

Writing Center COVID-19 FAQs

Because all in-person classes at SJSU have been moved to the online environment due to COVID-19 concerns, the Writing Center has canceled all *in-person* services for the remainder of the spring 2020 semester; we are also moving to online-only services during summer 2020.

We are still available to assist you virtually through online tutoring sessions, conducted through the Zoom web conferencing platform. Our [online tutoring](#) page (<http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/onlinetutoring>) provides all the details about online sessions; it also includes an informational video about online tutoring.

In collaboration with the MLK Library, we are also rolling out our new [“Ask a Tutor” live chat service](#) (<https://library.sjsu.edu/writingcenter-chat>) on Monday, 4/20/2020. This service is intended to emulate our drop-in tutoring sessions during which students can ask quick questions. Our tutors will be available at various, scheduled times M-Th.

Please refer to these FAQs for additional information about our current services so that we can best support you during this challenging time.

Why was my recent in-person tutoring appointment canceled?

Once the university-wide decision was made to move all in-person classes online, the Writing Center decided to do the same thing: move all our tutoring services online. This decision was not made lightly but was done for the safety of everyone involved, as social distancing has proven to be one of the most effective safety measures against the coronavirus. As a result of this move, we canceled all in-person appointments that had already been scheduled. The director sent an email to all affected students. (Please check your spam folder if you didn't receive this message! It was sent through our WCOonline appointment scheduling system.)

Are both Writing Center physical locations closed (in Clark Hall and the MLK Library)?

Yes, both our physical locations are currently closed.

Will there be any drop-ins offered?

We have partnered with the MLK Library to rollout our new “Ask a Tutor” live chat service. Using SSO, students can log in and ask our tutors live chat questions at scheduled times when we have tutors available—no appointment necessary. Our website provides more information, and the direct link to our chat system is <https://library.sjsu.edu/writingcenter-chat>. Note that this service can only be used for brief questions—generally concerns that tutors can address within 10-15 minutes. If you need more intensive help, please schedule a full-length online tutoring appointment.

How do I schedule an appointment for an online tutoring session?

When you're ready to make an appointment, click the big blue button that says, “Schedule a Tutoring Appointment.” You'll then be directed to our online appointment reservation system.

If this is your first time using the Writing Center, you'll have to register for an account; if you've used our services before, simply login to the system.

What happens after I've scheduled my appointment?

Once you've scheduled your appointment, you will receive an email (*sent to the SJSU email address that you provided when you registered in our system*) either the night before or the morning of your session that provides a Zoom link. When the time of your appointment comes, simply click on that link. Please note that these emails will be sent from one of the following employees: *Maria Judnick, Michelle Hager, Lakmini Campbell, Shubham Patel, or Julee Sarmiento*. Do not delete emails from these individuals, or you will not have the necessary link to begin your online tutoring session!

If I have tech problems, will my online appointment be marked as a "no show"?

If you virtually arrive to your session on time but then experience some tech issues (e.g., inability to share your document), then the tutor will give you some time to remedy the problem. If you cannot fix the issue, then the appointment will end; however, it will not be marked as a "no show" since you did show up for the appointment. However, if you simply do not come to your appointment, it *will* be marked as a "no show." If you are experiencing problems that aren't allowing you to begin the Zoom session, please cancel the session through our online appointment reservation system or send us an email at writingcenter@sjsu.edu.

If I am a graduate or AEC student, can I get additional tutoring time?

For online appointments during this period, all sessions are the same length: 45 minutes. Within our online scheduling system, student can set up two 45-minute sessions per week. If you are a graduate student working on a large project or are an AEC student who needs the accommodation of extra tutoring time, please send an email to writingcenter@sjsu.edu. We can schedule *one* additional tutoring session for you each week.

Why can't I schedule an online appointment on the day of the session?

Our staff members need time to email the necessary Zoom links to all students who have online tutoring sessions on any given day. Since we do not have the capacity to have someone continually checking for scheduling changes, we only allow online appointments to be scheduled up to the day before the session.

Can I contact or email tutors directly?

No, please do not contact our tutors directly. They are students with busy schedules, and they are not always working—clients must respect their time and privacy. If you need assistance, please send an email to our general address (provided below).

Will any workshops be offered online?

We do not currently have the capacity to offer online workshops, and all in-person workshops that were scheduled for the remainder of the spring semester have been canceled. However, we are working toward creating videos of our workshops and, eventually, we will be offering

workshops via live stream. To maintain high-quality services, it will take some time to produce these virtual workshop offerings, but please rest assured that we are working on it!

Do you offer any other online resources for writing support?

We have 100+ Homegrown Handouts posted on our website that you can use for your own self-study: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/handouts>. We also offer instructional video tutorials about different aspects of the writing process: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/video>. Lastly, our blog is updated frequently (and will continue to be updated during this time), and its articles present plenty of tips and advice about writing: <https://sjsuwritingcenter.wordpress.com>. We create these resources for students, so please use them in addition to online tutoring.

Are you still hiring writing tutors?

We are always hiring writing tutors, and we have created plans to move the steps of our hiring/training process online. If you are interested in applying to work with us, please do so! Our director will reach out to you after she has reviewed your application.

When will you return to offering regular services (drop-ins, in-person appointments, workshops, special events, etc.)?

We will return to our regular schedule once in-person classes have resumed at SJSU. Due to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, we cannot say exactly when that will occur.

How can I keep up-to-date with what's happening at the Writing Center? Is there a dedicated mailing list for students? Will you be posting social media updates?

Yes, we have a student mailing list, and all SJSU students are encouraged to sign up. If you use the following link, we will add you to the group within a few working days. Once you are a member of the group, you will receive regular updates on our opening times, changes to services, announcements, etc. Click here to sign up now: <http://tinyurl.com/wcstudentgroup>.

We will also remain active with both announcements and writing tips via social media. Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn.

How can I contact the Writing Center during this time?

We strongly recommend that you use email as your primary method of contact. You can reach us at writingcenter@sjsu.edu.