

# INTEGRATING WRITING SUPPORT INTO THE GRADUATE CURRICULUM

Jill Smucker

*Director of Graduate Education*

*Southern Illinois University Edwardsville*



“we have money...  
let’s do some good”



**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
EDWARDSVILLE**



SIUE is a public D/PU (Doctoral/Professional University) that is primarily master's granting at the graduate level with close to 50 grad/professional programs.

**12K**

overall

enrollment

**3K**

grad &

professional

enrollment

**3**

staff members dedicated to

Graduate Studies

(myself & 2 office support staff)

**\$15K**


available funding for new

project

**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
EDWARDSVILLE**

 *(most)* Students don't "do" optional

 Potential for long-term impact

 Faculty concerns about graduate  
student writing

# And the survey says...

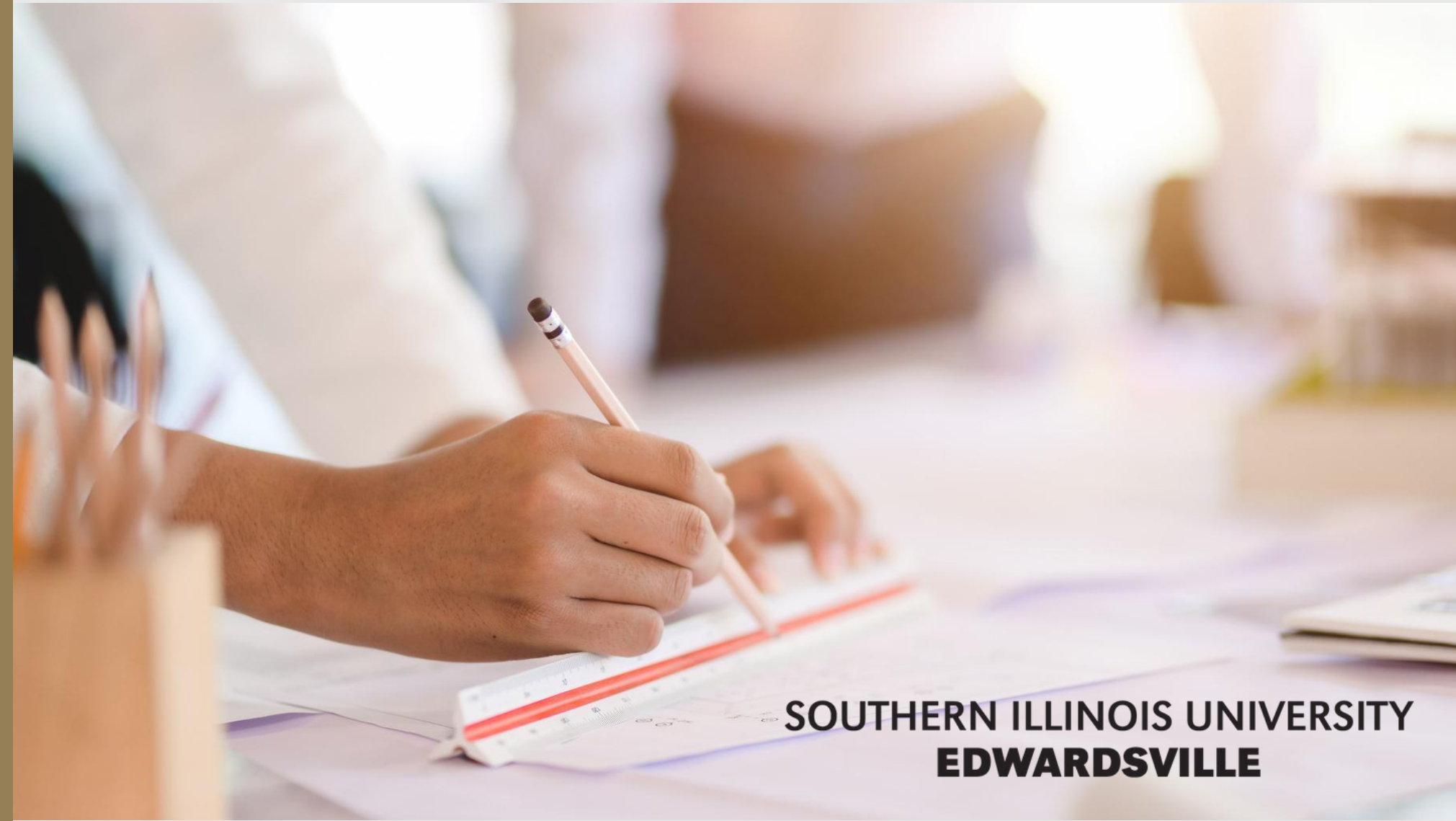
- Concern is widespread across disciplines
- Basic competencies, understanding of research writing, non-native English speaker challenges, unintentional plagiarism, and maintaining progress through large projects are most common reported issues
- Faculty often lack the capacity to address the depth of the skill gap within individual courses or via feedback on papers

## OUR DESIGN FOUNDATIONS

- Create online content easily adapted by faculty into existing courses
- Embedded assessments that faculty can use to demonstrate content proficiency/completion
- Content created by



# CURRICULAR INTEGRATION DESIGN



# Implementation Step #1

## **Consult with campus experts on structure & topics**

- Group included those with expertise on both writing & online instruction:
- English faculty, Writing Center Director, Online Learning Librarian, Intensive English Pathway Director

# Implementation Step #2

## **Bring instructional design team on board**

- Sought feedback on project design
- Empowered them to guide content creators with best practices for online learning
- Using content to create interactive modules in RISE course software



# Implementation Step #3

## **Seek & secure content creators**

- Promoted opportunity via various campus channels to all faculty & staff
- Set up application in forms software with 6-week application window
- Reviewed apps – checked references – made offers – signed contracts
- Contract included dividing payment of stipend based on achievement of project milestones

# Implementation Step #4

## **Step back & serve as project managers**

- Bring creators & instructional designers together with monthly check-in meetings
- Set up Teams site to facilitate ease of communication
- Let the experts take the wheel & provide input as needed

# Implementation Step #5

## **Seek feedback from graduate faculty & students**

- Grad School team reviewed & provided feedback
- Asked graduate faculty & graduate students to review modules and provide feedback
- Ready for final rollout...

# Module 1: Graduate-Level Writing Core Competencies

- Grammar Rules & Reminders
- Effective Writing
- Organization & Structure
- Citation Management

# Module 2: Research Writing

- Topic Development
- Researching Existing Literature
- Synthesizing Existing Literature
- Avoiding Plagiarism

# Module 3: Managing Large Writing Projects

- Planning & Preparing
- Producing & Polishing
- Time & Project Management
- Maintaining Momentum & Motivation

# Module 4: Overcoming Challenges for Non-Native English Speakers

- Avoiding Plagiarism
- Paper Structure & Organization
- Proofreading
- Utilizing Available Resources

Module 1:  
Graduate-Level  
Writing Core  
Competencies

Module 2:  
Research Writing

Module 3:  
Managing  
Large Writing  
Projects

Module 4:  
Overcoming  
Challenges for  
Non-Native  
English Speakers

# Finished Products





# Lessons learned

- Content creation, revisions, & polishing took longer than we expected (6+ months at minimum)
- Garnering faculty & student feedback was a challenge...next time would get a small group to commit & compensate if possible
- Promoting the availability of the modules will be a continual process to encourage usage

## MODEL FOR OTHER COMPETENCIES

- Career readiness
- Professional development within discipline
- Research skill sets

• Other???



# CURRICULAR INTEGRATION

Faculty may be willing to integrate  
into appropriate coursework...

**But may lack the capacity and/or expertise  
to create the content & assessments**



**Dr. Susan Morgan**

**Dr. Sarah Laux**

**Laura Million**

Former Associate Dean  
Graduate School

## Instructional Designers



**Dr. Monica Kempland**

**Dr. Andrew Wesemann**

**Asha Mattan**

Experiential Education Coordinator  
School of Pharmacy

Assistant Professor  
Public Administration & Policy Analysis

Director  
Intensive English Pathway

## Module Creators

# Meet the Team

