



In 2013–2014 Powell Library reinvented its reference services, focusing on meeting in-depth research needs through scheduled and drop-in consultations hosted in learning spaces designed specifically for research and writing assistance. In collaboration with the Undergraduate Writing Center, Powell Library hosted 2,130 research and writing consultations in the Inquiry Labs in 2013–2014, compared with 474 in-depth conversations about research at our reference desk the previous fiscal year.

TLS deepened its collaboration with the Undergraduate Writing Center (UWC), which continues to operate a satellite center at the Powell Inquiry Labs. Julia Glassman held a total of five training sessions for the UWC's 35 Peer Learning Facilitators (PLFs), during which they practiced using and teaching licensed databases, Melvyl, ILL, research guides, and other resources. In a survey distributed near the end of the school year, 92% of PLFs surveyed reported that they found the training "helpful" or "very helpful," and 91% reported that they help students with research during writing consultations at least a few times per quarter, with many of them reporting research assistance a few times per month or even per week. Based on our calculations, these results indicate that the training impacted approximately 750 students this school year, in addition to the PLFs themselves. We are currently devising a more in-depth data gathering system for next year.

In addition to training PLFs, TLS invited Christine Holten, director of the UWC, to give Powell's Inquiry Specialists basic training in writing assistance. During her training session, Christine taught Inquiry Specialists techniques to help students with proofreading, grammar, thesis statements, and essay structure. After the launch of this cross-training program, Julia and Christine presented with Doug Worsham at the Library Orientation Exchange (LOEX) Conference, and their presentation was enthusiastically received by attendees.



Featuring large digital displays, laptop hook-ups, and round tables for collaborative conversation, the InqSpace was designed to support the hybrid (digital/print) writing and research process.



Peer Learning Facilitators trained in both research support and the writing process assist students in InqLab 2, the evening home of the Undergraduate Writing Center.

Student Impact Stories

The setup of the research consultation meant that I was actually doing the research myself, with their guidance, and genuinely have learned how to do this in the future. I cannot recommend this program highly enough, and I hope it will be continued!

For the first time, I felt like I had the tools to do real research. Now walking into the library, I feel excited rather than overwhelmed.

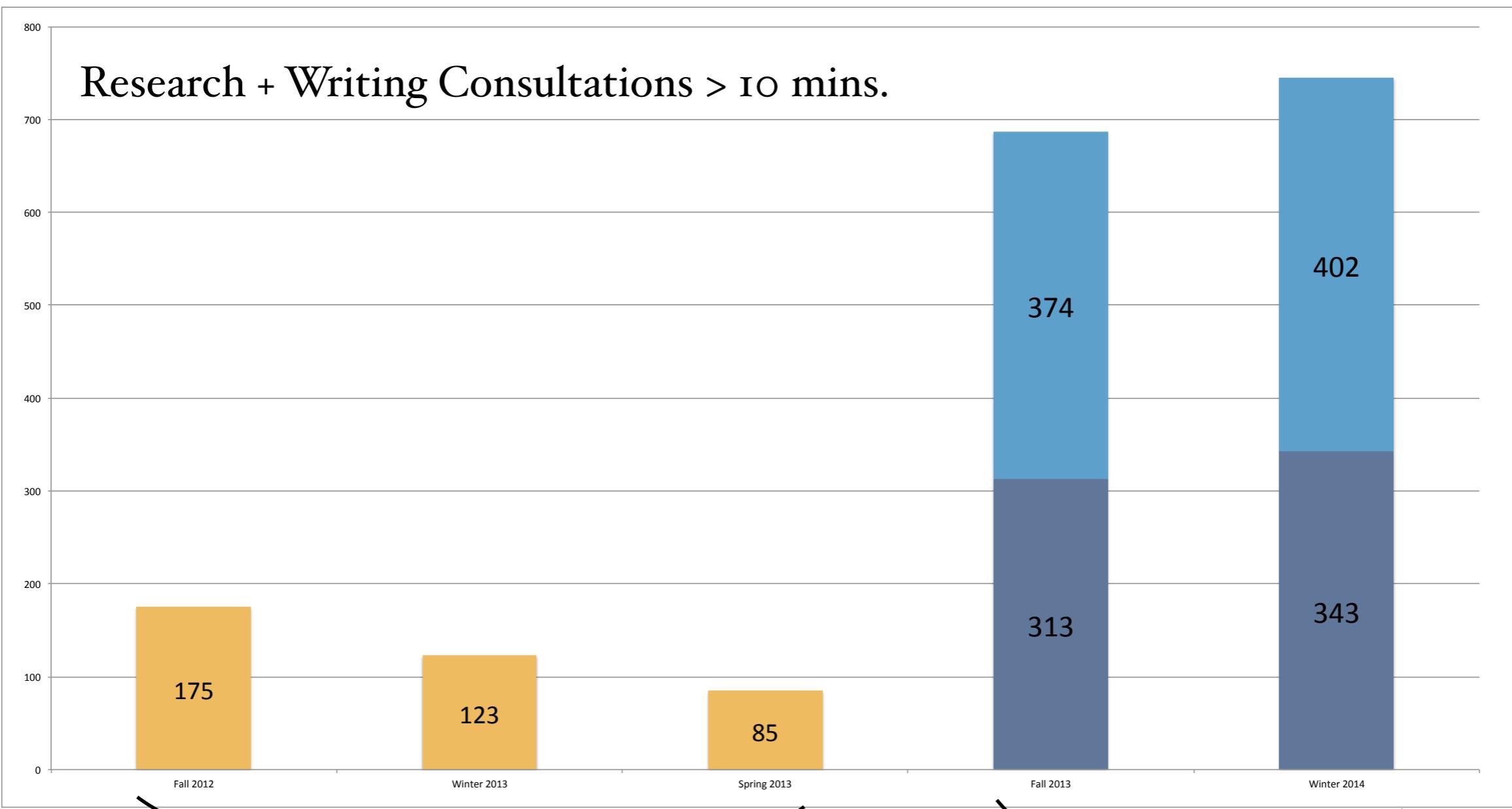
I came in not knowing how to go about organizing my research paper, but left feeling relieved. I now know how to structure my paper and what thesis I want to form the paper around. She was amazing! Thank you!

Top Outcomes:

- The creation of a hybrid peer-to-peer service model which facilitates student interaction with a mix of librarians, library-assistants, and graduate and undergraduate Inquiry Specialists.
- Creation of the first research skills training session for our 35 undergraduate library student employees.
- Creation of a cross-training program on research assistance for Undergraduate Writing Center Peer Learning Facilitators.
- Increased collaboration with Young Research Library on Inquiry Specialist and Graduate Research Assistant training.
- Created marketing bookmarks and distributed to 2800 students.
- Created new assessment tool designed to gather student feedback on research assistance services, and received fantastic feedback from 51 survey respondents: 94% of respondents were “very satisfied” with the service, 100% of respondents said they would use the service again.
- Created iPad-based check-in process to assist with data collection.

What's next?

- Expansion of assessment efforts to increase our understanding of the impact of consultations on the writing process and product.
- Expanding train-the-trainer efforts through creation of a series of training workshops for Writing Program instructors focusing on effective assignment design for research projects.



*Powell Reference
Desk*



InqSpace



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