



Fall GRAD Agile Planning Workshop



CSU WRITES
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

CSU Writes supports Colorado State University's researchers and scholars who write for submission and/or degree completion. The program provides targeted, opt-in support for experts or becoming-experts—faculty, postdocs, contract researchers, and graduate students—across their career spans and across disciplines and identities.

We are administratively housed in the Graduate School and receive operating funds from the Office of the Vice President for Research.

The program was founded and is directed by Dr. Kristina Quynn, Associate Professor and Assistant Dean in the Graduate School.

SUMMARY

In 2022, CSU Writes balanced virtual and in-person program delivery options—offering webinars and Zoom retreats while increasing the number of in-person workshops and retreats from 2021. We actively addressed concerns about researcher (faculty, postdoc, and graduate student) wellbeing and burnout. We also completed a comprehensive survey of research writing support at peer and top-ranked research institutions.

BY THE NUMBERS

3740	Attendances
674	Youtube Views
100+	Special Topics Talks
41	Workshops & Webinars
28	Retreats
12	Graduate Student Interns
1	Mentoring Writing Program
1	Book Club - 4000 Weeks: Time Management for Mortals



NOTEWORTHY

CSU Writes expanded its impact through increased attendance, new initiatives to support grant writers, and an exploration of national and international researcher writing programs to better assess our program's value and position within the broader landscape of writing support.

- **New Initiative: GRANT Writes** included a "Grants at the Sentence Level" webinar, two 1-day writing retreats, and grant feedback groups—for writers of NSF and NIH proposals.
- **Report on Research Writing Support Programs** completed a 2-year study of programs at 100+ research institutions. Executive summary below



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CHALLENGES

CSU Writes navigated several challenges this year, including resource constraints, participant engagement issues (e.g., show up & write.), and logistical barriers such as leadership transitions.

Attrition for workshops and retreat can range between 50-90%, depending on the event topic, placement in the semester, and even the weather. For example, for the GRAD webinar on Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Submission (104 registered, 25 attended).

To address these, the program implemented adaptive strategies and is exploring new approaches to sustain participation and demonstrate impact through submission records and other assessment measures.



Dr. Teri Gadd inspired as she navigated disability to complete her dissertation at **show up & write.** sessions.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Next year, CSU Writes aims to refine its drop-in writing sessions, implementing revisions to enhance accessibility and engagement. The program will introduce new strategies for supporting researchers, including expanded proposal-editing services and deeper collaborations with colleges to strengthen writing support at multiple levels. Additionally, efforts will focus on developing a system-wide CSU Writes initiative to extend resources and impact across the CSU System.



WRITER EXPERIENCES

Grants Workshop: *Great job. I'm a seasoned grant writing and reviewer and I learned a few things here.*

USGS Research Retreat: *These retreats are a valuable tool. The accountability aspect of having everyone writing in the same room is helpful to keep focused*

GRAD Workshop: *I loved the session, especially books recommendation. It was a great session overall to learn more about publication and related issues*



Early Career Retreat

OUR TEAM & GRATITUDE

CSU Writes thrives because of the dedication of our writers, collaborators, and team members.

We extend our deepest gratitude to the CSU Writes Graduate Interns: Nellie Kassebaum, Heidi Klem, Rudy Leal McCormack, Lauren Mangus, Tawni Riepe, Laura van der Pol, and Sara Van Etten; as well as our partners at NREL Writes--Julie Heinrichs and FORT Writes--Cam Aldridge and Sarah Carter at the USGS. We also appreciate the invaluable support of the Graduate School staff and the Office of the Vice President for Research. Special thanks for the gracious and impeccable leadership of Interim Graduate School Dean, Dr. Sonia Kreidenweis.

The support of research writing requires a CSU Village. Thank you.

write. early. often. better. together.

DATE: October 1, 2022
FROM: Kristina Quynn, Director CSU Writes
RE: Report on Research & Scholarly Writing Support, 2021-22

Summary of the CSU Writes report on “Research & Scholarly Writing Support: Institution Survey”

CSU Writes has completed a survey of writing programs that support early-career through late-career researchers at more than 100 highest-ranked research institutions. The survey included our peer institutions and select aspirational institutions. Responding institution sizes ranged from those that served graduate student populations of ~1500 to ~9400. In 2021-22, CSU’s graduate student population was ~3600.

The purpose of the survey was two-fold: 1) to better understand the program arrangements of and approaches to writing productivity support, and 2) to open pathways of communication and potential collaboration among writing program directors for studies of advanced writing research.

The survey findings will also help CSU improve our support of publications, proposals, and submissible documents (theses, dissertations, reports, and more) across the career spans of our researchers.

Select key findings from the report:

- Research/scholarly writing support can be housed in various campus locations—most commonly in graduate schools and writing centers, but also in colleges, libraries, and resource centers.
- Program size varied significantly and spoke to the idiosyncrasies of institutional histories, funding, and interests in research writing productivity. Size did not correspond with grad student population.
- Reported yearly program attendances ranged from 160 to 3500. One program (a CSU peer institution) reported providing 4000 consultations to graduate students.
- 76% of programs reported having peer consultants/tutors on staff
- Program staffing also varied significantly: 40% have one FTE staff; 45% more than two FTE.
- Covid brought inconsistent impacts: Several programs reported suspending or canceling programs while a couple programs reported being well equipped to cope or higher attendances at events.
- The survey reveals the ingenuity of program administrators to provide a range of specialty programs, workshops, and other offerings to suit the changing needs of writers at their campuses.

Select key insights for CSU:

- CSU Writes was one a few programs designed to work with faculty as producers of research.
- CSU Writes was unique because we work with graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and other researchers across the career span.
- CSU Writes endorses field-driven (not curricular) measures of high-quality research writing.
- CSU Writes had the highest number of reported faculty attendance of universities reporting support for faculty writers.
- With yearly program attendances exceeding 3500, CSU Writes also has one of the overall highest rates of reported attendances.
- CSU Writes can reach across discipline, rank, and skill-level differences to provide graduate student, researcher/postdoc, and faculty writing support in a single program.
- Only two programs reported exploring manuscript editing services for either graduate student and/or faculty writers—a service long-requested by our faculty and international scholars.
- Reminder: Professional manuscript editors and writing coaches can provide targeted support for individual writers for various manuscripts/proposals.
- We can make CSU the first university to come in mind when researchers think of excellence and innovation in research writing and productivity.