

短 報

聖路加国際大学アカデミック・ライティング・デスク (AWD)

—学術研究・学術的文章作成・プレゼンテーション・出版のための
メンタリングサポートの取り組みと展開—

Edward BARROGA¹⁾ 井上 麻未²⁾ 藤田 寛之³⁾ 佐藤 晋巨³⁾
松本 直子³⁾ 中島 薫⁴⁾ 瓜生田真理⁴⁾

The Academic Writing Desk of St. Luke's International University
—Providing Increasing Mentoring Support in the Areas of Academic Research, Writing,
Presentation, and Publishing—

Edward BARROGA, PhD¹⁾ Mami INOUE, MA²⁾ Hiroyuki FUJITA, MA³⁾ Kuniko SATO, MLS³⁾
Naoko MATSUMOTO, BA³⁾ Kaoru NAKAJIMA, BA⁴⁾ Mari URIUDA, BA⁴⁾

[Abstract]

The Academic Writing Desk (AWD) of St. Luke's International University (SLIU) was established in 2015 to provide professional mentoring to undergraduate and postgraduate students through individualized or group consultations and planned educational programs in academic writing, presentation, and publishing. Its concept is based on the development of skilled, knowledgeable, and independent academic writers and presenters achieved through personalized mentoring by a highly experienced faculty academic mentor as a collaborative partnership. The conceptual approach is to improve English language and logical thinking skills to achieve well-communicated wording and writing. Since its launching, the AWD has helped in equipping undergraduate students with skills and knowledge on integrating and communicating biomedical information and making effective presentations, as well as in mentoring postgraduate students on synthesizing ideas, writing valid research questions, conceptualizing research, composing proposals, and logically presenting findings in writing and presentation forms. This year, the AWD has played an instrumental role in achieving a highly successful student exchange program and academic presentation at McGill University in Canada, and academic presentation at Duke University School of Nursing in the U.S. where SLIU attendees achieved the highest mark among international presenters. The survey feedback from the AWD users has been very favorable with particular requests for increased AWD services. With its establishment, the AWD aims to facilitate qualified education, aiming at increasing writing, presentation and publishing skills, promoting research, and further enhancing the international reputation and academic standing of St. Luke's International University.

- 1) 東京医科大学国際医学情報学講座・Tokyo Medical University, Department of International Medical Communications
- 2) 聖路加国際大学看護学部基盤領域 (英語)・St. Luke's International University, Social Sciences & Humanities / Fundamentals of Research (English)
- 3) 聖路加国際大学学術情報センター学習コミュニティ支援室・St. Luke's International University, Center for Academic Resources, Support Office for Learning Community
- 4) 聖路加国際大学国際連携センター・St. Luke's International University, Center for International Cooperation

受付 2016年9月30日 受理 2016年11月29日

[Key words] academic writing, academic presentation, mentoring, research methodology, scholarly publishing, nursing education

[要旨]

聖路加国際大学では、2015年4月から学部生・大学院生を対象に、英語教員、学習コミュニティ支援室、国際部が協働し、英文ライティングの支援を行う「アカデミック・ライティング・デスク」(以下AWD)を立ち上げ、運用を開始した。米国の大学では学術的文章の支援サービスが広く普及している。一方、日本では、アカデミック・センターを設置し、安定的に運営している大学は未だ多くはない。

本学のAWDは、わが国で初めての、看護学部生・大学院生に特化したアカデミック・ライティング支援となる先駆的なサービスである。AWDでは、学生は医学分野の英語論文指導の第一人者である教員との英語でのメンタリングを通し、英語で書き、発信する力を伸ばす。大学院生には、特に、学位論文作成に必要な論理的思考力の鍛錬、研究倫理も含む多様な研究活動支援を提供している。2016年には、利用者調査を行い、本サービスへの満足度の高さと同時にサービス拡大への希望が多い現状を把握した。本稿ではAWDの特色と詳細、利用者調査の結果、AWDの教育的成果例を示す海外研修プログラム(デューク大学)での学生プレゼンテーションの結果を明らかにし、今後の発展的な支援継続に向けて新たな取り組みの可能性を提示する。

[キーワードズ] アカデミック・ライティング, ライティング・センター, メンタリング, 論理的思考力, 英語論文指導, 看護教育

I. INTRODUCTION

The establishment of a university academic writing program provides a strategic setting for teaching, mentoring, and supporting the writing, presentation, and publishing activities of the academic institution. Many leading universities in the U.S. have long-established academic writing programs implemented through their writing centers in recognition of the importance of communicating scholastic work in writing. These centers provide assistance to students on how to write their academic papers, reports, projects, and presentations.

Some of these writing centers in the U.S. include The Writing Center of Harvard University, Hume Center for Writing and Speaking of Stanford University, UCLA Graduate Writing Center of University of California - Berkeley, and Student Learning Center Writing Program of Colorado State University, among others (1).

In Japan, several leading universities have perceived the importance of such a program and have established their own writing centers and program content tailored to their academic needs. Some of these leading universities include The University of Tokyo, Waseda University, International Christian University, Tsuda College, Nagoya University, Hiroshima University, and Sophia

University. In fact, The Writing Centers Association of Japan was established in 2011 to “exchange ideas about the role of writing centers in nurturing and advancing the culture of academic writing in Japan as well as the use of writing to improve teaching and learning” (2).

In recognition of the importance of transferring essential knowledge and skills in academic writing, presentation, and publishing activities, St. Luke's International University has recently established the Academic Writing Desk (AWD) program. Since its launch in 2015, the AWD has initially mentored undergraduate students and then postgraduate students concurrently, with the weekly academic consultations consistently fully booked. The program grew to distinctively offer education, guidance, and practical experience in academic writing, presentation, and publishing through individualized or group consultations.

This is a pioneer academic writing program initially launched in the College of Nursing and the Graduate School of Nursing Science at St. Luke's International University, with the prospective aim of expansion to all the academic institutes of the university.

With its establishment, the AWD aims to increase writing, presentation and publishing skills, promote research, and further enhance the international reputation and academic standing of St. Luke's International

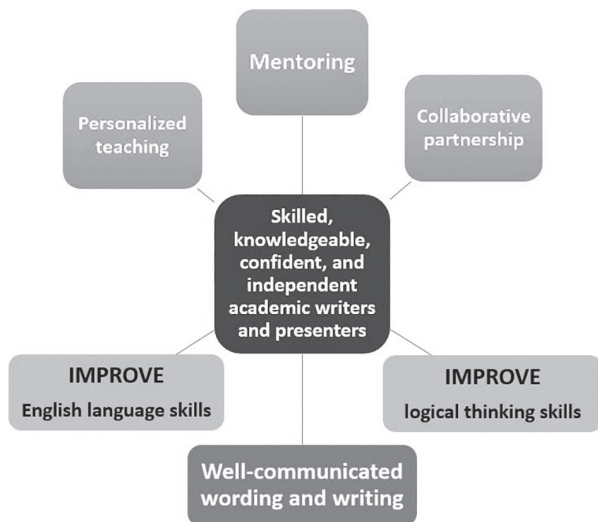


Figure 1. AWD concept

University.

II. CONCEPT AND PHILOSOPHY

1. Concept

The AWD concept is based on the development of skilled, knowledgeable, confident, and independent academic writers and presenters. This is realized through personalized teaching, mentoring, and collaborative partnership during individualized or group consultations. The conceptual approach is to improve both English language skills and logical thinking skills, resulting in well-communicated wording and writing (Figure 1).

2. Philosophy

The AWD philosophy is grounded on developing independent academic writers through teaching and mentoring by a faculty academic mentor with a strong English, science, and medical background.

III. ACADEMIC GOALS

1. Intermediate goals

For undergraduate students, the AWD aims to equip them with skills and practical knowledge on how to integrate, write, and communicate biomedical and scientific information and make effective presentations.

For postgraduate students, the AWD aims to mentor them on how to synthesize ideas, write valid research questions, conceptualize research, compose study proposals, and logically present findings in written and

presentation forms.

2. Long-term goals

The AWD endeavors to establish an academic and scientific paper writing advisory and publication support system for all constituents of St. Luke's International University. Specifically, the AWD aims to support university research and help increase scholarly publications in leading high-impact factor journals.

It also aims to promote globalization by establishing local and international collaborations and courses on academic writing, presentation, and publishing.

IV. ORGANIZATION

The AWD team is currently composed of seven members: faculty supervisor (Mami Inoue), faculty academic mentor (Edward Barroga), three support coordinators from the Center for Academic Resources (Hiroyuki Fujita, Kuniko Sato, Naoko Matsumoto), and two institutional coordinators from the Center for International Cooperation (Kaoru Nakajima, Mari Uriuda).

V. FACULTY ACADEMIC MENTOR

A unique feature of the AWD is the guidance provided by a faculty academic mentor. The AWD faculty academic mentor holds doctoral degrees in the biomedical field and is an Outstanding Young Scientist awardee. He is a member of international biomedical writing and editing journal advisory boards and medical writers associations, has more than 10 years of experience as a full-time company and university senior medical editor, and has over 25 years of experience as an academician, medical researcher, author, writer, and reviewer.

The AWD therefore provides in-depth and professional support based on the academic mentor's considerable experience in publishing, teaching, and academic mentoring.

VI. MENTORING AREAS

Another distinguishing feature of the AWD is its wide range of mentoring areas that encompass basic to advanced topics for the AWD services rendered (Table 1). These mentoring areas were specially planned for

Table 1. AWD mentoring areas

MENTORING AREAS	BASIC TO ADVANCED TOPICS
Writing and English language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic grammar usage • Sentence structure and patterns • Correct usage of words, phrases, clauses, and terminology • Essay, research paper, and report writing • Editorial and scientific style
Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poster, slide presentation, and presentation text writing • Oral presentation script writing • Presentation delivery • Q & A sessions
Articles and journals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article preparation for publication • Components of a scientific paper • Types and structures of biomedical articles • Different types of medical research • Manuscript sections • Target journal selection • Guidelines for authors • Online submissions
Academic and scientific writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing and revising titles and running titles • Abstract writing, structuring, and revising • Designing and writing methodologies • Reporting results • Writing discussions • Formatting references • Documenting tables, graphs, and biomedical images • Editing tables, graphs, and diagnostic images • Interpreting basic statistical analyses • Cover letter writing for article submissions
Scholarly publishing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretation of journal decision letters • Revisions and online resubmission of articles • Writing of responses to reviewers' comments • Digital annotation of galley proofs
Ethics and misconduct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical issues in academic writing • Conflicts of interest disclosures
Publishing aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer review • Impact factor and H-index • Editorial management systems • Research methodology • Publication misconduct • Open-access publications • Digital publishing • Research visibility, impact, and citation • High-quality scientific articles • Predatory publishing

St. Luke's International University based on a recent research article (3) by the faculty academic mentor.

VII. MENTORING AND LEARNING

Another noteworthy feature of the AWD is its personalized mentoring and learning approach. The AWD mentoring involves imparting concepts, principles, processes, structures, and tools for concisely writing essays, research papers, academic presentations, and scholarly articles. It provides personalized feedback, advice, and suggestions during the consultations. Writing skills are built on the strong foundations of

essential grammar and editorial style, and enhanced by in-depth but practical knowledge of ethical writing and publishing. The consultations are a collaborative work, aiming at producing professional-caliber work in the course of the learning process.

During the mentoring, guidance on how to write or improve the academic material is provided. The academic mentor shows an example of how to make the necessary improvements as a guide, and the student similarly make corrections in other parts of the academic material under the guidance of the academic mentor. The mentoring is more than a mere tutorial. It is a collaborative undertaking to nurture confidence and

develop independent writing skills.

To improve acquired knowledge and skills, regular consultations for guidance and instruction are encouraged. This mentoring approach aims to incrementally improve the acquired skills and experience towards the development of independent writers with good writing and presentation skills.

VIII. MECHANICS AND IMPLEMENTATION

For mechanics, individualized or group consultations are prearranged with the AWD support coordinators online. The consultations are free of charge and English is encouraged as the medium of instruction as part of the continuing English education. Japanese is used as a last option.

The consultations are currently implemented in the AWD room once a week consisting of 3 to 4 sessions lasting 40-60 minutes each. The academic materials covered in the consultations include class reports, essays, presentation slides and oral scripts, Master's and doctoral dissertations, research papers, journal articles, documents for studying abroad, and enrollment or employment documents among others. Consultations at any stage of the writing, presentation, or publishing process are encouraged and accepted.

IX. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

An annual or biannual questionnaire feedback survey is conducted among AWD users to identify specific needs and areas for improvement. Permission is initially obtained from the participants, whose identities and responses are protected. Data are reported only in aggregate and no individuals are identified. The survey is administered and summarized by the AWD coordinators and analyzed by the faculty supervisor and faculty academic mentor.

In the most recent survey regarding AWD services (St. Luke's International University Ethics Committee approval number : 15-077), there were 26 respondents of whom 8 were undergraduate students, 10 were Master's students, and 8 were doctoral students. The majority (57.1%) of respondents used AWD for writing their thesis, and others used it for class assignments (42.9%) or research publications (28.6%).

Respondent comments about the quality of assistance were positive overall: 78.6% responded "very helpful for

my study" and 21.4% responded "helpful for my study". All respondents felt satisfied with the one-on-one consultation style because they were able to receive personalized feedback quickly, and they thought that the faculty academic mentor's advice was easy to understand. They were also all comfortable talking with the academic mentor.

All respondents showed a strong interest in continuing to use the English AWD services. They also indicated an interest in having an AWD service in Japanese to facilitate the following four skills in their native language : 1) writing papers (69.2%), 2) reading academic articles (69.2%), 3) presentations for academic conferences (53.8%), and 4) making presentation slides (53.8%).

Comments included "Because we can discuss, it was good to be able to understand the reasoning behind corrections. Responses were quick. I could understand how to write papers", "They (the faculty mentor) give detailed suggestions on how to express things in English", and "It was important for me to have a native perspective on my paper, so support being easily accessible was helpful."

X. EQUIPPING STUDENTS TO BECOME ACHIEVERS

The true value of the AWD can really be seen in the practical benefits and real life successes of students who have taken advantage of it. As an example, one fourth-year student who has used the AWD service since it started has achieved great success in presentations at both McGill University (Canada) and Duke University School of Nursing (U.S.) in 2015 and 2016, respectively. The student's four-year scholastic experience involved knowledge acquisition, mentoring, and actual local and international presentations, all pivotal in equipping her to become an achiever (Figure 2).

In her third year, she took "English Elective III" (under Mami Inoue), a course in which students learn how to read nursing articles written in English and give presentations about them. To prepare for this class, she used the AWD services (under Edward Barroga) and improved four key English skills through face-to-face consultations, and also learned how to make effective presentation slides. She was then able to give a very successful presentation to Thai exchange students in the class.

Development of English Academic Writing and Presentation Ability: A Case Study of a Student's Four-year Scholastic Experience at St. Luke's International University, Japan

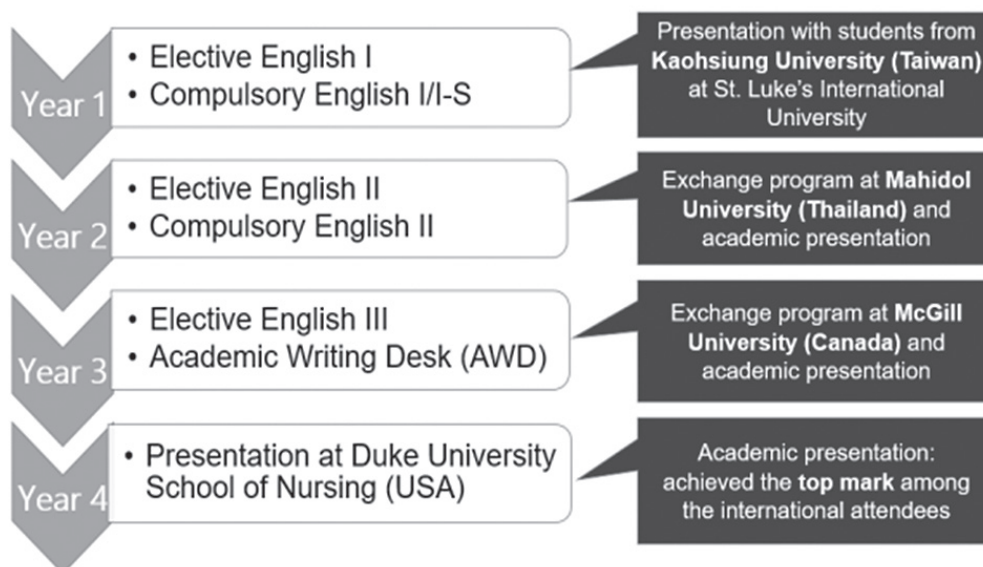


Figure 2. Four-year scholastic experience of a student towards becoming an achiever



Figure 3. Medical English Study Abroad Program participants with AWD faculty academic mentor

Then, she applied for the Medical English Study Abroad Program for Nursing Students and Nurses at McGill University and gave a group presentation entitled, “Present and Future Aspects of Palliative Care in Japan”. The AWD faculty academic mentor fully guided and supported her group from writing outlines to making slides, and also showed them how to give an effective presentation to an international audience at McGill (Figure 3).

In her final year, in August 2016, she attended a two-week seminar on “Exploring Global Patterns of Health and Illness for International Students” at Duke



Figure 4. Presentation at Duke University School of Nursing (U.S.)

University School of Nursing in the U.S. with two other fourth-year students. All three students in the group used the AWD service when they took “English Elective III” and learned how to write and make strong presentations. In this seminar, they achieved the top mark among the international attendees for their group presentation entitled, “The Context of Health, Illness, and Care Delivery in Japan” (Figure 4).

These academic milestones highlight how the AWD services not only improve students' academic reading and writing skills, but also their presentation skills, encouraging them to become internationally competent

nurses or global level researchers in the future.

XI. FUTURE EXPANSION

Common suggestions for improving AWD services are related to the opening hours and location. The majority of respondents want AWD services to be available two to three times a week, and some of the respondents requested that AWD services be available on either Fridays, weekends, or other weekdays that do not overlap with their class times. Many respondents work or have classes on Thursdays from morning to noontime, thus they requested that AWD services be open in the afternoon, evening, or after school (16:00-20:00). In addition, several respondents (28.6%) suggested having AWD services in a classroom rather than in an open space so that they could talk more openly.

Taken together, the survey showed that all of the respondents were satisfied with the quality of the AWD services. To further improve the services and to be able to mentor more students, AWD services should be available more frequently – especially in the after-

school time period.

Extension of the support services to encompass not only the undergraduate and postgraduate students but also the faculty and medical staff of St. Luke's International University would likely be highly beneficial. This can be realized through the expansion and seamless university-wide integration of the AWD program.

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