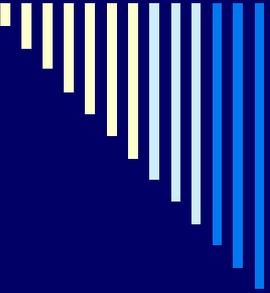


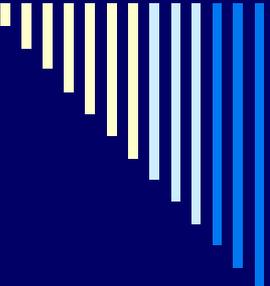


The Role of the MENA Writing Center Director



The Literature

- Appeal for greater insight into the role of the writing center director
 - Acknowledge that directors tend to function in institution specific ways
 - Recognize there are constants across context
-



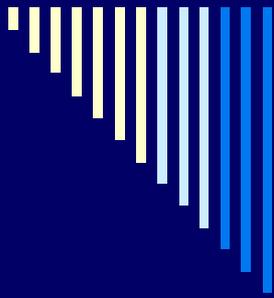
Marginalization

“Often Writing Center directors work in dreadful situations...because no one has a clear idea of how things should be.”

Simpson, 1985:36

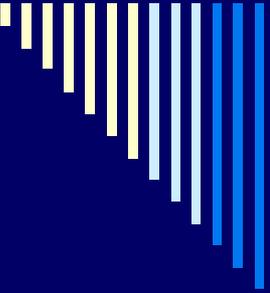
“...the toll escalating administrative demands can take on the most committed writing center director.”

Cogie, 2002:5



“Those who opt to stay in the world of writing centers do so because it is compatible with whom they are as individuals and with what they can be effective at. Enjoyment of and effectiveness in student-centered collaborative work in writing centers is usually accompanied by a particularly strong preference for avoiding hierarchies. “

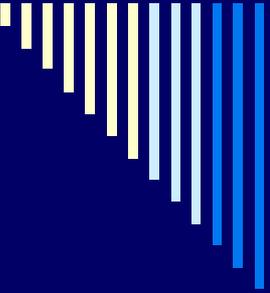
Harris, 2001:435



However...

....staying in the periphery,
our roles unclear to others,
jeopardizes writing center
directors' status and
security in the institution
and by extension the status
and security of our writing
centers.

Lerner, 2000

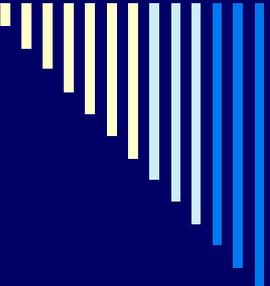


High level of administrative and leadership responsibilities, low level of teaching responsibilities

Murray & Banister, 1985

Others may perceive writing center director role as that of an administrator, rather than a scholar, teacher or specialist

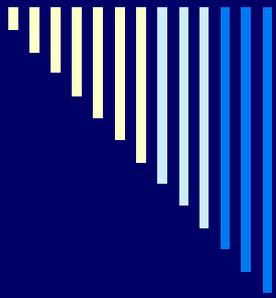
Olson & Aston-Jones, 1995



More than management...

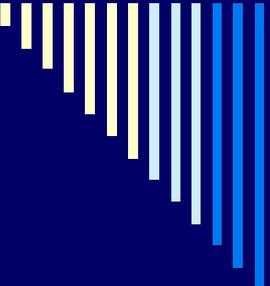
- ◆ Theoretical perspective
- ◆ Understanding or rhetorical principles
 - ◆ Sharing our vision
- ◆ Lead others to our purpose





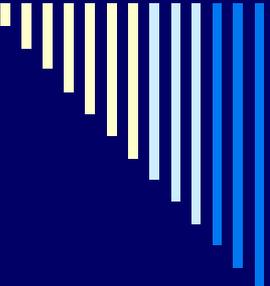
**To what extent do
MENA writing
center directors
perceive their
role to be as a
manager, a
leader and a
teacher?**





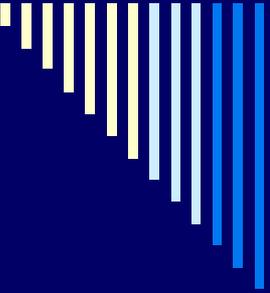
Nine Participants

- ❖ MENAWCA Members
 - ❖ Female
 - ❖ Three responsible for founding the writing center
 - ❖ Seven first time directors
 - ❖ Average time in post was 2.1 years (median of 1.5 years)
 - ❖ Four hired specifically for Directorship
-



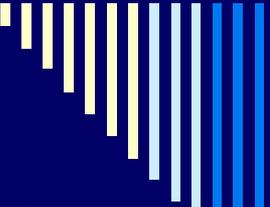
Writing Centers

- ❖ Lebanon, UAE, Qatar
 - ❖ Four private, five government funded
 - ❖ Average years writing centers have been in operation is 4.35 years (median of 4 years)
 - ❖ Two stand alone, two part of English department, two part of writing program, two part of learning support centers
-



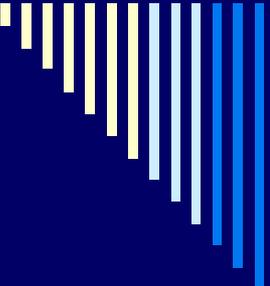
Questionnaire

- Demographic – Consideration of theoretical underpinnings of the study that truth is individual
 - Job related activities – 10 manager activities, 6 leader activities, and 5 teacher activities
 - Perception of role – Taken from survey used by Pennington and Xiao (1990) to formulate a job description of ESL directors
-



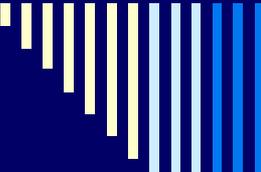
Manager related activities

rank		1=trivial	2=helpful	3=important	4=essential	mean
1	Maintain and report statistics of the writing center's activities	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	100% (9)	4
2	Remain accessible throughout the workday	0% (0)	0% (0)	11.1% (1)	88.9% (8)	3.89
3	Publicize writing center services	0% (0)	11.1% (1)	11.1% (1)	77.8% (7)	3.67
4	Possess strong communication skills	0% (0)	0% (0)	22.2% (2)	77.8% (7)	3.78
5	Recruit and hire tutors	11.1% (1)	0% (0)	22.2% (2)	66.7% (6)	3.44



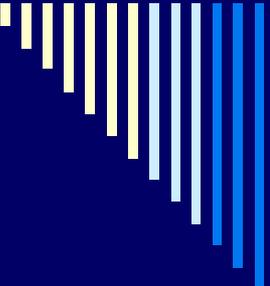
Most time consuming job-related activities?

“Day to day keeping one step ahead with the schedule and monitoring attendance and quality of work; maintaining the flow of materials available and used by staff; keeping the peer tutors busy with creative work when gaps occur.”



Leader Related Activities

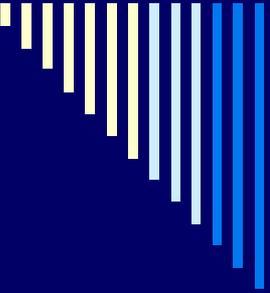
Rank		1=trivial	2=helpful	3=important	4=essential	mean
6	Educate others about the 'idea' of a writing center (what we do)	11.1% (1)	0% (0)	22.2% (2)	66.7% (6)	3.44
11	Create writing center policy	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	11.1% (1)	55.6% (5)	3.11
12	Include tutors in strategic planning and/or addressing issues	11.1% (1)	11.1% (1)	33.3% (3)	44.4% (4)	3.11
13	Expand the writing center's service	0% (0)	33.3% (3)	44.4% (4)	22.2% (2)	2.89
14	Remain current with developments in the field	11.1% (1)	11.1% (1)	55.6% (5)	22.2% (2)	2.89
15	Have access to administrators outside of my department	11.1% (1)	44.4% (4)	11.1% (1)	33.3% (3)	2.67



In general, what do you think most contributes to the effectiveness of a writing center director?

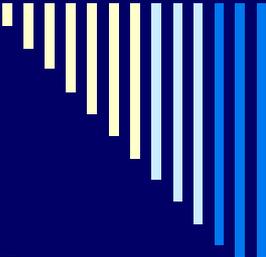
“....Understanding of the unique philosophy and service of a writing center and ability to communicate that to stakeholders.”





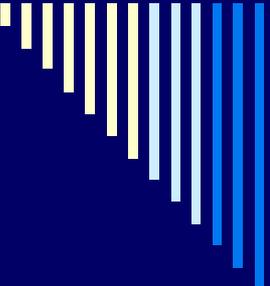
What is the most important reason for a failure in your job?

“I feel that faculty is not aware of our mission. I have had faculty members deduct points from students’ essays because their students visited the writing center. Many instructors also send students to the WC to “clean up” essays and assignments.”



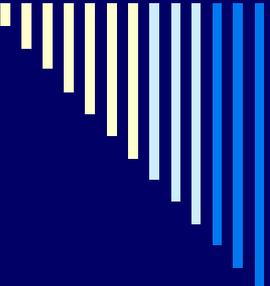
Teacher Related Activities

rank		1=trivial	2=helpful	3=important	4=essential	mean
8	Conduct workshops for students	0% (0)	11.1% (1)	44.4% (4)	44.4% (4)	3.33
17	Conduct workshops for faculty members	33.3% (3)	44.4% (4)	11.1% (1)	11.1% (1)	2
18	Teach writing courses	66.7% (6)	0% (0)	11.1% (1)	22.2% (2)	1.89
20	Familiarize faculty with new developments in composition	66.7% (6)	22.2% (2)	0% (0)	11.1% (1)	1.56
21	Teach courses in tutoring	55.6% (5)	33.3% (3)	0% (0)	11.1% (1)	1.67



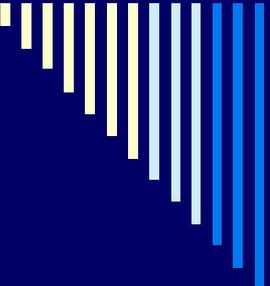
In general, what do you think most contributes to the effectiveness of a writing center director?

“I think having an informed pedagogical approach and experience teaching writing are very important.”

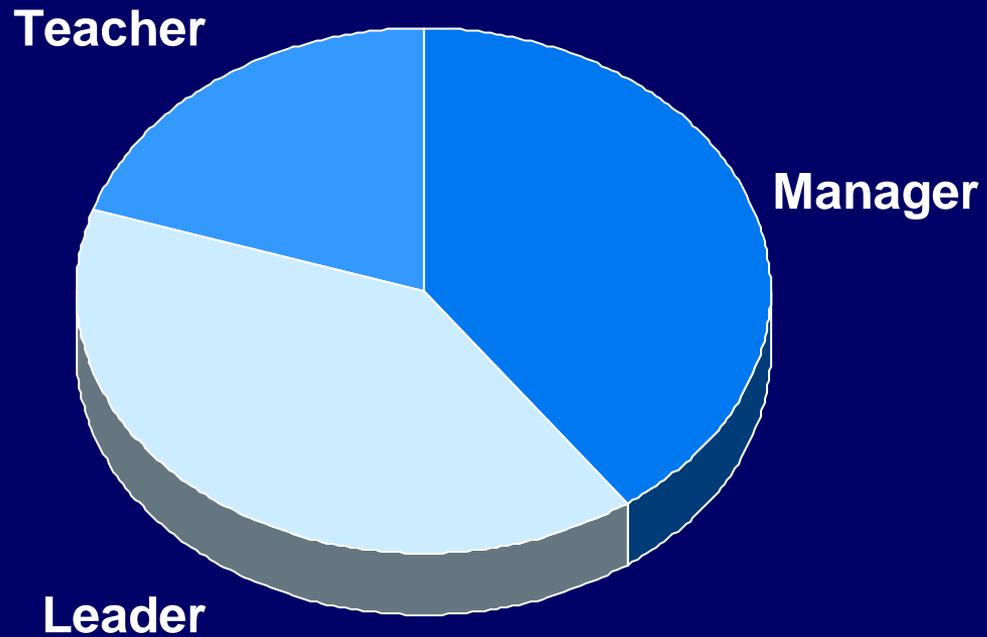


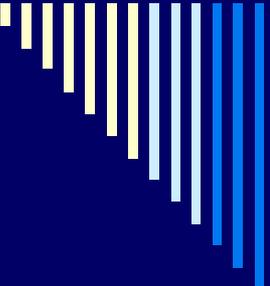
Do you think your job is different from that of writing center directors working in universities in the west?

YES!



Conclusions





Regional consideration

