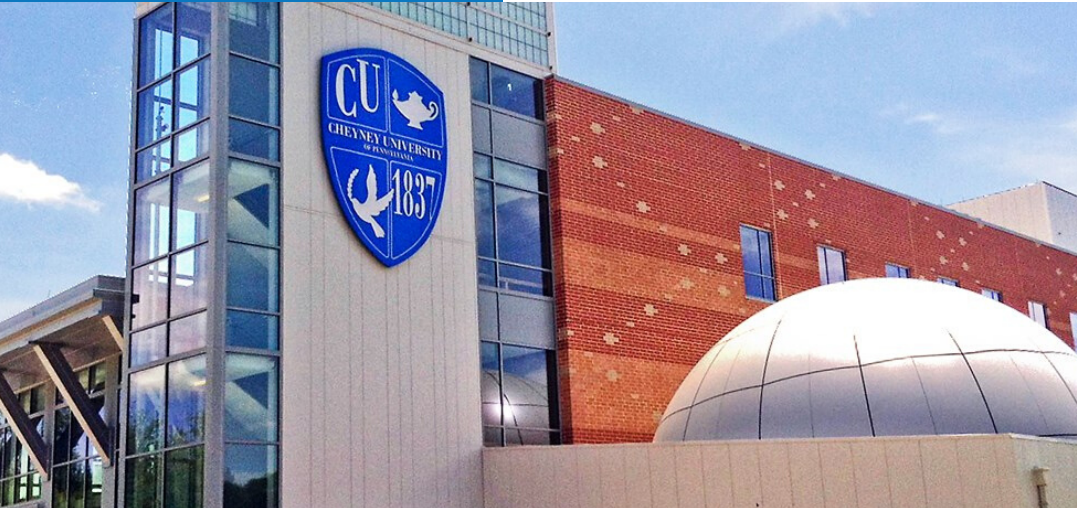


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THIS ISSUE

*We take a deep dive
into the Writing
Center at Cheyney
University*

ABOUT THE WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center, located in Carnegie Hall, 2nd Floor, features a specialized team of experts who are totally focused on writing improvement, skill development, and overall writing excellence. The Center is funded by a grant from the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA), Title III Part F and supports Goals 1 and 2 of Cheyney University's Strategic Plan.

TO RECEIVE ASSISTANCE

- Complete a Tutoring Request Form (TRF) - students must list their name, course, instructor, and the class time(s).
- Once that TRF is received, the student is connected with a Writing Assistant via email and the two of them will arrange a mutual time for their initial visit.
- Once the initial session is concluded, they will set the terms of any subsequent meetings.

THE WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center (WC) assists upward of 350 students annually in increasing their pass rate in first-year writing and writing intensive courses. It provides one-on-one conferences between student writers and professional writing consultants. Students are required to actively participate in conferences by discussing their approach to the assignment, their goals for their paper, and choices they make as writers. The center enables students to take part in the collaborative process of writing and to become more confident and proficient writers, thus improving communication and career-readiness skills.

Julani Ghana, the Director of Student Success & Retention, oversees the Writing Center, ensuring that the students are receiving the best support and that the center has reasonable and reportable objectives.

"I do an annual review of the WC marketing materials, assess and request feedback on its service delivery strategy, review student outreach initiatives, and look at the data regarding frequency of visits," Ghana explains. "I also consult the Provost on the identification of courses with high D, F, W grades to see if any of those courses are labeled as 'writing intensive'. The WC will shape its academic calendar strategy and planning based on that information."

CONTINUED.

Though the Writing Center is its own entity and encourages students to take initiative in their own academic success, the center often coordinates with the English department and receives referrals from professors who believe certain students require immediate help and attention.

Writing Assistants (WA) work with students at all stages of the writing process, focusing in on “higher-order” concerns before concentrating on editing and correctness. Justin Green, a WA who received a Master of Art in Education, became a writing assistant to be a mentor to the students and help them succeed at Cheyney and beyond.

In working directly with the students, Green is able to pinpoint specific problem areas students have and directly addresses them by giving them the proper planning, organization, and execution tools necessary to improve their writing. In general, Green often recommends brainstorming, mapping, graphic organizers, creating outlines, and other writing strategies to his students.

Regarding what changes he believes need to be implemented in how English and language arts should be taught prior to college, Green says, “I believe students should be allowed to write more about topics that interest them.”

STUDENT SUCCESS STORY ● Oluwatoni Latona, Freshman Computer Science major

“The role that the writing center has played in my academic success is how to be open-minded in the way I speak. It has taught me how to be assertive in many ways and to accept other points of view, honesty, and motivation.”

Ghana maintains that consistency and repetition, especially with writing, generally results in much stronger academic performances from students who have more confidence in their writing submissions.

“The more students interact with the WA, if even for a quick review, homework help, or just to build or continue an ongoing relationship, the more they will remain connected to reading, writing, and learning. Those generally result in better overall outcomes for students in their writing intensive classes,” he says.

Written by Dominique Smiley, Title III Program & Fiscal Management Office in collaboration with Julani Ghana, Director of Student Success & Retention. Formatted & Edited by Dominique Smiley.

WRITING ASSISTANT SPOTLIGHT

SALIYM COOPER

- B.A. English and Black American Studies, University of Delaware
- M.A. Publishing, Kingston University

Q: WHY DID YOU BECOME A WRITING ASSISTANT?

For me, writing is a lot like breathing; it's something I can't live without. I didn't realize how powerful writing was until I came to college. I had a professor that assigned Malcolm X, Amiri Baraka, Victor Séjour, and Chester Himes. I found out that my people were saying real things and speaking about their lives in ways that weren't perfect. That class taught me words don't have power, the writer does. That sense of power, and what some call agency, is why I became a Writing Assistant. I want more people who look like me to understand the power of words.

“WE DO ULTIMATELY DESIRE TO TRANSFORM OUR WC INTO NOT JUST A PLACE FOR TUTORING AND HOMEWORK HELP BUT ALSO A DYNAMIC, FUN, AND INTERACTIVE SPACE WHERE ALL THINGS CONNECTED TO WRITING, LEARNING, AND CREATIVE LITERARY EXPRESSION ARE HIGHLY VALUED.”

-Julani Ghana, Director of Student Success & Retention