Writing Fellows Program

A HANDBOOK FOR FACULTY

Fall 2003 – Spring 2004
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PREFACE

This handbook is designed to answer some of your questions about the UHP Writing Fellows Program. It may be helpful to review the handbook before meeting with your Writing Fellow, who can also answer your questions. The handbook describes the way the Writing Fellows Program has operated over the past fifteen years and suggests new ways in which you can incorporate the program in your classes. The Writing Fellows Program has enormous potential; I encourage you to experiment with it. If you have any questions, concerns, suggestions or problems, please feel free to contact me at 831-8567 or rpeters@udel.edu. You can find me at the Honors Program offices in 207B Elliott Hall.

The Writing Fellows Program has room for tutoring sessions on the third floor of Elliott Hall. We can accommodate individual, group conferences, and computer-based tutoring, although appointments for this space should be arranged in advance. For more information, please visit our website at www.udel.edu/honors/writingfellows.

I look forward to working with you.

Ray Peters
Coordinator, Writing Fellows Program
THE UHP WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM

An Overview
To improve the writing skills of Honors students, the University Honors Program launched the Writing Fellows Program in the mid 1980s. The Writing Fellows Program is a peer-tutoring program in which advanced undergraduates assist faculty members in the writing component of all Honors colloquia; as of last year, selected Writing Fellows began work in other programs including the Writing Center, McNair Scholars and selected capstone courses. We base the UHP Writing Fellows Program on two assumptions: 1) Writing is a long process that generally involves prewriting, drafting, editing, and revising. 2) Writing instruction works best when it is personal, that is, when the student receives direct one-on-one input concerning his or her particular writing needs.

The Writing Fellows Program provides a corps of trained students who read other students' papers, offer constructive comments and hold individual writing conferences with each student. Fellowships have been awarded to 31 juniors and seniors who successfully passed a special training course, English-Honors 316, "Peer Tutoring and Advanced Composition," and who will attend ongoing training meetings throughout 2003-04. Thirteen Fellows have returned from last year, and 18 new Fellows will begin work this year. Writing Fellows deal with composition issues such as thesis, focus, coherence, evidence, organization, paragraphing, transitions, research and citations; they do not proofread, assign grades, comment on the substance of the course, or act as teaching assistants.

Traditionally, Fellows commented on a draft of a paper and held a conference with a student, who rewrote the paper and submitted it to the faculty member for critique and evaluation. We encourage you to negotiate with your Fellow a wider range of activities, from brainstorming sessions to library visits and online research to computer-based revision (tutoring at the computer). You will find more information about the range of activities later in this handbook.

The Writing Fellows Program tries to respect the organizational style and writing assignments of diverse faculty. The Fellows generally comment on three of the papers assigned in a course, though this can be negotiated based on your own course design. This year, the assignments range from analytical essays, to "reactions" to texts, to creative writing projects, including sonnets and plays; Fellows are increasingly prepared to work with creative and narrative assignments. All of the faculty members who teach colloquia have accepted a Fellow; some have modified their syllabi to incorporate the extra time required for a Fellow to review the students' essays.

THE WRITING FELLOWS

Who Are the Fellows?
Writing Fellows are selected according to their grade point averages, their backgrounds in writing and tutoring, their people skills, and their willingness to help others improve their writing skills. We invite faculty members to submit nominations for students whom they consider good prospects for the program and we also solicit applications from students who submit applications independently. Admission to the Writing Fellows Program is quite
competitive. Fellows apply in their sophomore or junior year; most serve until they graduate.

To prepare for the program, Fellows enroll in a course in advanced composition and peer tutoring (Honors English-316), in which they must earn a B+ or better; most earn an A. This course provides the Fellows with extensive training in writing and editing, and acquaints them with current research in composition theory. Here they apply recent models in writing pedagogy to their tutoring. The purpose of the course is to make Fellows sensitive to common writing problems and to equip them with different ways of explaining these problems to students. Once assigned to faculty members, Fellows meet regularly with the Coordinator of the Writing Fellows Program who reviews their editing and conferencing techniques. A Senior Fellow reviews each Fellow’s work as well.

One or two Fellows serve each of the Honors colloquia and frequently a couple of other Honors courses in the Humanities. Last year, selected Fellows worked with students in a variety of other programs: the LIFE program, the University Writing Center, and Nucleus. In addition, during Summer 2003 two Fellows assisted in Summer College classes.

**Benefits of the Program**

Faculty, students and Fellows have discovered these benefits from the UHP Writing Fellowship Program:

- Faculty can emphasize writing in their courses without feeling obligated to teach composition.
- Because faculty members receive more readable papers, they can concentrate on the student's comprehension of subject matter.
- The faculty member may become more aware of various strategies for responding to students' writing, and may also make discoveries about his or her own writing process.
- Productive relationships often develop between faculty and Fellows.
- The program encourages students to think about writing for a reader, and instills in them the best of writing habits: revision.
- The program reaches a large number of undergraduates, including many who are afraid to attempt a writing course because they are aware of their writing deficiencies. The program helps build confidence in writing skills. For some students, it may be the prelude to taking a writing course.
- Since the Writing Fellows are helping their peers, not judging them, students feel freer to ask questions that may betray ignorance ("What is a semicolon?"), and they can take risks in trying to extend their writing abilities without fear of reprisal. This partnership between Fellows and students helps build a cooperative sense of academic community within the University.
- Fellows gain valuable experience in teaching as well as in editing.
- Fellows learn more about their own prose.
HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS
The Fellow works with the same group of students throughout the semester, typically meeting individually with each student on each of three writing assignments or projects.

The Traditional Model
Under the traditional model, for each assignment students first submit their written work to the Fellow, who analyzes the papers' strengths and weaknesses and makes constructive suggestions for revision. The Fellow returns the papers to the students and arranges to meet with them individually to discuss their work and answer questions. Students then revise the papers and submit both versions to the faculty member for evaluation and a grade. Fellows do not assign grades.

Variations
If you have chosen to have your Writing Fellow do something different with your students, the process might be much simpler. If your Fellow will help students brainstorm, for example, students merely need to bring a copy of your assignment and some ideas to the conference. They will come away from the conference with work generated during the meeting: some notes, perhaps even an outline, tentative thesis, or research strategy. Many activities like this require less time built into your syllabus for reading, conference and student revision.

The Sixty-Hour Rule
As we built more flexibility into the Fellows Program, we needed a new model to determine how much time a Fellow should spend with the students. We arrived at a “Sixty-hour rule,” meaning that your Fellow or Fellows shouldn’t spend more than 60 hours during the semester working with students in your course. If you have just one Fellow, that Fellow is on an “expanded” Fellowship, meaning he or she will receive $500 for work during the semester, for 60 hours of work. If you have two Fellows, each is on a “standard” Fellowship, and will receive $250 for 30 hours of work (the 60 hours here refers to the combined work of the two Fellows, so each should work no more than 30 hours).

We derived this formula from the hourly equivalent of the traditional model of fellowing. Under this model, a Fellow spends roughly half an hour reading and responding to each student paper, and half an hour conferencing with that student. This makes one hour per student per paper. Multiply that by 20 students, three times a semester, and you have 60 hours.

If you are considering other kinds of Fellowing activities, you can use the same method of calculation. Most activities take ½ hour, though you may decide you want an in-depth activity to last an entire hour.

Here’s an example: You might have the Fellow meet each of your students for ½ hour to help students generate ideas for paper #1 (10 hours total), ½ hour to review their proposals (10 hours); follow the traditional fellowing process for paper #2 (20 hours total), accompany them to the library in small groups for essay 3 (5 one-hour trips=5 hours); hold ½ hour conferences to help students with quotes and citations on essay 3 (10 hours); and hold ½ hour group conferences to help students prepare for an essay exam (5 one-hour meetings=5 hours). If I’ve done my math right, that’s 60 hours. This might sound a bit complicated, but is actually easy to
figure out, and allows for much more flexibility without overworking the Fellows.

**Scheduling**
Because students write and rewrite each paper handled by a Fellow, faculty need to give some extra attention to scheduling. In general, if you ask your Fellow to read drafts, write comments and hold individual conferences, he or she needs a week to comment on each set of papers, and an additional week to hold conferences. We have provided you with a sample syllabus in the appendix.

If your Fellow is doing something different than the above model, such as helping the student decide on a topic, you only need to build in one week (sometimes less) for conferences.

Regardless of what method your Fellow follows, you need to allow time for students to revise after meeting with the Fellow. This process is less time-consuming than writing an original draft, so students can usually revise a 5-page paper in 3-5 days, and 10-page paper in a week. In general, it is helpful if students complete one writing cycle before beginning the next.

Writing Fellows are top students who carry a full course load in addition to their work for the program. Therefore, please do not request that Fellows comment on papers in less than a week, or during or after the last week of classes (they have final papers and exams to take as well). Most Fellows are happy to oblige students who wish to hand in their drafts earlier than the due date, especially drafts of longer papers.

**Determining the Fellow’s Activities**
You will get the most from your Writing Fellow (and your students) if you design Writing Fellow activities that will best suit the needs of yourself, your Fellow and your students. Here are some questions to consider as you design your course, and the Fellow’s involvement. The questions are sequential, beginning with broad considerations and moving into the specific and the practical:

- What are your overall goals for your students? What kind of thinking and writing do you want them to work towards?
- How engaged with the writing process do you plan to be? Are you going to read drafts yourself?
- Given your answers to the above questions, what kinds of Fellow involvement would your students most benefit from? At what stage of the writing process? For example, if you plan to read and comment on all drafts, it might be more productive to have the Fellow do something else, like meet with the students earlier to brainstorm and outline ideas.

**University Writing Center**
In 2003, five Writing Fellows will work in the University Writing Center. There Fellows join an established staff of experienced tutors to offer drop-in tutoring to students from across the university campus. For more information on the Writing Center, see www.english.udel.edu/wc/.
HOW THIS PROGRAM MAY AFFECT YOUR COURSE

Requirements
This program is designed to complement your course, not to shift its focus. Because writing clearly about a subject helps one understand it better, the program should help your students learn. Although adopting the program should not affect your course goals, it may affect some logistical aspects of the course:

- All students in the course must work with the Writing Fellows.
- Students should meet with the Writing Fellow a minimum of three times during the semester. Often the best work happens late in the course, when the student and Fellow know each other better.
- We request that faculty consider incomplete any paper submitted unaccompanied by a version with the Writing Fellow's comments.

Writing Fellows work best with three papers because students need to do a significant amount of writing to improve their skills. If students write six or seven papers, however, there is little time for Fellows to intervene, or for students to revise their work.

It is important that faculty require that all students in their course participate in the program. Otherwise, students who are all too aware of their writing problems might avoid working with a peer tutor. Conversely, writers who have been generally successful might feel that they do not need the program. Even talented students, however, rarely receive extensive comments on their papers, and they benefit from detailed descriptions of the qualities of writing that succeed or fail. Good student writers often rely heavily on intuition; our aim is to help them gain control over their prose by increasing their awareness of how they write. Once a student can organize material into a paper with a strong thesis and clear evidence, he or she then benefits from discussions of various rhetorical strategies, style, transitions, and figurative language. Fellows are trained to assist each student at his or her present level of skill.

We trust that you will consider students' participation in this program as a vital part of your course—as indispensable as readings or exams. Students who do not participate in the program should be seen as failing to complete an essential aspect of the course. It may help to include a description of the Writing Fellows Program and the name and contact information of your students’ Writing Fellow in your syllabus. This is a good place to emphasize the benefits of the program to your students, and to let students know they are required to meet with the Fellow. Comments you make in class can clarify and reinforce this written information.

We find that students seek indications that faculty have closely reviewed their work. If you do not like to give grades, a few comments on the students' final drafts will give them a sense that their writing efforts have been acknowledged.

Writing Assignments
The Writing Fellows Program will not alter your writing assignments. Professors teaching courses with Fellows often assign three papers of 3-5 pages, a length appropriate to freshmen's ability to organize evidence. However, faculty have successfully assigned papers in the range of 1-10 pages. If you only assign one large project, your Fellow can meet with students at various
times during their research and writing process. If you have many smaller projects, you can have the Fellow meet with students for selected projects.

Fellows are often the first to know when students are confused about assignments. Please write out your assignments; take the time to discuss your expectations with your students and your Fellow. Review with them strategies for approaching the topic. Students frequently do not understand the goals of an assignment, how to organize material, and whether and how they can take a stand on the material. The strongest writing appears in the courses in which the faculty member takes considerable class time to discuss the assignments. Students are often stunned to learn what processes we go through (endure!) when we write. Initiate your students into the styles, expectations and genres of your discipline.

Fellows report greatest success when the assignment is specific, particularly if the audience is specified. ("Writing to readers of Scientific American, compare and contrast arguments for evolution and for creationism.") But Fellows will adapt to any assignments. For example, several faculty teaching colloquia assign creative writing or autobiographical topics. Fellows entering the program this year have received training in writing and conferencing narrative and creative papers.

Students should write on a word processor. At the least, please ask your students to type their papers (double-spaced, wide margins) because the Fellows find it exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, to read handwritten papers.

Suggested guidelines for writing assignments are listed below:

- Write out all assignments. Let your students know your expectations, what issues could arise, your grading procedure, and organizational strategies.
- Include "Fellow Due Dates" or "Due Date of First Draft" and "Final Due Dates" on your syllabus.
- Remind your students that only faculty can give deferments for late papers.
- Have students hand the paper directly to you rather than a Fellow; this helps keep your students on a schedule.

How the Program Will Affect Your Evaluation of Papers

With the traditional model of revision and tutoring, you will receive both versions of each student's paper, the first draft and the final copy. If you have asked your Fellow to make written comments, he or she will write both marginal comments and concluding comments. You may wish to consult the first version in order to determine how the paper developed. You can see the kinds of comments that the Fellow made and the student's response to them. We suggest that you skim the Fellow's final comments before evaluating the final version of the student's paper.
OPERATION OF THE PROGRAM

Since Writing Fellows carry full course loads of their own, they cannot attend your class meetings. They cannot become experts in your field and will not comment on substantive material in your course, unless you specifically ask them to. They will, however, make every effort to attend your class when you discuss writing or writing assignments. They will also briefly attend class meetings in order to meet the students, to return each set of papers and to make conference arrangements.

Fellows may occasionally ask your permission to take five minutes at the beginning or end of class to speak about writing problems common to many of the papers, or to talk about techniques to help overcome difficulties such as writer's block. Fellows may ask to see your written comments so that they can determine what is important to you and what kind of papers you hope to read. Please be sure to meet with your Fellow before and after each set of papers!

Introducing the Writing Fellows Program to Students

Faculty who actively support the Writing Fellows Program have found that their students work seriously on their writing. The way you introduce the program on the first day of class influences your students' response to it. It is helpful if you emphasize that the Writing Fellows Program is an integral part of the course and is required of all students. If you wish, your Writing Fellow will come to class on the day that you introduce the program.

Your Writing Fellow will provide your students with a handout containing the information they will need concerning the program (for sample, see Appendix C.)

Your students’ work with the Writing Fellow will go more smoothly if they know what to expect. Help students prepare for their sessions with the Fellow by asking them to prepare questions and ideas for the meetings. Tell them the Fellow will not “fix” their paper or issue directions, but will ask questions and make suggestions, to help the student take control in improving the paper.

Students who balk at the program may do so because they have been led to believe that revision is a punishment meted out to poor writers. Students are relieved to hear about your own writing process. They are surprised that professors also work with colleagues and editors before their work faces publishers and public reviews.

Procedure for the Pick-up and Return of Papers (for traditional tutoring process)

1. Students submit a first draft. Students should submit their first drafts to the professor rather than sending them directly to Fellows. This procedure allows instructors to note which papers are late, and it discourages students from procrastinating.

2. Fellows pick up the papers from the faculty member. Fellows will pick up papers in your class, or by previous arrangement, either during an appointment or an office hour.

3. Fellows return the papers. One week later, Fellows will return papers. You and your Fellow can negotiate how this should happen—sometimes it works well to return papers in class, but some Fellows find it works better to return papers during conferences, so that the meeting isn’t just a reiteration of comments the student has already read. The
Fellow may give you a list of their conference times to pass around the class.

4. Students submit a final draft. Students turn in the final draft of the paper, along with the first draft, directly to you. Fellows will need to see some of the final drafts in order to see how students are responding to their suggestions and to monitor the progress of the program. Although no papers have as yet vanished, it is a good idea to encourage students to photocopy papers as a safety measure, or print out duplicates if they are using a word processor.

**Late Papers**
Please make your late paper policy clear to the Fellows and the students. Fellows do not have the authority to grant extensions. If papers are always submitted to the course instructor, who in turn gives them to the Fellow, students will not be tempted to slip a late paper directly to a Fellow.

If you choose to grant an extension for a late paper, please make sure the Fellow has the same amount of time for commenting on the work. Students handing in late papers must also make arrangements to meet with their Fellow for a conference. It is helpful to establish a cut-off date for extensions so that the Fellows will be able to plan their own work schedules.

Whatever the specifics of your late paper policy, please do not excuse students from participating in the program because their papers are late. If you receive a late paper, notify your Fellow who will pick it up and edit it quickly.

**The Nature of the Writing Fellow’s Work**
The UHP Writing Fellows Program attempts to create a writer/editor model because writing instruction is best when it is one-on-one. For this reason, Fellows' comments are "readerly" rather than judgmental; comments are directed toward revision. Frequently Fellows will formulate their comments as questions in order to indicate the response of an intelligent reader. They may say, "How could you clarify the main point of this paragraph?" or "You've lost me here," rather than "Poorly constructed argument" or "Unfocused paragraph." Our comments record the pleasure, confusion and dismay of an educated reader going through a piece of writing. This type of commenting tends to minimize the defensiveness of the editing process.

The conference is where the writing instruction really occurs. Since Fellows meet with the students for each assignment, they are available to answer questions about their editing. During conferences, Fellows help students work on apparent writing problems and suggest strategies for revision. Consequently, students need to meet with their Fellows prior to submitting their revised or final draft.

Students need not mechanically accept every suggestion that a Fellow makes. Rather, they should consider the Fellow's questions, understand the weakness being described and revise accordingly. A Writing Fellow may suggest, for example, that a particular paragraph does not relate to the essay; the writer might decide that the paragraph should go, or that the paragraph belongs, but that he or she needs to link it to the topic or thesis. The point is that the students revise in light of their own ideas.

Fellows do not generally comment on the accuracy of the paper's content. Of course, it is
difficult at times to separate form from content, but Fellows make every attempt to direct comments towards the student's writing. For example, Fellows may ask questions, point out apparent contradictions, suggest that the writer define key terms or relate ideas more explicitly to help the student clarify a position, but they will not comment on the accuracy of that position.

In general, Fellows tend to explain and question rather than label errors. For example, rather than simply writing "Vague" next to a sentence, Fellows pinpoint the source of the problem by asking, "What could you use as evidence here?" At the same time, Fellows do not aim to address a wealth of minutiae; instead, they direct their focus on one or two all-encompassing areas of improvement. Fellows provide the student with an honest picture or mirror of the paper's strengths and weaknesses, but try not to overwhelm the student.

Meeting with Writing Fellows
We suggest that you meet with your Fellow before and after each set of papers. Your Fellow will contact you during the week before classes begin, if possible. At this meeting it is useful to review:

- The syllabus and course goals and any changes in schedule (Please give your Fellow a copy of your syllabus).
- Your writing assignments and your goals for them (Please give your Fellow a copy of each assignment).
- Procedures, dates, and times for picking up and returning papers.
- Your late paper policy.
- Your pet peeves in writing.
- Arrangements for the Fellow to visit class.
- Ways to contact each other—phone numbers, email addresses.

Meetings should take place before each paper cycle to clarify goals and expectations, and after each paper cycle to review the Fellow's work, to share impressions of student writing, and make suggestions for modification. You may also wish to discuss the specific requirements for the remaining papers. We hope you feel free to disagree with your Fellow's comments. Finally, an "exit" meeting is helpful so that you can review the progress of your students' work with your Fellow at the end of the semester.

Evaluation of the Program
In addition to the informal evaluation you will have with your Fellow, we ask that you have your students complete a short evaluation of the Fellow and the program which we will provide (see Appendix D for a sample). These evaluations are very important to us and we appreciate your cooperation in distributing and collecting them. Please ask that students complete these evaluations in class because students who take evaluations forms home rarely complete them.

Student Response to the Program
So far, students have responded very favorably to the program, and we have noticed encouraging improvement in their writing ability. Most students view the program as a valuable opportunity to work on their writing although they may have initial concerns. Some may feel that they don't need revision. Some may doubt the Fellow's ability to comment on their papers. Others may just
hate the idea of typing their papers twice, although word processors lighten the burden of revision. But in most cases doubts are dispelled when Fellows return the first set of papers. Strong faculty support of the Fellows helps shorten this period of discontent.

**Potential Problems and Their Solutions**

Faculty have reported few problems with this program, but here are some we have seen or anticipate:

1. *Students submit late papers.* It helps the paper flow in this program if you insist that all papers be submitted on time. Nevertheless, some students will miss deadlines. At the first meeting with your Fellow, it is a good idea to agree upon a late paper procedure. Your Fellow will comment on all papers—even late ones. Students should not be able to omit revision by submitting their papers late.

2. *A student wishes to turn in a final paper without the first version and the Fellow's comments.* For the traditional model of the Writing Fellows Program to be effective, students must have a Fellow comment on a first draft, attend a conference, and revise the paper. Therefore, we ask that you accept only papers accompanied by their first version and the Fellow's comments. The program works best if you insist on the importance of revision.

3. *A student says he or she does not need a Writing Fellow.* Since the program is mandatory for all students in a participating course, please do not excuse any students. If the program were not required, those who need it most would avoid it, and even the best writers can improve. If a student is deeply concerned about participating, you can refer him or her to a Fellow or to the Coordinator.

4. *A student complains about a Writing Fellow.* If the student strongly disagrees with a Fellow's comments, we suggest that the student call the Coordinator, who will arrange to speak with the student and the Fellow. In addition, you should alert the Coordinator about any persistent complaints about a Fellow. However, we have had very few complaints about the Writing Fellows, and they often stem from misunderstandings about the Fellows’ roles.

5. *Some students object to working with Fellows who are not knowledgeable about the course content.* We try to remind students that Fellows will respond as educated lay readers. Since Fellows comment on expression and form, not content, they need not be experts in the field at hand to help the student improve his or her writing. Thus, students should not dismiss an apparently naive question a Fellow asks. Some questions show the student where definitions are vague or the progression of an argument is unclear.

6. *Your Fellow does not return the papers on time.* This is a very rare problem; the Fellows have been very punctual and truly appreciate the time constraints of a syllabus that incorporates the Writing Fellows Program. If the Fellow expects to miss the deadline by only a day or two, he or she will make arrangements with you to return the papers. In more extreme circumstances, the Fellow will notify the Coordinator, and alternate arrangements will be made. In any case, the Coordinator should be informed if a Fellow were consistently and inexplicably missing deadlines.

7. *A paper is lost.* So far, no papers have been lost. Once a Fellow's backpack, which contained a few papers, was stolen, but all of the papers had been written on word processors and the students were able to make copies. We hope that we will never again encounter this nightmare, but we encourage students to photocopy papers to safeguard
against loss.

8. *You strongly disagree with a Fellow's comments.* We urge you to discuss such problems with the Fellow directly or, in an extreme case, to contact the Coordinator.

**GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY TEACHING COLLOQUIA**

**What Students Have Been Told about the Honors Colloquium**

Printed below is the text of the Honors Program Handbook for first year Honors students concerning Honors Colloquia. This course description explains to students the general nature of colloquia.

All first year students in the Honors Program, regardless of their intended college or major, are required to take one Honors colloquium. Although colloquia topics differ according to the interests and expertise of the faculty teaching them, all colloquia are designed to provide certain learning experiences held by faculty to be important for the beginning of every Honors student’s undergraduate career.

Honors colloquia are broadly conceived, generally going beyond conventional disciplinary boundaries and focusing on topics of major and enduring significance. Topics thus deal with central concerns of liberal education. Colloquia are intellectually rigorous without requiring more than a high-school background in a field. They are elementary not in the sense of preparing students for further study in a discipline, but rather in the sense of preparing them for further skilled reflection on issues and ideas of interest to all educated persons.

Intensive reading, thoughtful analysis, intelligent speech, and good writing are the core expectations of colloquium participants. Normally, primary materials are assigned for reading; these are typically “original” in the twin sense that they are the discoveries, reflections, or creations of the authors themselves and that they may take a study to its basic principles. Readings are texts rather than textbooks and may include film and other media in addition to print: they convey to the student the experience of inquiry and discovery rather than simply presenting results. Field trips may also be appropriate.

Colloquia emphasize informed discussions rather than lectures. Given the intended breadth of the colloquia, team-teaching and/or participation by guest scholars may be employed. Students’ small group discussions and group work are encouraged.

Substantial writing is required in all colloquia. Writing assignments include three medium-length papers and follow the procedures of the Writing Fellows Program, which provides each colloquium with a trained peer tutor who assists colloquium participants in revising each paper. Faculty expect to spend considerable time outside of class assisting colloquium participants with the subject matter of their papers, while Writing Fellows assist students with the effective organization and presentation of ideas.

**Course Design of Colloquia**
Faculty teaching colloquia have a unique opportunity to introduce important subject matter to some of the University’s most talented students at the beginning of their college careers. However, because of the different goals of the colloquia, most faculty find that structuring colloquia requires planning different from the designing of a course within the major, even an Honors course in the major. Although most Honors courses are smaller in class size than regular sections (in order to facilitate students’ active learning) the expectation for active learning in colloquia is even greater than is usual even for an Honors course. The following are some requirements and suggestions that faculty have found helpful over the years.

**Writing:** Each colloquium works within the structure of the Writing Fellows Program (for full information, see the Writing Fellows Program Handbook), which includes the following features:

- Writing takes a variety of formats—analytical essays, reader response and reaction papers, personal narratives, and creative writing projects to name a few.
- Students typically are assigned three papers or projects for work with Writing Fellows. Each of these assignments is made available to the students and their Writing Fellow in written form and is explained clearly in class and to the Writing Fellow. Students should be told clearly what the basis for their grades will be (e.g., developing an idea, explaining an author’s thought, writing imaginatively, etc.).
- The traditional Writing Fellows Program contains a three-step cycle; this does not necessarily apply to other forms of tutoring, such as drop-in tutoring, brainstorming sessions, and so on. The first step (at least a week) involves the assignment and allows the student to write the initial version of the paper; the second (usually a week) is when Fellows read and comment on the paper drafts; the third (usually a week) is when students confer with the Fellow and revise their papers. (Owing to time constraints, for the last paper students may meet with the Writing Fellow for a “drop-in” conference rather than go through the full cycle.
- Faculty stay in close touch with the Writing Fellow, meeting before and after each paper assignment.
- Writing Fellows are not Teaching Assistants. Fellows are trained in composition theories, editing and writing response strategies, and theories of learning, not in the particular subject matter of the course. Fellows will comment on the various persuasive qualities of student papers (organization, focus, clarity, evidence, style, etc), but not on the papers’ content.
- Most faculty do not comment on the first version of the students’ papers, but wait for the version that has been revised after work with the Writing Fellow. Some faculty, however, prefer to see the first versions and to comment fully on them. The nature and extent of faculty involvement with drafts should be considered in determining the activities of the Writing Fellow in each course—if you read early drafts carefully yourself, you might want your Fellow to read a later draft, or to engage students in another activity to supplement rather than repeat what you’ve done.

**Class Discussion:** In addition to the course time devoted to paper writing, considerable class time must be given in colloquia to thoughtful discussion. For most of the class meeting time, the lectures and lecture-discussions that are our most familiar modes of instruction will not be appropriate for the colloquia, which require the regular active participation of each class member.
in discussion. Small group work and other forms of collaborative learning offer helpful tools, and workshops in problem-based learning are available for faculty interested in designing colloquia.

**Individual Student Conferences:** To assist students in developing paper topics, understanding the material, and finding their voices in class, individual conferences between faculty and students are an important component of the colloquia.

**Content “Coverage”:** To make room for the accomplishment of the colloquium’s pedagogical goals, course content is scaled to fit available class time. Although colloquia are primarily for first-year students, these courses are not to be considered introductory courses in any discipline. They presume no extensive background and are preparation not for further study in a particular field but for developing the student’s ability to read carefully, question actively, analyze thoughtfully, speak intelligently, and write clearly.

**Exams:** Exams are not usually given at all or they are replaced by in-class writing exercises. There is normally not a place in colloquia for multiple-choice or other machine-graded tests. If you do include essay exams as part of your course, you might consider having your Writing Fellow help students prepare to write an in-class or take-home exam.

**Frequency of Class Meetings:** Because continuity in-class discussions must be sustained, colloquia are scheduled to meet at least twice a week. There are no three-hour sessions.

**Help from Colleagues:** Topics and approaches of faculty who design colloquia display considerable variety. Colloquium faculty have greatly enjoyed the opportunity to think creatively about their own disciplines, their teaching, and their own writing. Many are eager to share experiences and to hear from faculty interested in designing new colloquia. If you would like to talk to experienced colloquium faculty, contact the Coordinator of the Writing Fellows Program. A list of faculty teaching colloquia in fall 2003 is included in the appendix of this Handbook.
APPENDIX A
Sample Colloquium Syllabus

ARSC390-081: Honors Colloquium Spring 2004

Location: 315 Gore Hall
Hours: TR 11:00 – 12:15
Instructor: Mr. Peters
Office: 207B Elliott Hall
Office hours: 8-12 on MWF, 8-10:45 on TR, and by appointment
Office telephone: (302) 831-8567
E-mail: rpeters@udel.edu
WWW: honors.udel.edu/rpeters/a39081.htm

Writing Fellows assigned to ARSC 390-081:
Jen Moyers mafiajen@udel.edu
Claire Zelinskas claires@udel.edu

ARSC 390-081 Colloquium: Cancer, Plague, Polio, and Flu: Disease and Culture
In this course we will examine the social and cultural history of disease and medicine, analyze the different ways humans use language to deal with disease, and explore the many social, political, and ethical implications of cultural attitudes toward disease. In order to do this, we will try to answer a number of questions including: Why do we think the way we do about certain diseases? How does culture influence the way we explain and treat disease? How do diseases affect social and political change? The plague, for example, killed a third of all Europeans in the 14th century with dramatic consequences. Most of our reading will be non-fiction such as Arno Karlen’s *Man and Microbes: Diseases and Plagues in History and Modern Times*, Stanton Peele’s *The Diseasing of America*, and Susan Sontag’s *Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors*, but we will also look at the way these issues are raised in stories, poetry, and film. Students will write brief response papers, analytical essays, and a research paper examining the effects of cultural attitudes about disease on a subject of their choice: medical research, treatment, government policy, education, business, etc.

Texts
Requirements

- 2 essays
- 1 research paper
- Conferences with Writing Fellows as assigned
- Writing exercises, collaborative exercises, conferences, and additional exercises as assigned
- All essays must be prepared on a computer and turned in at the beginning of class on the due date. All papers must be word processed in a standard font, double spaced with one-inch margins, and must be fastened with either a paper clip or a staple. (Torn corners and chewing gum are not acceptable)

Expectations

- I expect you to conduct yourself in a polite, civil manner.
- I expect you to attend all classes. If you do miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed before the next class session. If serious illnesses, family emergencies, or other crises occur during the term, one of the key things you must do is to contact the office of the dean of your college as soon as possible. This office can assist you in notifying faculty and in validating for your teachers what has happened. Such validation will be necessary for you to make up missed assignments.
- I expect you to read the assigned material and be prepared to discuss it in class.
- I expect you to participate actively and constructively in both large and small group discussions.
- I expect you to have an e-mail account and know how to use it. Many assignments will require that you send me an e-mail message.

Academic Integrity

As in any professional environment, plagiarism is forbidden. Any work that you submit at any stage of the writing process—draft, thesis and outline, bibliography, etc., through final version—must be your own; in addition, any words, ideas, or data that you borrow from other people and include in your work must be properly documented. Failure to do either of these things is plagiarism. The University of Delaware protects the rights of all students by insisting that individual students act with integrity. Accordingly, the University severely penalizes plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. I encourage you to review the policy on Academic Honesty in the *Student Guide to University Policies*. If you have questions on this important matter, please see me.

Writing Fellows

Jen Moyers  mafaijen@udel.edu
Claire Zelinskas claires@udel.edu

In Honors colloquia you have the added advantage of Writing Fellows, advanced students who have been trained to assist you in all stages of the writing process from brainstorming to revision to research. This semester you will have three mandatory conferences with Claire and Jen. We are all happy to assist you in any way we can, but be aware that we all have busy schedules. Please come to all meetings on time and prepared with the required materials. The Writing Fellows’ objective is to help you develop your own writing skills, not to do the work for you. For more information, please visit the Writing Fellows Program
website (www.udel.edu/honors/writingfellows).

Writing Center
The Writing Center in 016 Memorial (831-1168) provides free one-on-one instruction to students who have writing assignments in this or any course. You may call or stop by the Writing Center to make an appointment. Appointments are offered on a first-come, first-served basis, so you should make your appointments as far in advance as possible.

Format for Essays and Research Paper
Essays and research papers should be prepared according to the standard MLA manuscript format described in *The Bedford Handbook* (see Chapters 5 and 57). All papers should include your name, my name, course and section number, date, and a title (see pp. 112-114 in *The Bedford Handbook* for the proper format for an essay). All papers must be fastened with either a paper clip or a staple. (Torn corners and chewing gum are not acceptable)

Class Schedule
Week 1 (2/10 and 12)
Introduction and overview
Introduce yourself: Send an e-mail message to me before the end of the day on Wednesday, 2/11. The message should describe your interest in the theme of this course. Please tell me why you are taking a course that will require you to read, write, and talk about disease and culture. What would you like to discuss in class this semester? In addition, please tell me what you like to read—and what you don’t.

Week 2 (2/17 and 19)
Kolata, pp. ix-84

Week 3 (2/24 and 26)
Kolata, pp. 85-150
Bring draft of Essay 1 and completed Writer Response Sheet to class on Thursday, February 26

Week 4 (3/2 and 4)
Kolata, pp. 151-241

Week 5 (3/9 and 11)
Kolata, pp. 243-306
Essay 1 due on Thursday, March 11

Week 6 (3/16 and 18)
Karlen, pp. 1-78

Spring Break (3/23 and 25)
Class Schedule (cont.)

Week 7 (3/30 and 4/1)
  Karlen, pp. 79-147
  Research project conferences (in my office as scheduled). Bring a preliminary thesis statement, a working outline, and a working bibliography of at least five sources.

Week 8 (4/6 and 8)
  Karlen, pp. 149-230
  Bring draft of Essay 2 and completed Writer Response Sheet to class on Thursday, April 8

Week 9 (4/13 and 15)
  Sontag, pp. 3-87

Week 10 (4/20 and 22)
  Sontag, pp. 93-183
  Essay 2 due on Thursday, April 22

Week 11 (4/27 and 29)
  Peele, pp. vi-83

Week 12 (5/4 and 6)
  Peele, pp. 85-172
  Bring draft of Research Paper and completed Writer Response Sheet to class on Tuesday, May 4

Week 13 (5/11 and 13)
  Peele, pp. 173-287

Week 14 (5/18)
  Research Paper due on Tuesday, May 18
Grading

Essay 1: 20%
Essay 2: 25%
Research paper: 40%
Miscellaneous: 10%
Participation in Writing Fellows Program: 5%

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on date indicated. The grade for an assignment handed in late will be lowered one letter grade per day late.

A = Superior
Far exceeds acceptable college-level work. Presents significant and clear thesis, which is developed by a logical argument, supported with concrete, substantial, and relevant detail. Reflects an appropriate sense of the topic’s complexity in range and depth of argument. Follows logical and appropriate organization. Displays originality of thought and presentation. Effectively addresses concerns and assumptions of audience. Uses appropriate and consistent voice, tone, and style for assignment. Wording is clear, precise, and graceful. No errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, or manuscript format.

B = Good
Better than acceptable college-level work, but lacks one or more of the qualities of superior work. Presents a clear thesis, but neglects to develop it adequately. May be marred by an ineffective introduction, weak conclusion, inappropriate tone, or improper emphasis. May fail to address effectively the concerns and assumptions of audience. May contain awkward style, inadequate vocabulary, or mechanical errors.

C = Adequate
Acceptable college-level work, but without distinction. Thesis is acceptable, but lacks depth and significance. May lack clarity or conciseness; organization may be weak; may use inappropriate arrangement. May contain serious problems with tone, style, and vocabulary. May contain a number of mechanical errors.

D = Unsatisfactory
Does not meet college-level expectations. Contains severe problems in content and/or organization. Barely meets minimum requirements for assignment.

F = Unacceptable
Far below college-level work. Totally off the mark. Fails to meet minimum requirements.
APPENDIX B
Sample: Writing Fellows Schedule

**ARSC 390-081 Colloquium: Cancer, Plague, Polio, and Flu: Disease and Culture**

**Writing Fellows Schedule: Spring 2004**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Time for each WF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Meet with me before semester starts</td>
<td>30 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Introductions: Come to class and meet students</td>
<td>15 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Get Essay 1 on 2/26, read drafts, schedule conferences, and meet with me to discuss expectations</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Review drafts with students and review conferences with me</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Essay 1 due 3/11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Spring break!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Get Essay 2 on Thursday 4/8, read drafts, schedule conferences, and meet with me to discuss expectations</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Review drafts with students and review conferences with me</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Essay 2 on 4/22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Get research paper on Tuesday, 5/4, read drafts, schedule conferences, and meet with me to discuss expectations</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Review drafts with students and review conferences with me</td>
<td>5 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Research paper due 5/18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I will distribute a sign-up sheet for conferences on the day drafts are due and leave it in your mailbox by the end of the day, so please give me the sign-up sheet no later than the previous afternoon. (E-mail is fine.) After each round of conferences, I will want to find out
- who showed up and who didn’t
- who came prepared and who didn’t, and
- your impression of each student for the given assignment.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at rpeters@udel.edu or 831-8567.
APPENDIX C
Sample Assignment

ARSC390-081: Essay 2
Prospectus due: April 1
Draft due for review by Writing Fellow: April 8
Completed essay due: April 22

The Assignment
In Making Sense of Illness, Robert Aronowitz shows how values and interests have determined research programs, public health activities, clinical decisions, and the patient’s experience of illness. Write an argumentative essay in which you take a position on an issue of your choice regarding the meaning of disease and the experience of illness.

Prewriting
Consider the following questions:

- Who has the authority to define disease?
- How did the diagnosis and scope of Lyme disease, chronic fatigue syndrome, and other chronic diseases become so controversial?
- Why are these issues important? As Aronowitz puts it, what are the stakes? Who are the likely winners and losers?
- Which is the best way to define disease: by the way a patient experiences a disease or by a doctor's evaluation of test results and physical examination?
- What are the assumptions underlying these representations of health, illness, and disease? Are the assumptions believable? Do they express your values? Do they seem true in your experience? Are the assumptions consistent with each other?

Prospectus
Send me a prospectus by e-mail in which you address the following questions:

- Which issue do you intend to discuss?
- What is your position on the issue?
- How will you defend your position? What arguments do you plan to use to support your position?
- How do you plan to organize your essay?
- What action will you recommend?

Drafting
Using the notes you have made, draft an essay of 1000 to 1500 words. Remember, a good essay will

- include an arguable thesis that makes your position and your purpose clear
- support your argument with persuasive appeals to logic
- arrange details, reasons, examples, and anecdotes effectively
- anticipate and address reader concerns and counter-arguments
- use specific, relevant details to support your thesis and to clarify your argument
- have a consistent tone demonstrating fairness and even-handedness

Your draft should be your best effort and it should be in the same manuscript format as the completed essay you give me on the final due date. Your Writer Response Sheet should be attached to your draft.
Rewriting
When you have finished your rough draft, examine the essay’s effectiveness in supporting your thesis. Does your introduction clearly state your thesis and provide a good foundation for the rest your essay? Does each paragraph relate to the thesis? Are all paragraphs adequately developed? Do you use your conclusion to make a point, providing your reader with perspective and a recommendation? Do all sentences clearly and concisely express their meaning?

Evaluation
Your essay will be evaluated on the quality, organization, and development of your ideas as well as the clarity and style of your writing.
APPENDIX D
Sample: First-Day Handout

The Writing Fellows Program

To help improve the quality of writing in courses throughout the curriculum, the University Honors Program has established the Writing Fellows Program. The Writing Fellows Program responds to student demands for one-on-one help with their own writing problems and needs. The purpose of this program is to provide individualized writing instruction for all Honors students. This year, Writing Fellows will be available as writing advisors in all colloquia and other selected Honors courses in the humanities.

Writing Fellows have taken an advanced seminar in the theory, practice, and teaching of composition. Nominees are chosen from many disciplines for their proven performance as writers and for their interest in helping fellow students improve their writing skills. They become Fellows after stiff competition and rigorous training.

Each student in this course will be assigned to a Writing Fellow. As part of this program, you will work individually with your Fellow on each paper; the specific work you do with your Fellow will be determined and explained by your instructor. These conferences give you an excellent opportunity to discuss your own writing in detail. Your Writing Fellow will give you specific instructions about where to meet. Please bring all related materials with you to the conference—your essay, notes, your assignment. All students, regardless of their writing abilities, should find the program profitable and are required to participate in it.

All papers submitted to faculty and Writing Fellows should be typed and double-spaced. It is a good idea to make a copy of your papers.

The Writing Fellows are trained undergraduates who can help you with such concerns as idea generation, thesis development, organization, coherence, grammar, introductions, conclusions, transitions, citations, and style. They do not proofread, do not have the authority to grant extensions, and do not assign grades.

Your Writing Fellow is [______________].

Your Fellow’s email address is [____________________].

Professor [__________________]
Course: [__________________________]

For more information, please visit the Writing Fellows Program website (www.udel.edu/honors/writingfellows).
APPENDIX E
Sample: Faculty Evaluation of Writing Fellows

Faculty Evaluation of Writing Fellows
FALL 2003

Your observations about Writing Fellows are crucial in planning the future of the Writing Fellows Program, in designing the training course, and in evaluating individual Fellows. Please return this form through campus mail by Friday, December 19 to Kathy Zgleszewski in 202 Elliott Hall. Thanks!

Ray Peters
Coordinator, Writing Fellows Program
rpeters@udel.edu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Name:</th>
<th>Semester:</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Name of Writing Fellow:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) How many papers did you assign?

2) What types of papers did you assign (narrative, argument, research, et cetera)?

3) How many revisions for each paper did you assign/allow?

4) How many times did the Fellow meet with your students?

5) How many times did the fellow meet with you?
6) Did your students' writing improve?


7) What were the most significant areas of improvement?


8) How satisfied were you by the nature/quality of the fellow's comments on students' papers?


9) How satisfied were you by the quantity of the fellow's comments?


10) Overall, did the course benefit from increased attention to writing? In what ways?


11) Did the presence of the Fellowship Program detract from or complicate your teaching in significant ways? Please explain.


12) Are there things you would like your Fellow to do differently? Please list them.


Feel free to add any other comments/observations not addressed above.


Thanks for your feedback! Please return this form by Friday, December 19th to Kathy Zgleszewski, Honors Program Office in 202 Elliott Hall.
## APPENDIX F

### Writing Fellow Assignments Spring 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professor and course</th>
<th>Writing Fellows</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan Blits: EDUC391-080</td>
<td>Jeff Price</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan Blits: EDUC391-081</td>
<td>Stella Ilel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milena Davison: ARSC390-080</td>
<td>Emily Frankenberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robert Denemark: POSC390-080</td>
<td>Emily Quinlan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Darlene Farabee: ENGL167-080</td>
<td>Emily Kobliska</td>
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<tr>
<td>Linda Gottfredson: EDUC391-082</td>
<td>Amy Eluto</td>
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<tr>
<td>Devon Miller-Duggan: ARSC390-082</td>
<td>Lilly Burris</td>
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<td>Ray Peters: ARSC390-081</td>
<td>Jen Moyers</td>
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<td>Nancy Nobile: FLLT360-081</td>
<td>Sara Geiger</td>
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<td>Thomas Rocek: ANTH390-080</td>
<td>Erin Burkett</td>
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<td>Rita Skelly: ARSC390-084</td>
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<td>Patrick White: ARSC390-085</td>
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<td><strong>Writing Center</strong></td>
<td>Alexandra Bortnick</td>
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<td>Rachel Kassman</td>
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<td>Johanna Salfrank</td>
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<td>Chad Krueger</td>
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<td><strong>Senior Writing Fellows</strong></td>
<td>Sarah Hillman</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nick Klingaman</td>
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