Feedback On Student Writing...”  | Maureen Reddy (English), Janice Okoomian (Gender/Women’s Studies), Janet Johnson (Ed. Studies), Andrea Del Vecchio (Physical Sciences), Deb Britt (Biology) | Faculty from across disciplines will share strategies for giving efficient and effective feedback on student writing.  |

\* Writing Center Tutors: Eric Berardis (MA; creative writing), Sara Pocaró (English/Creative writing), Charlotte Abotsi (Mass Media), David Posman (Film Studies), Kyla Tibets (Math/Elementary Education).