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# THE WRITING LAB AS COMMUNITY RESOURCE

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STAFF OUTREACH AT PURDUE UNIVERSITY

CARRIE KANCILIA

ECWCA CONFERENCE: MARCH 25<sup>TH</sup> 2017

# STAFF USE OF THE PURDUE WRITING LAB: FREQUENCY OF USE

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Beginning of semester lab tours and inclusion rhetoric

Staff visits to the lab accounted for less than half of 1% (.44%) of our traffic (2015-2016)

Annual report language (2015-2016) on staff

# METHODOLOGY: ANONYMOUS SURVEY QUESTIONS

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- According to the 2015-2016 Annual Report a mere .44% of the visitors to the lab identified as staff (down from the 2014-2015 academic year with 1.09% of visitors identifying as staff). This study aims to discover if Purdue's staff do not use the Writing Lab because of language barriers, the belief that they do not need writing help, or a lack of awareness of the range of available services offered to them.

# MENTIONS OF STAFF ON THE PURDUE OWL (2014)



Purdue University students, faculty, and staff at our West Lafayette, IN campus may access this area for information on the award-winning **Purdue Writing Lab**. This area includes Writing Lab hours, services, and contact information.

In 2014, the Purdue Writing Lab website directly addressed staff in its website language.

October 2014

# MENTIONS OF STAFF OF THE PURDUE OWL (2017)

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While the current version of the website addresses the Writing Lab's commitment to diversity and the academic community, staff members are not specifically mentioned.

## Goals

- To help clients at Purdue, West Lafayette, Indiana, with documents in any stage of the writing process, in any discipline, in any medium, and in any genre
- To provide world-class resources and services to the global community through the Purdue OWL
- To promote responsible academic inquiry, critical thinking, and the expression of diversity
- To serve the academic community by fostering professional development and writing-related research

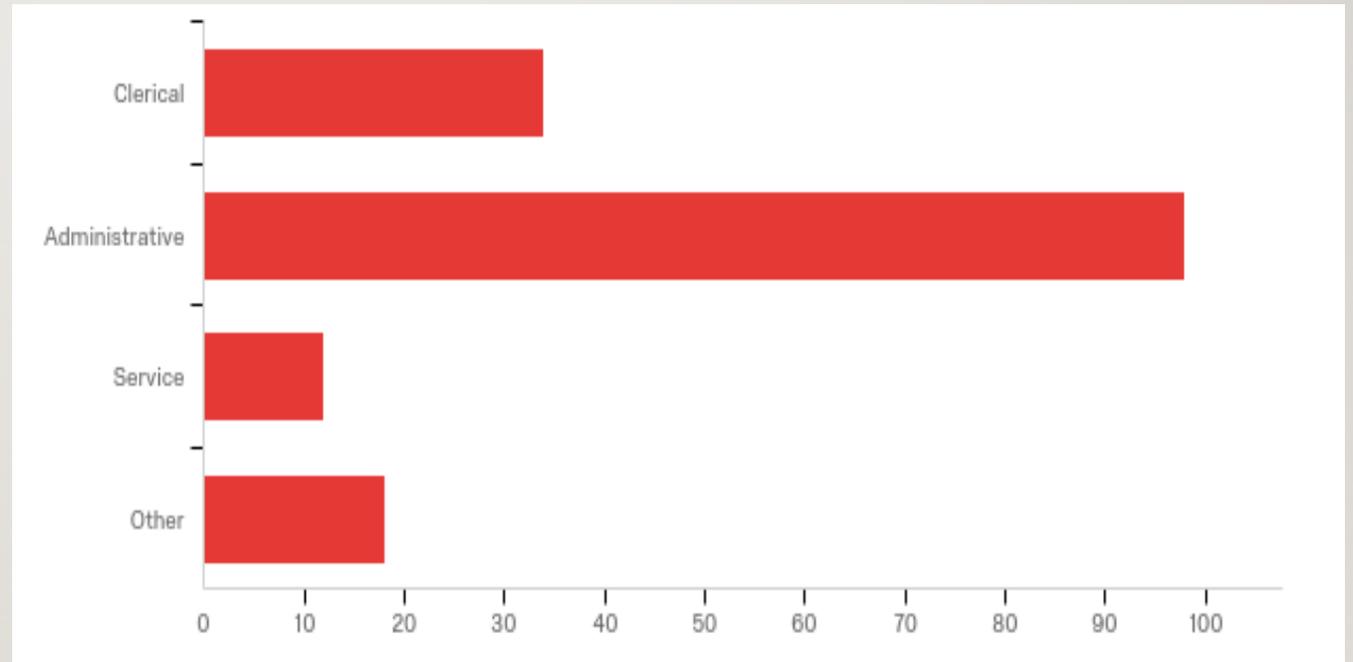
March 2017

# STAFF RESPONDENTS: BREAKDOWN BY DEPARTMENT

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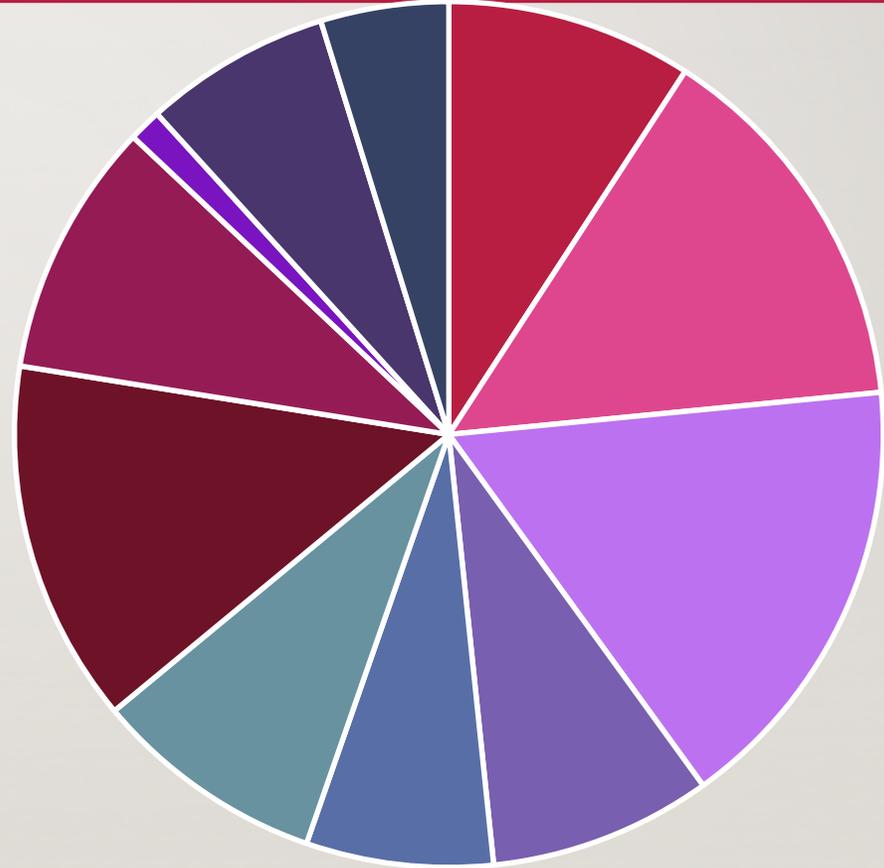
The graph shows the following respondent breakdown:

Clerical	20.99%	34 responses
Admin	60.49%	98 responses
Service	7.41%	12 responses
Other	11.11%	18 responses
Total		162 responses



# GENRES OF WRITING COMPOSED BY STAFF

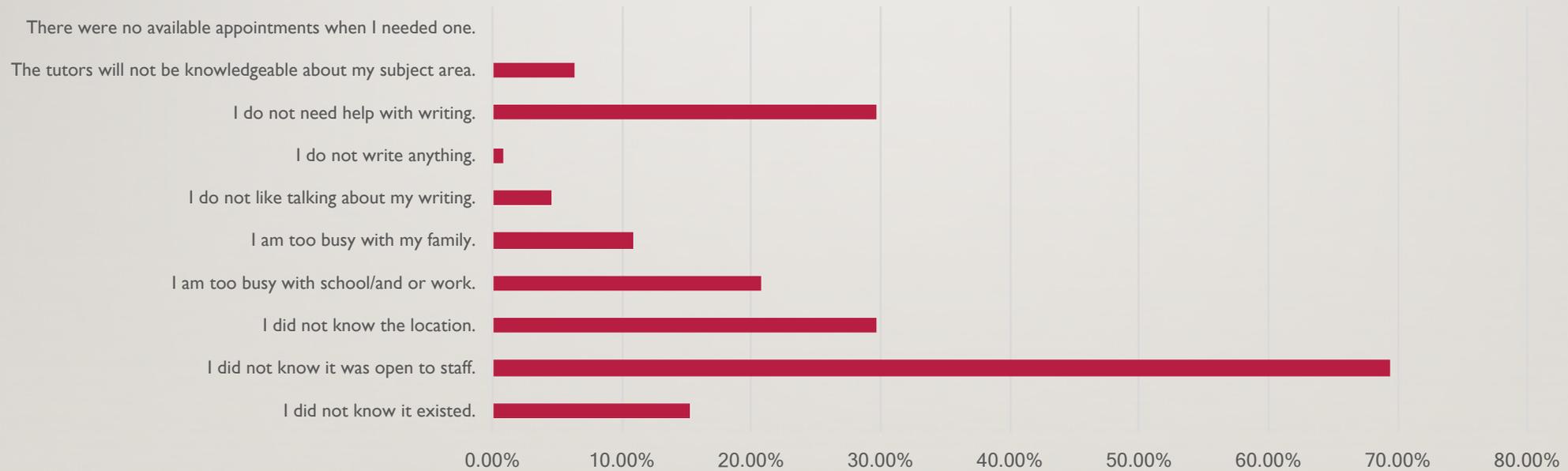
- Cover Letters
- Internal Memos
- Professional Emails
- Status Reports
- Written Presentations
- Oral presentations (speeches, toasts for weddings, etc.)
- Spreadsheets
- Invitations for Group Events
- Lab Reports
- Creative Work
- Other



# REASONS FOR NOT VISITING THE WRITING LAB

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Why Staff Do Not Use the Lab



# REPRESENTATIVE QUOTES BY STAFF ON THE LAB

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- “I recommend the writing lab to students all the time, but just never thought of it being there for me.”
- “Although my supervisor supports professional development, she does not approve of taking time away from my office unless I am to attend a 'proper' workshop -- which makes personal development (such as tutors) difficult to get approval.”
- “Most of my writing cannot wait for a tutor.”
- “Thought this mainly a student geared program, and thus assumed it was unavailable to faculty/staff.”

# NEXT STEPS

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- Given staff responses, possible modes of staff outreach include:
  - University-wide publicity of the Lab's address and resources available to staff
  - Retention of language on the Purdue Writing Lab website with reference to staff inclusion
  - Highlighting the availability of both synchronous and asynchronous online options across the campus
  - Identifying an administrative contact for each department with whom to liaise regarding department-relevant workshops on the genres of writing most used by staff

# CONCLUSION

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- Final thoughts
- Query to attendees on staff use