

QUESTION:

From Shumaila Hemani, Doctoral Student, Music regarding the Centre for Writers - May 2016

RESPONSE:

Thank you for your question and comments concerning the Centre for Writers (C4W). Based on the feedback we have received since the last GFC meeting, we have decided to undertake further consultation on the transition of CRW. I will provide further details at the May 30 General Faculties Council.

In the meantime, let me reiterate that the transition in reporting for C4W is in no way intended to change the model for the Centre. The service provided, cost (free to students), location, budget, staff, tutors, training and mandate all remain as before. What we hope to achieve is better integration and coordination of student supports and of writing initiatives.

Responding to your specific question, below is a brief summary of the history of C4W and the consultation process that informed the decision to move the administrative responsibility for the Centre from the Faculty of Arts to the Dean of Students, and how the decision will affect students.

The Centre for Writers (C4W) was established in 2007-2008 by joint agreement of the Provost and the Dean of Arts at the time. The Centre was created, with a mandate, 'to provide one-on-one writing support to students across the University'. The C4W provides no courses, programs, or certificates, and therefore is considered to be an administrative unit providing an important student support service. It is permissible for any interested scholars to pursue research activities in conjunction with the Centre, consistent with University research policies.

In Spring 2015, the University Writing Committee (chaired by an Associate Dean in the Faculty of Arts) produced a document that was presented to the Office of the Provost describing a proposal to centralize writing services across the North Campus. Following delivery of the proposal, the Vice Dean of Arts and the Vice-Provost (Programs) met with members of UWC, including the Director of C4W, additional Vice-Provosts, the Chief Librarian, and the Dean of Students. Input was also received from other stakeholders in the system. After reporting to the Provost, the decision was taken to move the administrative responsibility and oversight of C4W to the Dean of Students.

The purpose of the move is to improve accountabilities and consolidate and create synergies among some of the various student-focused writing service programs at the University. The Dean of Students is the most appropriate unit for hosting C4W given its dedicated mandate and strong track record for providing services to support student success. It is neutral space with an institution-wide mandate and with accountability to all faculties through the Office of the Provost. It also provides good opportunities for coordination with the *Writing Across the Curriculum* program at the Centre for Teaching and Learning, which also reports to the Office of the Provost.

There is no intention to change the nature of services provided to all students, or to change the tutoring program (which levers the academic Writing Studies courses offered by the Faculty of Arts). It was intended that students accessing services would notice no difference in the availability, quality, or costs of services, and that tutors can continue to expect to be hired by the C4W after completion of WRS 301/601.

The Office of the Provost will continue to support and develop this service to students at no cost to them regardless of its administrative home.

Steven Dew, Provost and Vice-President (Academic)