

## **“You Actually Learn Something”: Gathering Student Feedback Through Focus Group Research to Enhance Needs-Based Programming**

Allie Simpson  
*York University*

Laurie Waye  
*Northwest Community College*

### **Abstract**

In the spring of 2015, the Centre for Academic Communication (CAC) at the University of Victoria began a series of projects aimed at understanding the needs of undergraduate and graduate students with English as additional language (EAL), with the goal of increasing the effectiveness of the Centre’s programming. The first project, detailed in this article, concentrated on identifying student perceptions and use of the Centre’s programming and aimed to elicit suggestions as to how the CAC could better meet student needs. To do this, we facilitated two focus group interviews consisting of EAL graduate (N=6) and undergraduate (N=4) students. Participants responded that the timing of programming should better reflect their schedules, and that programming should be more discipline specific and better designed for graduate students. They also felt that they did not receive enough critical feedback and that there was a lack of standardization across tutorials and workshops. However, the participants also felt that the tutors were helpful, the programming provided a good addition to their studies, and the supports increased their confidence. Two unexpected findings were that, generally, students accessed one kind of programming offered by the Centre, rather than taking advantage of the range of offerings, and that students had misconceptions about the Centre’s offerings and how to use them. It is hoped that this study will help inform other student academic support services about focus group research for the purposes of program evaluation and collecting student feedback.

### **Introduction**

Since 2007, the University of Victoria has provided academic writing skill support to all students at the undergraduate and graduate levels through its Writing Centre. In 2014, the Writing Centre grew into the Centre for Academic Communication (CAC), with a broader mandate to teach other academic communication strategies in addition to writing, such as reading, presenting, and understanding university expectations and academic integrity. This growth was also designed to better support the burgeoning number of students attending the university who use English as an additional language (EAL). Both authors were involved in the transition of the Writing Centre into the Centre for Academic Communication, including the program design and evaluation components.

In the 2014–2015 academic year, the CAC held over 4200 one-on-one appointments, the largest number held in the history of the Centre. Furthermore, during this period other programming such as the graduate writing room, drop-in help zones, and grammar and other English for academic purposes workshops assisted over 650 students. In addition to an increase in visits, the CAC also experienced a shift in student demographics, with more graduate students

and more students with EAL visiting than in previous years. In order to understand the needs and characteristics of this growing and dynamic population, the CAC conducted a qualitative research project to supplement the vast amount of quantitative data that is regularly collected through our centre's scheduling software and through periodic anonymous surveys.

### **Writing Centre Research in Relation to the Current Study**

Over the past decade, there have been many areas of focus with respect to writing centre (WC) research. One area that has been studied is students' perceptions and expectations of academic communication support and the implications of these perceptions for WCs. For example, Moussu (2013) notes that, in regards to writing, EAL students are often caught in opposing educational frameworks: whereas students perceive WC support as a type of "grammar repair shop" (p. 56), WC staff attend to grammatical errors only after addressing higher order concerns (e.g., paragraph structure, content understanding, and argument development). Given the conflict between students who may perceive their needs in relation to form over content (with a possible push from professors who have the same focus) and support staff who assist with the reverse, it is increasingly important to have a more complete understanding of students' expectations and to develop strategies to respond to them while maintaining the educational framework of the Centre (Moussu, 2013).

In addition, research has also focused on the role of assessing students' academic communication needs for the purpose of program design (Huang, 2013). Huang (2013) notes that inquiry into student needs is a necessary action in the processes of program development, task design, and materials development. In fact, inquiry is a foundational step toward achieving an empirically substantiated approach that will most effectively support students' skills development. Committed to evidence-based, reflective programming, we engaged in a reflection on the importance of both students' expectations of WC support and their perceptions of their academic learning needs, in the context of our own dynamic student population.

When considering our options for this initial research project, we chose to follow the lead of other writing centres throughout North America (Queen's University, 2004; Cushman, Marx, Brower, Holahan & Boquet, 2005) and selected a focus group methodology. We felt this data collection technique valued students' voices because focus group methodology is an "ideal" approach for exploring individuals' needs, concerns, experiences, and perspectives (Kitzinger, 2005, p 57); it also serves as a tool for program evaluation (William & Katz, 2010). Further, focus group methodology has the ability to utilize collaboration between participants to collect detailed responses to specific questions (Cushman et al., 2015) and, for this reason, can obtain a higher level of ecological validity not found in survey research or other research methods (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). For these reasons, the focus groups were thought to be an effective and reliable method for collecting the data required to inform our future program design.

### **Focus Group Methodology**

Following the guidelines outlined in Krueger and Casey (2009) and in Cushman et al. (2005), two one-hour focus groups were designed. In the spring of 2015, ethics approval was received

and participants were recruited via ethics-approved posters that were placed around the CAC. The posters asked interested students to contact a staff member who was unaffiliated with the CAC. Following recruitment, the focus groups were facilitated by two moderators who were connected to the CAC. Throughout the focus groups, one moderator asked questions and interacted with participants who were seated at a round table while the other moderator took detailed notes from the corner of the room. Notes to record participants' comments were taken on a laptop throughout the entirety of the focus group interviews.

## Participants

Ten students expressed interest in the student recruitment posters. Participants' backgrounds varied, with 60% of participants registered as graduate students and 40% as undergraduate students. The majority of participants were female (90%) with EAL (90%). One graduate student with English as a first language participated in the focus group. Table 1 outlines participant characteristics.

Table 1

### *Participant Characteristics (N = 10)*

Gender	Female	(9) 90%
	Male	(1) 10%
Level of study	Undergraduate	(4) 40%
	Graduate	(6) 60%
Year of Study	1	(6) 30% (undergraduate); 30% (graduate)
	2	(3) 10% (undergraduate); 20% (graduate)
	5 and above	(1) 0% (undergraduate); 10% (graduate)
Division	Humanities	(3) 30%
	Social Sciences	(6) 60%
	Life Sciences	(1) 10%
Language	EL1	(1) 10%
	EAL	(9) 90%

## Questions

As per the recommendations outlined by Cushman et al. (2005), ten main questions were used to prompt discussion (See Appendix 1). Questions fell into four main categories:

1. Questions regarding students' perceptions of helpfulness of programming: For example, "Considering the programming you have used, what did you find helpful and what did you find unhelpful?"
2. Questions regarding students' current CAC usage: For example, "What programming did you not attend, and why?"
3. Questions regarding students perceived needs: For example, "To you, what makes a good workshop?"

4. Questions aimed at eliciting suggestions: For example, “What do you think is the best way to get information to students about the programming that the CAC offers?”

### Analysis

Data were analyzed following the classic data analysis strategy outlined in Krueger and Casey (2009), which consists of a systematic strategy involving the organization and categorization of transcripts and the coding of participants’ statements in terms of relevance, frequency, specificity, and emotion. Using this approach, data were first analyzed and independently coded by five members of the CAC team. Each member followed the same method, consisting of identifying key points, summarizing, and extracting support in the form of quotations from the transcripts. Next, the individual analyses were discussed and compared during a face-to-face meeting, which took place about a week after the data collection period. Discrepancies in coding were discussed until resolved and a final analysis was reached. The following sections detail the main findings of both focus groups. In order to preserve students’ voices, their comments are reported verbatim. As a result, some of the representative quotes may include variations on Standard English usage. Further, some quotations include topic insertions for clarity.

### Results

#### Perceptions of Programming

**Positive perceptions.** The first category of questions concentrated on how students perceived and accessed services currently offered by the CAC. The services the students could reflect on included:

- Workshops, including a stream for graduate students titled “Master Class”
- One-on-one appointments, including 25-minute booked appointments, 15-minute drop-ins, and asynchronous online feedback
- The Conversation Café, a weekly opportunity for students to speak English in a friendly environment, and
- An event held twice in 2015, the Intensive Lab in English for Academic Purposes (ILEAP), which featured one to three full days of learning and practice opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.

In terms of perception, the participants in both focus groups responded similarly: they mentioned that the CAC had been “helpful” to their learning. With respect to helpfulness, students most frequently mentioned workshops such as Master Class, grammar workshops, and the Conversation Café. In fact, the word “helpful” was used ten times in the focus group discussions:

- ILEAP: 3 times
- One-on-one tutorials: 2 times
- Workshops: 5 times

Table 2 lists student comments on the helpfulness of CAC programming.

Table 2

*Representative Quotation by Type of Program*

<b>ILEAP</b>	<b>One-on-one tutorials</b>	<b>Workshops</b>
“ILEAP was really helpful” “The conference [ILEAP] was really beneficial.” Student X says that s/he was looking for “tool sets to work with,” and the workshops in ILEAP gave him/her “really good ideas how to proceed.” S/he thinks ILEAP was “excellent!”	“Talking about the problems ‘face to face’ can be very helpful.”	“I went to some graduate-specific workshops and actually found them to be helpful.” “The Café was helpful. We don’t speak much in our classes or labs. Café is a good place for people to communicate.”

Alongside helpfulness, many students also noted experiencing a positive affective state, such as feeling comfortable: “I came here when I was taking English courses. I didn’t feel nervous at all.” Another student stated, “I feel very good. My classmates come too, so it is even better.” In addition, five main subthemes were identified in terms of student perceptions regarding the strengths of the CAC’s programming.

**Academic communication skill development.** The main mandate of the CAC is to help students learn how to improve their academic communication skills. The data collected reflects this mandate: “You actually learn something. Teachers from high school only tell you something. Here they know where is the problem. They tell you to think about it. And then [they] help you revise your writing.”

**Improvement in grades.** While an improvement in student grades is not part of the stated mandate of the Centre, students see an increase in assignment scores as proof of their growing mastery of academic communication skills. One participant shared that she came to the CAC for help with an assignment for a first-year English course. She said, “We chatted a lot while working on my writing. [The tutor] was friendly. I really liked it. The grades [I got for that course] were not bad.”

**Confidence building.** In addition to teaching students how to develop their academic communication skills, programming is designed to help students feel more confident about their ability to learn. As one student said, “My first tutor was Susan, and she was super nice. We started by talking about our experiences in Canada. We talked about where we came from. She was very friendly. I was afraid at the beginning that my writing was really bad. But she encouraged me to read it out loud, and it helped me build my confidence.” Another student said, “no one had told me about [publishing] before, so I never even thought about publishing. That session gave me a lot of confidence.”

**Social.** Like improving confidence, providing opportunities for students to practice their spoken English is folded in to the CAC mandate. Said one student, “We don’t speak much in our classes or labs. Café is a good place for people to communicate.”

**Perceptions of unhelpfulness.** In addition to commenting on the CAC programming that participants felt was helpful, participants also commented on areas they felt were less helpful. Interestingly, unlike when discussing helpfulness, participants discussed aspects of programming they perceived as unhelpful instead of identifying specific programs. These comments centred mainly on four key program aspects: (1) timing, (2) lack of standardization in tutorials, (3) workshop content that is too basic, and (4) a lack of feedback.

**Timing and Flexibility.** The comments students made demonstrated a diverse understanding of how one-on-one tutorials can and should be used. For example, students said,

- “[The tutorials] are a bit short. I often cannot finish an essay during the one tutorial and I have to rebook.”
- “I have so many questions, and there is no time”
- “I always have an artificial hesitancy to use the one-on-ones, as there are only ten [appointments allowed per semester].”

While we had designed tutorials to be focused on one or two areas of support (e.g., developing a thesis statement and identifying a couple of error patterns), students believed the tutorial was for going through their assignments from beginning to end. As well, the CAC point of view is that a tutorial is for helping support students strategically, instead of fully, while the participants’ comments demonstrated a different perspective.

When offerings were scheduled was also a point of discussion. Workshops at the CAC have suffered from less than robust attendance despite attempts to schedule them when students are free. However, a participant added another dimension to the concept of timing by pointing out that it is not simply when a workshop is offered in the day, but when in a student’s learning it is offered: “Timing can be tricky. If you are not working on assignments, no matter how useful, the workshops are not very helpful. You might learn good things, but you will forget them.”

**Lack of standardization.** One of the issues participants discussed in working with different tutors is the lack of standardization from tutor to tutor. While a large staff means that the CAC can offer tutors who represent a variety of disciplines and skill sets, students commented on the lack of consistency between tutors. The participants stated that they liked the tutorials but were sometimes “confused about different methods of teaching” because “tutors have different approaches, sometimes to the point that they are conflicting. So it gets confusing.”

**Workshop content is too basic or too general.** The attempt to create workshop material that is general and helpful fell short. As one student noted, “Some [workshops] are very introductory. [I] don’t know how to use the points.”

**Not enough constructive feedback.** Like the workshop content, the feedback provided in tutorials and in workshops did not satisfy the participants. One participant felt he could not “make improvement[s] in the Café: there is no feedback, no summary, and no advice.” Another reflected that “online tutoring was not very useful, as the feedback was too general.” Like the purpose of tutorials, the CAC’s approach to feedback is different than what the students would like or, at a minimum, has not been clearly communicated.



Overall, participants in both focus groups discussed the CAC and its programming favourably, citing that their experiences had been positive and that the CAC programming had been beneficial to their learning. With respect to improvements, timing, feedback, and a lack of standardization between tutorials were discussed most frequently in both focus groups.

### Usage of CAC Programs

In terms of student usage of CAC programs, students reported accessing services in a variety of ways, with participants citing regular attendance in workshops, one-on-one tutoring, and/or events. Although a few participants indicated a range of attendance in different programs, many expressed that they had had rather limited experience with programs and services at the CAC and were surprised to learn about the range of programs that were offered. For example, when given a CAC program brochure and asked to comment on which programming they had attended, many participants admitted that they had “never heard about” some of the programs.

In addition to a lack of awareness, participants also cited timing and “schedule conflict” as a barrier to program access, with one student stating, that “I even missed some of my classes to attend the workshops.” Participants agreed that timing was a key obstacle: course work and practicums prevented them from accessing a majority of the weekly CAC programs they had wanted to attend.

### Perceived Needs

In addition to exploring their perceptions of CAC programming and program usage, participants were also asked to discuss their perceived needs in the context of academic communication support. Three main themes were identified in terms of perceived needs: (1) discipline-specific support, (2) graduate-specific help, and (3) “other” support.

**Discipline-specific support.** Similar to the findings of Huang (2011), our study showed that a number of students identified needing more discipline-specific support. Students claimed that they “need someone who knows stuff from their field.”

**Graduate-specific help.** In addition, the graduate students who participated in the focus groups expressed a need for increased support, specifically with respect to (1) thesis writing, (2) oral defence and presentation support, and (3) goal setting.

**Thesis writing support.** There was an overwhelming consensus among graduate students regarding a need for thesis writing support. Participants indicated that they felt confused by the writing process “in general” and “[wished] there could be more help for thesis writing.” Participants identified proposal and methodology writing as areas of specific concern and specified that they would appreciate workshops that addressed these issues as well as workshops that presented the “big picture of how to tackle a general issue like thesis writing.”

**Oral defence and presentation support.** Similarly, there was agreement among many of the graduate student participants regarding a need for “help with oral defence and presentation.”

Although they discussed it less than thesis-writing support, participants indicated that if they were aware of an oral defence workshop, they would “come for that.”

**Goal-setting support.** Lastly, an interesting discussion arose after one participant expressed a need for goal setting and accountability support. The participant mentioned that she would like to have someone who knows her goals and plans and would remind her of them to keep her accountable. In essence, this participant indicated that she wanted this service to be a replacement for her supervisor, who she felt did not follow up on her work.

### Other support

In addition to the perceived needs discussed above, participants also mentioned other areas they believe they need support for or specific topics they would like the CAC to cover. These topics are described in Table 3. While some of these suggestions are addressed by other campus support units, the CAC team can consider targeting its programming to meet these perceived needs. The CAC team can also consider how to advertise the other services on campus that provide training and practice in other supports, such as Career Services and the Learning Strategist program.

Table 3

<i>Perceived Areas of Need</i>		
<b>Speaking</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Professional Skills</b>
“Academic speaking”	“Vocabulary help” “Technical reading”	“Interviews” “Career and professional related skills”
“Casual speaking”		
“Pronunciation clinic”		

### Participant Suggestions

When asked for suggestions as to how the CAC can be improved, participants offered a variety of ideas, the majority of which centred on CAC–student communication and the timing, delivery, structure, and content of workshops.

#### **CAC-Student Communication.**

**Tutors’ Profiles and Workshops.** There was a general consensus among participants regarding the appreciation for information available online regarding tutors’ backgrounds and skill sets. Participants suggested that this type of information informs their decisions regarding which programs to attend and can help them develop a rapport with tutors. In one of the focus groups, participants suggested that an online link connecting the workshops and the tutors’ profiles would allow students to know “who is doing what.” In terms of one-on-one tutorials, participants agreed that the success of the tutorials depends on the chemistry between tutors and students. They argued that “it’s tricky to get to know the tutors,” and having as much information as possible can help them get to know the CAC staff before attending tutorials and workshops.



**Advertising.** Many participants acknowledged their lack of awareness regarding the programming that the CAC offers. Participants agreed that better advertising would help them gain awareness of the types of programs offered. Participants offered many suggestions as to which advertising methods would be the most effective for them. These suggestions included the following, some of which we currently engage in, and others that we had not considered.

- Electronic communication, such as emails, including departmental emails, the CAC website, and social media
- Visual displays, such as posters around professors' offices, reminders of upcoming offerings on classroom whiteboards, and flyers regarding specific services
- More targeted advertising, such as an explanation of why a workshop topic should matter to them, and of the daily schedule of offerings

**Timing.** As mentioned previously, the timing of workshops was a frequently recurring area of discussion in both focus groups. A majority of participants believed that most of the programming happens in the morning and mid-day, when students are in class, despite much of CAC programming being scheduled for 4pm–6pm on weekdays. Participants suggested that either early morning, later in the afternoons, or on weekends would be a more effective time to host workshops. As well, participants indicated that a tutorial is not long enough, despite their ability to book two 25-minute sessions back to back; this information was not known by the participants. These two timing issues, scheduling of programming and length of tutorials, may be addressed at least in part with better communication. This was, in fact, one of the biggest surprises in our focus group findings: we had thought we were advertising our programming clearly to students, but the data indicate that we were not. In addition, it was not only what programming was available, but also how it should be used, that was not communicated clearly to students.

**Delivery of content.** Lastly, when asked for suggestions as to how to make workshops more effective, students mentioned three main categories: (1) delivery, (2) structure, and (3) content, outlined in Table 4, below.

Table 4

<i>Suggestions for Increasing Effectiveness of Workshops</i>		
<b>Delivery</b>	<b>Structure</b>	<b>Content</b>
“Clear agenda, description of the takeaways”	“Exercise time”	“Examples”
	“Participants’ involvement in the activity”	“Handouts, something that we can take away”

Again, these results were surprising to us because we had thought that the workshops were well designed, provided opportunities to apply new learning, used examples, and used handouts. However, the data indicate that either these design aspects were not included in all workshops, or that students were not able to recall these components. To apply these findings, then, requires two activities: ensuring that, when workshops are developed, these aspects of what

students are looking for in workshops are included, and ensuring that all workshops in fact have these characteristics each time they are offered.

### **Limitations**

Although focus group interviews have been widely used due to their ability to provide insights into “what people think” (Kitzinger, 1995, p. 299), this method has also been subject to a number of criticisms. For example, Krueger and Casey (2009) note that focus group data can be subject to dominant individuals within the focus groups and that there is a tendency for participants to make up answers where limited experience is perceived. While the first criticism may have been slightly applicable to our data collection, the second was definitely applicable: it was clear that instead of collecting information on what students thought about our programming, we collected information on what students thought they knew about our programming. Good examples of this are students stating that tutorials are limited to 25 minutes, rather than 50 minutes, and that programming is held only during daytime hours.

In addition, it is important to acknowledge that the findings of this study represent the opinions of a limited sample and may not extend to those of the entire student population. A wider range of participants would have been helpful, too, to determine if similar findings would be repeated, if further issues would arise, and if the recommendations would be the same. Further, when identifying or reflecting on practical suggestions based on these data, it is critical to remain cognizant of what the CAC can practically do in terms of resource and staff availability and in terms of the scope and mandate of the Centre.

Moreover, the authors note that the findings of this study may be of limited interest to a broader community, but they hope this study will help inform other student academic support services about how to engage in focus group research for the purposes of program evaluation and collecting student feedback.

### **Practical Suggestions**

Three themes arose from our data analysis: time, advertising, and specialization. In the simplest form, students were not fully aware of when services were offered and how to use them to their best advantage (an advertising issue), students felt that services should be scheduled in accordance with when they are not in class (a timing issue), and students felt the offerings should be less general and more suited to both the needs of their student population (e.g., graduate students) and their areas of study (a specialization issue).

#### **Time: understanding student perceptions of time and timing**

In line with Huang’s (2011) findings, participants’ comments indicated that timing was one of the largest issues in terms of both one-on-one tutoring sessions and workshops. Based on participants’ comments, the CAC could better advertise students’ ability to book two appointments back to back to create a 50-minute one-on-one tutorial, which would address student perceptions that tutorials are not long enough. Further, a clearer communication of the Centre’s educational philosophy could also address perceptions of programming length. By

better communicating the CAC's emphasis on strategy development (i.e., the identification of a few reoccurring organizational issues and the instruction regarding strategies to identify and improve them), and not on "full" support (i.e., reviewing an entire paper for organizational issues and correcting every issue), we might be able to adjust students' perceptions regarding time.

In terms of workshop timing, the CAC could also consider hosting programming in the early mornings or on weekends to decrease instances of scheduling conflicts and other barriers to access. However, given that the late afternoon programming offered by the CAC has not had great uptake, it may be more of an issue of advertising. Further inquiry into the issue of timing is clearly required.

### **Advertising: helping students know about all the programming options**

Also echoing the findings of Huang (2011), the CAC may consider creating more means to raise students' awareness of programming offered by the CAC. Despite the fact that many of the participants' advertising suggestions are strategies the CAC is already employing, it is now obvious that programming information is not reaching students, even those who regularly use some of the CAC services. For instance, many students have one-on-one tutorials as their first point of entry to the CAC. For this reason, training tutors to consistently overview other CAC programs with students may be an effective way to increase students' awareness of programming. As well, the CAC should consider alternate methods of advertising to help students understand the range of programming available, its schedule, and how it is best used. For example, while a 25-minute tutorial on a presentation a student is preparing may be sufficient from the tutor's point of view, the expectations of how much help a tutor can and should give could be better communicated to students both through advertising and through an explicit conversation at the beginning of each tutorial.

Different means of advertising can be considered as well. Social media and the CAC's website are likely two underutilized methods of advertising. In particular, the website and the schedule could have a closer link by connecting specific tutors to the workshops they are providing, allowing students to feel connected to the tutor in advance and to select workshops based on positive interactions they have had with tutors in the past. In addition, our use of print advertising has been light, due to environmental concerns, but perhaps a return to a range of flyers and posters would be beneficial for our students. Emails could be sent to students more regularly, and we could explore how to connect with professors more strategically to have them send out advertising about CAC services to their students.

### **Specializing: considering discipline-specific programming**

Considering the limited resources available, many administrators would agree that hosting programs that are applicable to a majority of students instead of programs focused on specific disciplines is a more effective use of a centre's resources. As well, our Centre, like others, is aware of the fine line between the support it provides graduate students and the support supervisors provide, or should provide. Like most institutions, the University of Victoria has a broad base of student support with lines indicating where the help of one department ends and another starts. However, based on the findings of this study, there is a clear desire for discipline-

specific support, and going forward it may be worth reflecting on the feasibility of designing and implementing academic communication support programs for certain disciplines. As well, based on our findings, the Centre will offer a pilot program offering workshops on demand in departments to provide more specialized, contextualized student academic support, and a second pilot program to support graduate-level presentation skill development; future research on these pilots will be required.

Other recommendations found in the data include:

- **Standardization of services:** Through tutor training, hands-on management, and regular program evaluation, the tutorials and workshops could achieve a greater standardization.
- **Consideration of feedback:** While providing feedback is part of the design of our programs, we may want to consider providing more feedback, more explicitly.
- **Consideration of tutorial limits:** A number of years ago, there was no limit to the number of one-on-one tutorials a student could have. However, with a significant increase in students at the university, and EAL students in particular, a limit of 10 sessions per semester was instituted. While very few students use their maximum 10 sessions per semester, it may be that the restriction places a psychological barrier on students, causing them to attend fewer sessions than they would benefit from.

### Conclusion

Despite the drawbacks, the use of focus groups to supplement our quantitative data collected through usage statistics and anonymous surveys provided important insights into our EAL students' perspectives, perceived academic communication support needs, and use of our Centre's programs. These perspectives and other findings allow the CAC to take a more evidence-based approach to making programmatic and administrative decisions. In addition, the results of this study can serve as parameters when implementing program changes and can also help affirm and empirically substantiate the CAC's programming. In turn, this practice of evidence-based programming can perhaps help to secure future resources (Procter, 2011). And, when we look to the horizon and see the growth in government interest in learning outcomes, it seems that program evaluation, including both qualitative and quantitative feedback, is poised to play a more central role in the development and maintenance of EAL support programming at the university level.

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## Appendix 1: Questions

1. Considering the programming you have used, what did you find helpful?
2. What programming was less helpful? We'd really like to know.
3. What programming did you not attend, and why?
4. What about the timing of the programming?
5. What programming do you wish the CAC offered?
6. Let's focus on the workshops now. Which topics were useful? (students are handed the brochure)
7. Still thinking about the workshops, which topics would you like to see?
8. To you, what makes a good workshop? Think about handouts, interaction with other students, when they're offered, and so on.
9. Have you used any of the drop-in zones? What did you like or not like about them?
10. What do you think is the best way to get information to students about the programming that the CAC offers?
11. What else would you like us to know about the CAC and its programs?



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