Review of Goals:

A. Replace severely outdated UWC/SSWC technologies as soon as possible, and assign UWC/SWCC to a regular technology replacement cycle
B. Maintain and grow UWC staff to meet ongoing and steadily increasing demand for sessions that prepare NIU undergraduate students for academic and workplace expectations in writing proficiencies
C. Continue UWC project to provide undergraduate students in Foreign Language classes with support for writing proficiency in target languages
D. Continue to increase participation in WAC workshops to help faculty design more “writing proficiency” courses in general education and the major
E. Establish an upper-division writing requirement to define benchmarks for student learning outcomes
F. Establish Writing Proficiency Courses across the disciplines to demonstrate implementation of upper-division writing requirement
G. Continue to increase faculty participants in WAC workshop who contribute student writing samples to Assessment Services’ University Writing Project (UWP)

Chart of FY2012 Goals, Milestones, performance Indicators, and Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Milestones</th>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Results</th>
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</table>
| Goal A: Replace severely outdated UWC/SSWC technologies as soon as possible and assign UWC/SSWC to a regular technology replacement cycle | Yearly increments | • Increase satisfaction of technology integration in SSWC, as monitored through an end-of semester survey  
• Increase number of technology-related face-to-face sessions by 2% each year  
• Increase number of Skype sessions by 5% each year | • 7-year-old technology in the SSWC classroom has not yet been replaced. Projectors and many computers/ keyboards do not function. Overall impact has been negative on 15 First-Year Composition (FYC) instructors/ GAs and approximately 550 first-year students with classes in the SSWC. FYC training and electronic portfolio assessment have also been impacted. See Note 1 in “Plans.”  
• Since UWC’s 7-year-old general-use computers do not support current MS Office software, we could not conduct face-to-face sessions in which students needed a computer to review their electronic documents (e.g., PowerPoints, websites, |
### FY 2012 Report on University Writing Center & Upper Division University Writing Program Initiative

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Goal B: Maintain and grow UWC staff to meet ongoing and steadily increasing demand for sessions that prepare NIU undergraduate students for academic and workplace expectations in writing proficiencies</th>
<th>Yearly increments</th>
<th>Yearly increments</th>
<th>Yearly increments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Reduce “turn-aways” by an additional 3% each year</td>
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- Number of Skype sessions increased 138% in FY12 (302 in FY12, 127 in FY11) and number of Skype clients doubled (from 7 in FY11 to 14 in FY12)
- The UWC increased number of sessions by 6% in FY12 (11,389 in FY12, 10,716 in FY11). Although number of individual clients decreased (2,432 in FY12, 2,750 in FY11), the UWC increased average number of visits from 4.2 to 4.6 in FY12.
- The UWC increased number of individual courses served by 6.5% (629 courses in FY12, 591 in FY11). Number of faculty who taught those courses also increased by 8% (611 in FY12, 568 in FY11)
- The UWC turned away 303 individuals, 46% decrease from 561 turned away in FY11.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal C: Continue UWC project to provide undergraduate students in Foreign Language classes with support for writing proficiency in target languages</th>
<th>Yearly increments and benchmark</th>
<th>2012, increase sessions to support students writing for writing-proficiency courses in Spanish by 3% to establish program</th>
<th>2012 UWC/FLL collaboration was only minimally successful. We were only able to find/hire one consultant for Fall 2011 and two for Spring 2012. Number of sessions dropped from 101 in FY11 to 67 in FY12, a 33% decrease. Based on the sharp decrease, we would like to end the UWC/FLL program and ask that the funds be applied to the new initiative described under Note 3 in Plan section.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Goal D: Continue to increase participation in WAC workshops to help faculty design more “writing proficiency” courses in general education and the major</td>
<td>Sustain annual participation of 20-25 faculty</td>
<td>85% satisfaction of workshop participants</td>
<td>25 faculty participated in 2012 “Writing-Enhanced Course” workshop (3 on waiting list) 14 faculty participated in 2012 “Write-Publish More” workshop; writing circles continue for faculty who complete workshop 85% satisfaction met and exceeded, as reported by evaluations from Office of Faculty Development and Instructional Design</td>
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<tr>
<td>Goal E: Establish an upper-division writing requirement to</td>
<td>No Goal E milestone set for 2012 With support of Dean of CLAS</td>
<td>No Goal E performance indicator set for 2012</td>
<td>134 (11%) instructional faculty responded to the survey</td>
</tr>
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</table>
| **Goal F:** Establish Writing Proficiency courses across the disciplines to demonstrate implementation of upper-division writing requirement | • Fall 2011, redesigned ENGL 250 syllabus and assignments to develop its role as a Gen Ed writing-proficiency course  
• Fall 2011, ENGL 629 trained 14 GAs to teach ENGL 250  
• Spring 2012, piloted 4 sections of ENGL 250 with redesigned syllabus  
• May 2012, assessed from 4 sections of ENGL 250 | • 2012, 75% student portfolios from pilot sections of ENGL 250 meet expectations | • 99 students completed 4 sections of ENGL 250.  
• Portfolio assessment results: 82% met or exceeded expected scores of above 2.0 out of a 4-point scale on adapted VALUES rubric. Evaluators, however, agree that rubric needs further adaptation. |
Significance/Impact in FY2012

- Specific contributions the University Writing Center (UWC) and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) have made to Vision 2020 and the four strategic planning imperatives:

1. The UWC preserves, strengthens, and extends NIU’s teaching and learning environment by providing supplemental instruction in writing for any NIU undergraduate or graduate students who seek its services; WAC preserves, strengthens, and extends NIU’s teaching and learning environment by providing faculty with professional development in integrating up-to-date writing instruction and assessment in cross-disciplinary classes in general education and the major.

2. The UWC provides a strategy for investing in multi-disciplinary scholarship through collaborative review of faculty’s research/grants; WAC provides NIU a strategy for investing in multi-disciplinary scholarship and artistic clusters through workshops that support individual scholarly production within ongoing multi-disciplinary “writing circles.”

3. The UWC strengthens and extends NIU’s regional impact by helping undergraduate and graduate students enter the workplace and advanced academic programs with improved writing skills.

4. The UWC makes NIU an institution of “first choice” for faculty, students, and staff through:
   - Improving NIU undergraduate and graduate students’ abilities in the areas of critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and written communication, in support of student retention and academic success
   - Providing technological support for teaching and development of electronic writing assignments and electronic portfolios
   - Providing training for writing consultants who aim to enter the teaching profession
   - Assisting faculty with the development of writing assignments

WAC makes NIU an institution of “first choice” for faculty, students, and staff through:

- Contributing to the development of “master teachers” who use up-to-date techniques in writing instruction through workshops
- Supporting the productivity of faculty as scholars through workshops

- The UWC conducted 11,389 sessions with 2,432 students in 629 courses, and 1,051 sessions with 23 faculty, providing collaborative review of syllabi, assignments/rubrics, and research/grants, as well as in-class support through topic-focused presentations.

- WAC workshops supported 41 faculty and ENGL 629 trained 14 GAs; workshop and training follow-up impacted 308 students in 11 courses.

Presentations & Publications in FY2012

- UWC: Director conducted round table discussion at the Midwest Writing Center Association Conference in October 2011--*Hiring Challenges: More than Filling Open Positions*
WAC: no presentations and/or publications as a direct result of Strategic Planning Funds

External Funding Applications & Awards in 2012
- Neither the UWC or WAC submitted external funding applications or received awards based on Strategic Planning.

UWC Plans for FY2013:
1. Beginning in Fall 2012, the UWC will develop and administer an end-of-semester survey on satisfaction level regarding the technology in the SSWC to the faculty who teach in the SSWC.
2. The UWC will collect quantitative and qualitative data on client satisfaction regarding the overall performance of UWC sessions/operation.
3. In FY10 and FY11 the UWC collaborated with the Department of Foreign Languages (FLL) to provide tutoring in writing for students majoring in Spanish—primarily those taking FLSP 411, the FLL’s writing intensive capstone project. Although the UWC embedded consultants in the FLSP 411 courses for Spring 2011, Fall 2011, and Spring 2012 and had the consultants do presentations about UWC services in other classes, the Department of Foreign Languages did not encourage the students to use the services nor did the students generally take advantage of the services. In Spring 2011, the three FLL consultants conducted 101 sessions for foreign language courses, only 10 of which were students in FLSP 411. In Fall 2011/Spring 2012, the number of overall sessions for foreign language courses decreased to 67, only 11 of which were with students in FLSP 411.

Additionaly, it was very difficult to attract and maintain tutors in the foreign language consultant positions. The Department of Foreign Languages was supposed to identify potential consultants from its students with majors in Spanish. We had five applicants in Fall 2010 and were subsequently able to staff three of the four positions in FY11. However, we only had one applicant the second year, so we were only able to staff one position in Fall 2011. One of the FY11 consultants returned for Spring 2012 when he returned from studying abroad.

The Department of Foreign Languages has not shown a great commitment to the collaboration, even when asked to meet regarding the situation. Therefore, we propose that the UWC be allowed to transfer the UWC/FLL funds to a pilot writing fellows (WF) program with the Department of Economics. The proposed target course is ECON 492, the capstone project for the undergraduate economics majors. The course is writing intensive with multiple steps that embrace the research/writing process. In a series of six assignments, the students analyze a societal issue in an economic framework and use library, internet, and computer resources to conduct research, and to organize and write a research paper. The course is designed to help the students apply what they have learned in the Economics coursework and to hone their skills in writing in their discipline as well as practice for graduate school and/or professional careers.

Students enrolled in ECON 492 are currently required to use the UWC services three times throughout the semester, so it is a population with which the UWC has an existing relationship (319 sessions with 82 individual students in FY12).
Although the UWC consultants are familiar with the basic requirements of the project, having WFs who communicate directly with the professors and who attend the classes and are present during discussions about the research and writing expectations would enhance the depth of feedback provided to these students and reinforce the Department’s expectations for the project. Having WFs familiar with the standard conventions for writing in economics would also enhance the students’ documents. Copies of the students’ drafts, WF written feedback, and notes regarding the conference will be submitted to the professor with the final document.

The UWC practice of engaging clients in dialogues about their writing parallels the current writing center research and meets NIU’s goal of “scholarly conversations about ideas…and the pursuit of new knowledge” and the collaborative nature of striving for individual achievement. A writing fellows program emphasizes writing as a process through a peer mentorship model, so attaching writing fellows would benefit multiple stakeholders.

- **Students:** The students will receive written global feedback on ways to improve the presentation of the ideas in the drafts of their research papers and then conference with a WF to discuss options for organizing, revising, and editing their documents. WF would help the students identify their strengths and challenges as writers, articulate their ideas effectively, and master the stylistic nuances associated with written communication. These strategies exemplify NIU’s strategic plan goals to increase students’ academic success at NIU and to actively engage students in their own learning.

Because the writing fellows work closely with the professors, WFs are familiar with the assignment expectations and serve as a second set of eyes for the project. The students have the opportunity to improve their papers and their overall critical thinking/writing skills. This process also encourages students to meet deadlines in a timely fashion.

- **Faculty:** The professors/instructors have support in identifying student questions/concerns during the writing process. The faculty can concentrate on providing feedback on content rather than structure and mechanics. They receive more focused and better developed papers, which hopefully makes grading the papers easier.

- **Writing Fellows:** The WFs will have opportunities to participate in real-world engaged learning, build relationships with individuals from all facets of the university, hone skills they can use in their future careers, and expand their writing experience through talking about writing, observing others’ writing strategies, and learning about writing styles for diverse disciplines.

- **Department of Economics:** The WF program will support the Department’s goal, as stated on its website, of helping its students become more effective in expressing how to help “individuals, businesses and governments allocate scarce resources… and analyze choices and incentives to attain the best solutions to the problems arising from the constraints imposed by limited resources.” Working with WFs will help the students hone skills needed for their
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professional futures in “administration, marketing research, financial services, sales, management, insurance, real estate, public and social service, as well as many other exciting fields.”

- UWC: The benefit to the UWC is also significant. The UWC’s mission, as stated on its website, is to be “a place for all writers at Northern Illinois University (undergraduates, graduates, staff, and even faculty) to talk about their writing with trained consultants, one-on-one.” This collaboration will expand the UWC’s presence as a student/faculty/staff support resource for writing projects (academic and professional) throughout the entire university—further enhancing NIU’s commitment to writing across the curriculum.

There are 2 sections of ECON 492 scheduled for Fall 2012, with a total of 44 students possible. The UWC would assign one WF per 10-15 students, which still fits within the targeted funding for FY13.

Hiring/Training Process
The hiring process will be a collaborative effort between the UWC and the Department of Economics since the UWC will seek qualified candidates based on recommendations from the Department of Economics.

Hiring qualified WFs who understand and can talk about the writing process in their specific discipline is the first and most crucial step. Although it is possible to prepare many individuals to tutor, those who cannot articulate their writing process and those who do not truly understand that writing is a complicated, and sometimes frustrating, process are not successful in or comfortable working with the clients. The UWC hiring process has proven effective for the past eight years; adding the Department of Economics faculty recommendations and feedback on the quality of writing in the discipline will supplement the hiring process. The ideal WF will meet the following criteria:

- be an upper level undergraduate student or, possibly, a graduate student
- have declared major in economics
- have strong writing skills, especially in his/her declared major
- have the ability to talk about and mentor writing in general and writing in economics in particular

Candidates’ applications will be reviewed following the current UWC hiring process

- Application form
- 100-150 word statement explaining why the applicant would like to be a WF
- Academic writing sample for an economics course—minimum 1000 words
- 100-150 word statement explaining why the applicant chose the sample, including the following information: what he/she likes about the submission and what he/she would change if he/she revised it
Faculty recommendation
Interview with UWC staff, which will include a mock session

It is essential to provide adequate training and references/resources for the WFs to enhance their effectiveness when working with the clients. The UWC is not an editing service. Instead its mission is to create better writers by teaching the clients strategies to identify and overcome the challenges they face as writers. The more the consultants understand and embrace the philosophy, the better prepared they are to talk about writing. Additionally, the more references/resources/support they have to model effective writing or grammar/mechanics rules, the more successful the sessions are and the better the writers the university produces are. Therefore,

- All WFs will be trained in writing center practice and pedagogy and observe consulting sessions prior to working as a consultant.
- All WFs will be paired with an experienced UWC mentor to facilitate easing into, and to monitor, the tutoring process. The mentor and mentee will meet on a weekly basis the consultant’s first semester of employment in the UWC.
- All WFs will be required to attend all UWC training and staff meetings.

Assessment: Assessment will be quantitative and qualitative and come from the UWC database, pre and post surveys completed by ECON 492 faculty and students, meetings with ECON 492 faculty, and analysis of the WF feedback and conference information.

WAC Plans for FY2013:
- Maintain participation of 20-25 faculty in workshops, coordinating with Office of Faculty Development and Instructional Design
- Improve WAC advertisement of workshop through WAC Newsletter and updated website (website update proceeding very slowly because of WAC coordinator’s other duties)
- Re-assemble ad hoc WAC advisory committee to assist with preparation of proposed upper-division writing requirement and present proposed writing requirement to General Education Committee
- Work with ad hoc WAC Advisory Committee to prepare initial list of proposed Writing Proficiency (WP) courses
- Coordinate WAC Advisory/Committee on Undergraduate Writing Proficiency recommendations with Provost, Dean of CLAS, and academic advisors to add two more sections of ENGL 250
- Attain and maintain minimum participation of 15-20 faculty in UWP project

Submitted 6/1/2012