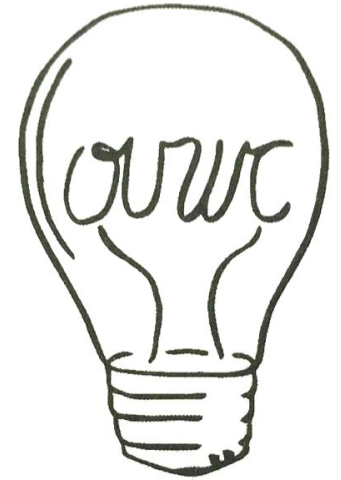
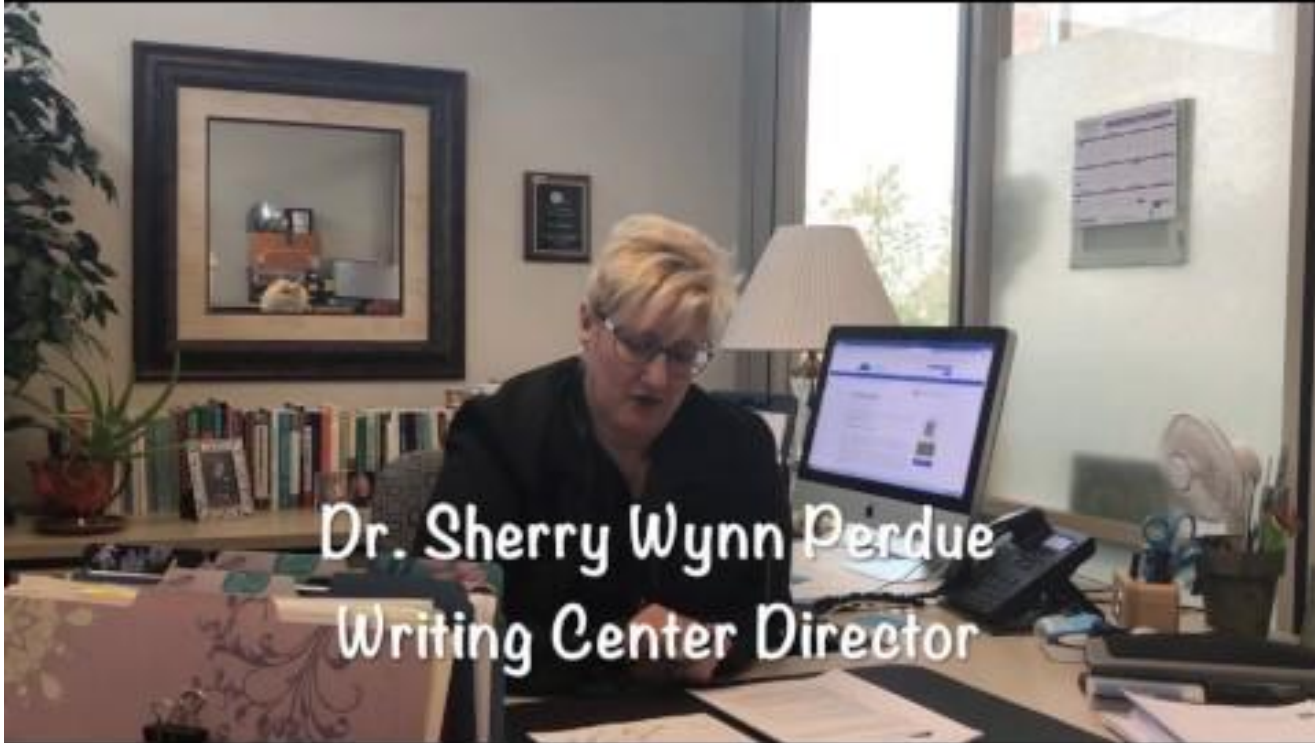


Preserving the Past, Preparing for the Future: The Importance of Archiving



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Dr. Sherry Wynn Perdue
Writing Center Director

This presentation will:

- Overview an OU writing center timeline created by me and a fellow consultant
- Discuss the importance of archival work
 - Why should a writing center document its history?
 - How can archival work influence writing center local understanding?
 - How can the work impact the consultants who compiled it?
 - How can you get started with archiving the work of your own writing centers?

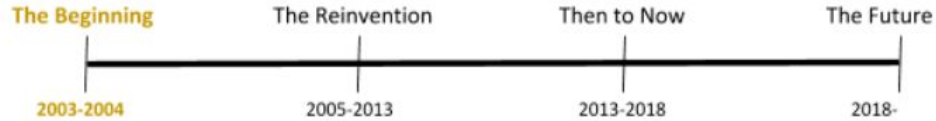
The Project: The Task

- Asked to create an archival project of the writing center since it opened in 2006, which included:
 - Important events
 - Notable accomplishments
 - Usage statistics
 - Staff levels
- Our director wanted to show this to our benefactor

Preparing for the Project

- We started by figuring out what we had:
 - a box of materials, two eSpace accounts, several files, a sharedrive, Google Survey responses, WCONLINE data, and a general WC history written in 2012
- Then, we had to synthesize this information and organize the physical documents.
- We established the format for the timeline: a chronological list with sections for each academic year categorized by semester
- We conducted primary research while compiling the timeline to make sense of the information
 - Spoke with our director, operations coordinator, and our benefactor.

Timeline: The Beginning



2003-2004: A committee, headed by Alice Horning and Bruce Mann, formed to talk about opening a new writing center at OU in 2003 (Gilbert, 2012). The committee, which included current writing center director, Dr. Sherry Wynn Perdue, prepared to establish the OU writing center by completing research, speaking to members of other centers, visiting neighboring university writing centers, and reviewing articles from *The Writing Center Journal* (Gilbert, 2012).

- Planning of our writing center
- Brief section because we did not have a lot of information

The Reinvention



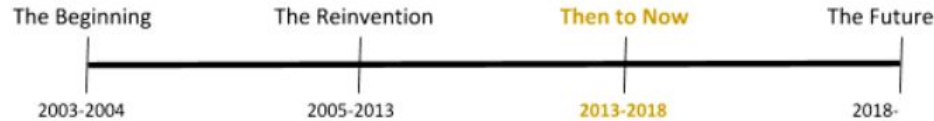
Fall 2005- Winter 2006: A proposal by Horning and Mann passed, allowing construction of the writing center to begin in November 2005 (Gilbert, 2012). An article on OU’s website by Rebecca Wyatt said a temporary writing center opened in the Winter 2006 semester (as cited in Gilbert, 2012). Jeanie Robertson was appointed as the center’s interim director, and Sherry Wynn Perdue became the part-time assistant director.

Notable accomplishments: Joan Rosen and her husband, Robert, donated funds to renovate the initial writing center space and fund startup operations (Conway, 2008). The Joan Rosen Writing Studio was dedicated on October 23, 2006 (Robertson, 2007).

Staff size: 12 (Robertson, 2007).

Usage: Winter 2006: 628 clients signed in, per Conway (2008)

Then to Now



Fall 2017- Winter 2018: The center employed its updated Cite Right program throughout the academic year. The consultant mentorship program began its use in the Summer 2017 semester, offering consultants a new form of guidance during training and practice.

Notable Accomplishments: The center began to train new and old consultants with its 5-week Consult Right program. Carol Burns-Wortham successfully updated the Cite Right program to be more thorough and to improve ease-of-use and transferability among consultants. The center and staff hosted the 2017 MiWCA conference.

Staff Size: Fall 2017: 26 consultants, per **WCONLINE (2018)**

Winter 2018: 23 consultants, per WCONLINE (2018)

Summer 2018: 9 consultants, per WCONLINE (2018)

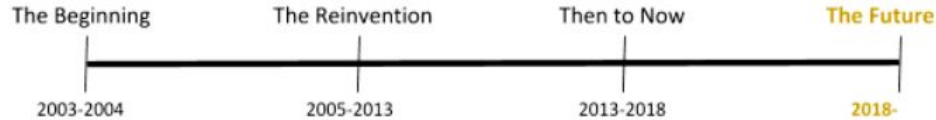
***Usage:** Fall 2017: 3,135 appointments with 1,198 clients, per WCONLINE (2018)

Winter 2018: 2,565 appointments with 922 clients, per WCONLINE (2018)

Summer 2018: 545 appointments with 201 clients, per WCONLINE (2018)

***Clients who came to the center more than once = 1 client**

The Future



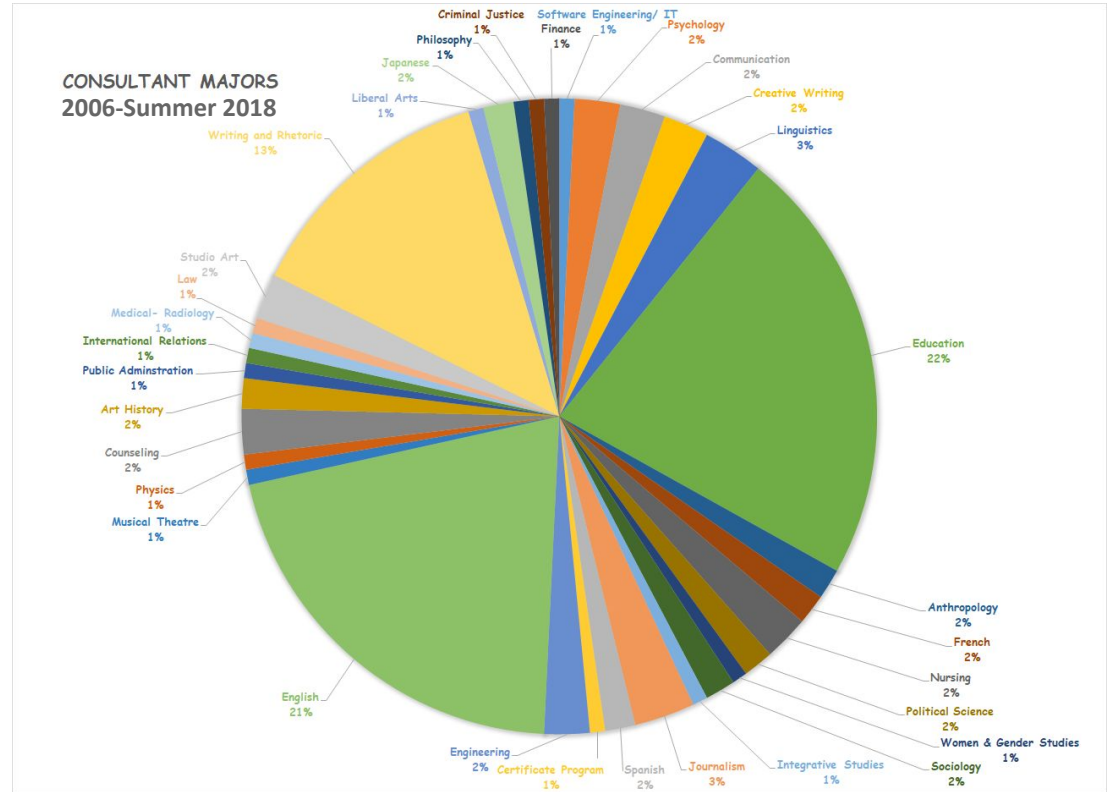
Fall 2018- Winter 2019: At the **end of the Summer 2018 semester**, consultants developed their skills at two professional development days, focusing on synthesis, consultant-client rapport, privacy policies, Cite Right, first- and later-order concerns, and writing center housekeeping. This fall, **20 consultants** will work with clients from various academic disciplines, from brainstorming to polishing final drafts.

- Sample of how we formatted our future section
 - Listed what happened close to the start of the academic year
 - Current staff size for this fall

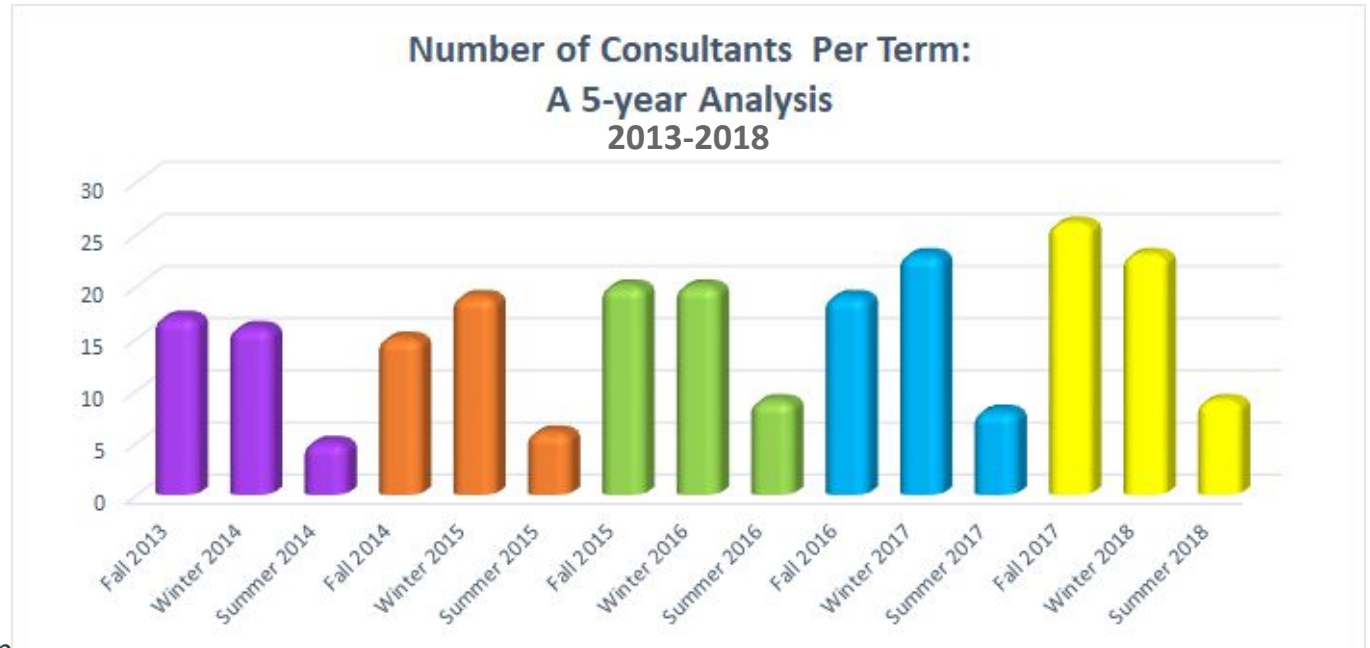
Data charts

- Consultants who no longer work at the center
- Double majors are noted, minors are not

- Previous consultant majors
Made by Noah Thompson

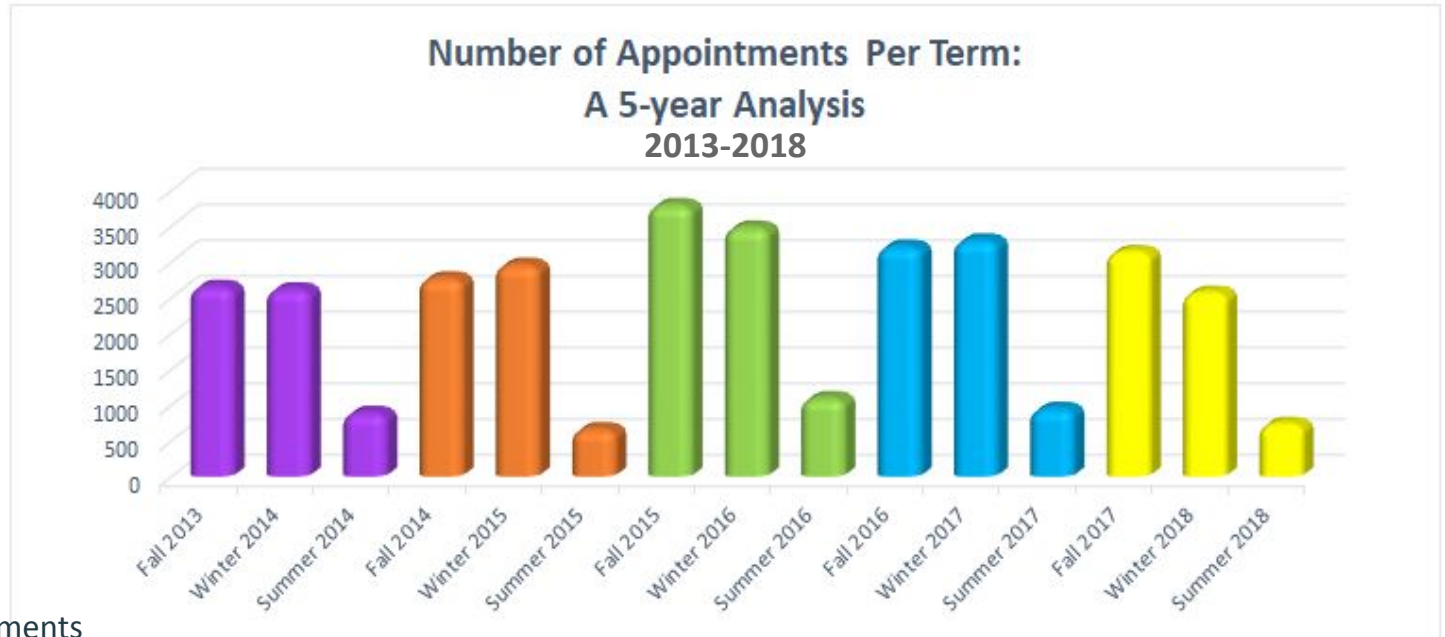


Data charts



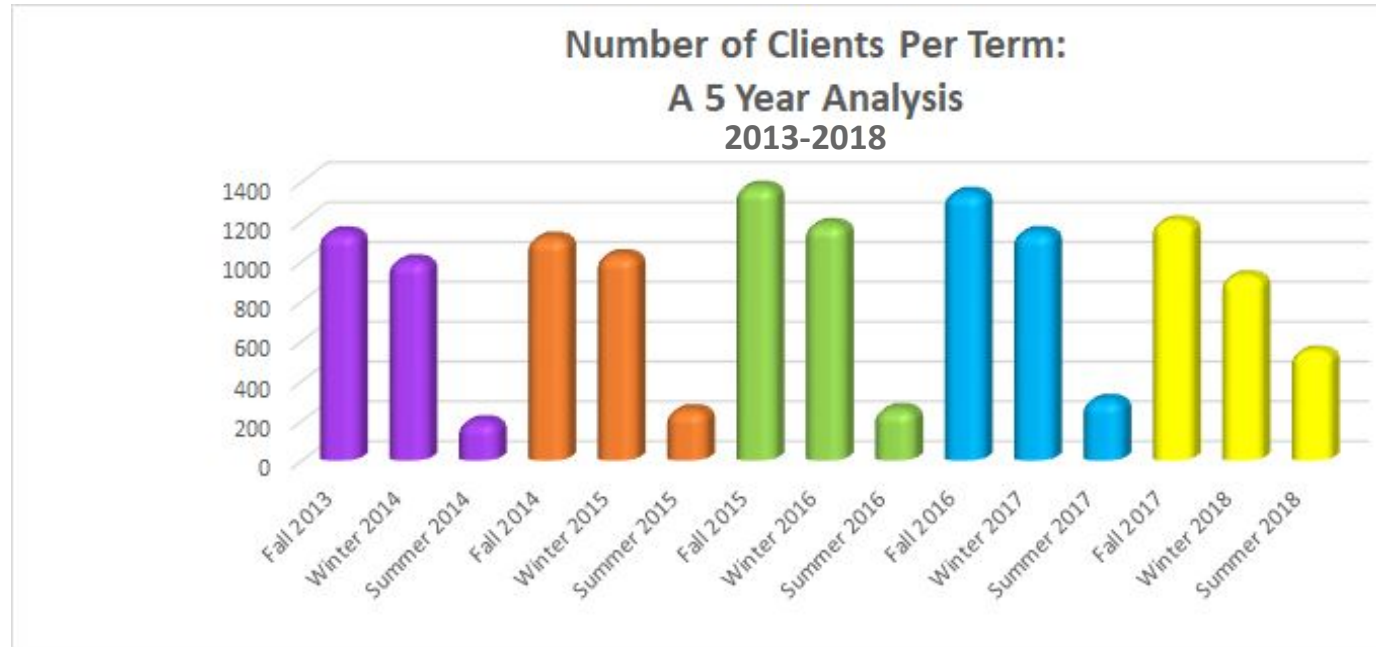
- Number of consultants
Made by Noah Thompson

Data charts



- Number of appointments
Made by Noah Thompson

Data charts



- Number of clients
Made by Noah Thompson

What's Next?

- Gather more information for timeline
 - Main focus for improvement
- Expand electronic record-keeping resources
 - Convert print materials to create online, searchable archive
- Present timeline information at staff meeting in January
- Submit a tutor column to the *Writing Lab Newsletter* documenting our process of creating the timeline and data charts
- Ensure that timeline is updated in the future

The importance of archival work

Creates a translatable history

- Compiling physical documents into an electronic archive enables the searcher to easily find what information is available.
 - The older material we organized was all physical. We will scan material into an eSpace page soon
- Putting accomplishments on a timeline makes them permanently memorable.
 - Gives writing centers the ability to document progress.

The importance of archival work

Contributes to local understanding

- How people near us understand the things that we do
- Informs new and old consultants of our history
- Helps people gain an understanding of writing center work

The importance of archival work

Useful when needing to show progress

- Again, growth is an important thing.
- Gives us tangible means to display our growth through the depiction of notable accomplishments, staff levels, and center usage
- Keeps memory of events when staff changes

The influence archival work had on me

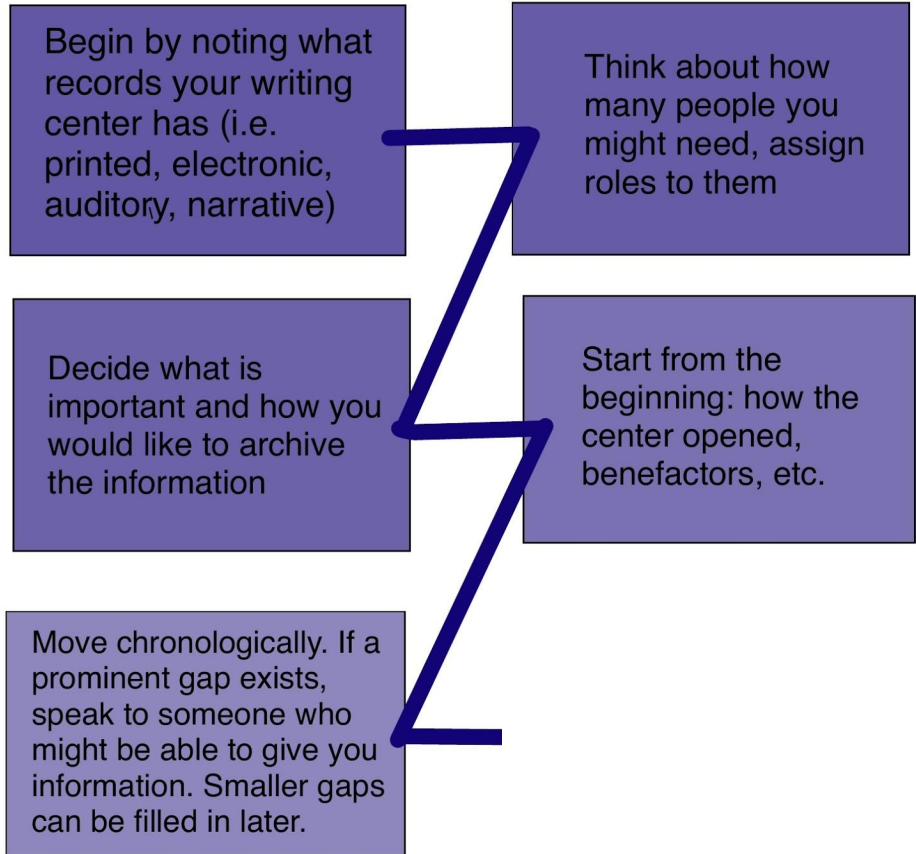
- Acquired an attention to detail
- Gained an appreciation for the work that we do
- Learned that transferrable data is crucial to writing center success



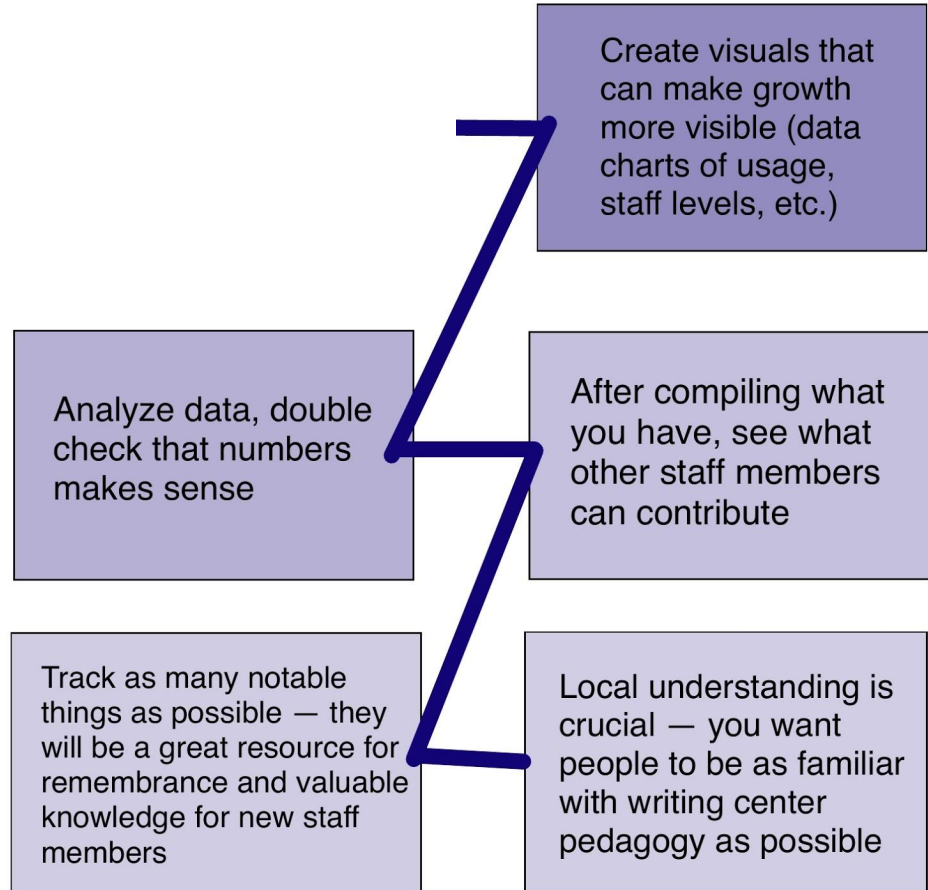
What can you do?

- Remember that you do not have to be an administrator to do archival work.
 - Compiling materials as a writing consultant can provide valuable knowledge and allow you to hone in on skills with attention to detail.
- Don't feel like you need to know absolutely everything before getting started. There's a lot of fun in learning new information as you go through materials.

Tips and Tricks



Tips and Tricks



Special thanks to:



Dr. Sherry Wynn Perdue
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OUWC Operations Coordinator



Joan Rosen
OUWC Benefactor



Noah Thompson
Consultant, co-creator



Red Douglas
Consultant Mentor



Michael Unger
Consultant Mentor

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