

getting the most from student writing support

Our philosophy

Student Writing Support (SWS) helps you become a better writer. Through collaboration between the student and the consultant, we help you develop confidence and good writing habits. We facilitate the process by listening to writers, helping them clarify and articulate their ideas, and affirming the experiences and abilities they bring to their writing. Although consultants work with you on specific writing assignments, what you learn applies to all of your writing.

Face-to-face consulting sessions

At Nicholson Hall, make an appointment for a face-to-face writing consultation by visiting writing.umn.edu/mySWS, calling 612.625.1893, or stopping by 15 Nicholson in person. We accommodate walk-in visits at Nicholson: although high demand for our services means that we cannot guarantee that sessions will be available, walk-in openings often occur. All sessions are scheduled for 40 minutes.

At Appleby Hall, consultants hold face-to-face consultations on a walk-in basis only; we do not make appointments. When you arrive in 9 Appleby Hall, please check in on the Appleby sign-in computer. The sign-in list gives priority to students who have not had a consultation that day, and/or have not already had two consultations that week.

Online consulting sessions (SWS.online)

Like our face-to-face consultations, online appointments are collaborative, student-centered conversations about writing. Unlike face-to-face consultations, where consultants read and discuss your paper when you arrive, SWS.online consultations involve three steps:

- (1) Electronically submit your writing and your specific questions about it; the consultant whom you've chosen will read and respond to what you've written.
- (2) Read your consultant's response at our secure website.
- (3) Meet with your consultant online for a follow-up chat.

Learn more at writing.umn.edu/sws/visit/online. Make an appointment by logging in with your X500 at writing.umn.edu/mySWS.

Our writing consultants will

Help you get started on an assignment

"I have to do a literature review, but I don't know where to start. How can I approach this assignment?"

Discuss concerns about structure and organization

"I have all these ideas for this dissertation chapter, but I am not sure how well they work together."

Address questions about clarity in your writing

"I am not sure if this paragraph makes sense. Is it clear to you?"

Model revision and editing strategies

"How can I make my sentences clearer and more direct?"

Teach you how to proofread

"My instructor told me that I have a lot of comma splices in this paper. What do they look like so I can fix them?"

Direct you to other writing resources

"Is there a book or website that can teach me how to cite sources in a History paper?"

Our writing consultants will not

Proofread your paper for you

"Can you correct all the comma errors in this paper?"

Write your paper, or tell you what to write

"How would you make this point?"

Tell you what your instructor wants

"Will my instructor like what I have written here?"

Evaluate or guarantee a grade for your paper

"Will this get me an A?"

All of our consultants are comfortable working with all kinds of writing and writers. In addition, some of our consultants specialize in working with non-native speakers of English (look for “Multilingual Learner Specialists” on our website), and many have experience with writing in specific genres and disciplines. Our consultants work on a regular schedule; to see who works when, use your X500 to log in at writing.umn.edu/mySWS, and click “view walk-in schedules.” To learn more about all of our consultants, visit writing.umn.edu/sws, and click on “consultant bios.”

Other resources

Along with our consultations, Student Writing Support provides other writing resources:

- Quicktips and online writing resources in the “Quick help” menu at writing.umn.edu/sws
- Citation manuals—APA, Chicago, MLA
- Books on writing in specific disciplines
- In Nicholson Hall, a computer lab with 15 dual-platform (PC-friendly) iMacs, plenty of spaces to plug in your own laptop, and printing for \$.10/page via your UCard or a Gopher Gold card

Important policies

Late, no-show, and cancellation policies

If you are more than 5 minutes late to an appointment, it may be given to a waiting student. If you cannot attend your appointment, please log in to writing.umn.edu/mySWS or call 612.625.1893 to cancel as soon as possible. This frees your consultant to see other students at that time. If you do not cancel, the appointment will be labeled a “no-show.” Habitual no-shows will affect your access to SWS services.

Exams

Consultants will not work with you on take-home or preliminary exams unless the instructor states in writing—whether on the exam, in the syllabus, or in an email to writing@umn.edu—that it is permissible for students to use our services specifically on these assignments.

Student privacy

Student Writing Support will not verify or discuss your session with your instructors. However, you are free to discuss your sessions with them. For this purpose, you may want to complete our Student Reflection Form after your session (available in 15 Nicholson and 9 Appleby or at z.umn.edu/swsreflection.) If your instructors require verification, please direct them to writing.umn.edu/sws/instructors.html.

Misuse of identification

Student Writing Support will not work with clients who represent themselves as being someone else. Students using another person’s University identification, or transferring to anyone such identification, are engaging in falsification, among other violations of the Student Conduct Code. These students may lose access to SWS services. For more details, please see z.umn.edu/SWSpolicies.

Student Writing Support

15 Nicholson Hall
mainly by appointment
open Mondays – Fridays
check website for current hours
612.625.1893

Center for Writing

9 Appleby Hall
walk-in only
open Mondays – Fridays
check website for current hours
612.626.1328

writing.umn.edu/sws

SWS.online
by appointment only
open Mondays – Fridays
writing.umn.edu/mysws