# Table of Contents

- Overview of the Writing Fellows Program ............................................................. 3
- Mission Statement .................................................................................................. 4
- Becoming a Writing Fellow ..................................................................................... 4
  - Application to the Writing Fellows Program
  - Standard and Expanded Fellowships
  - Training
  - Mentoring

- Different Writing Fellows Programs ...................................................................... 5
  - Traditional Colloquium
  - Writing Center
  - McNair Scholars
  - Other Opportunities

- Working with Faculty ............................................................................................... 7
  - Collaboration Is the Key
  - Opening the Lines of Communication
  - The Initial Meeting
  - Reviewing the Syllabus
  - During the Semester
  - End of the Semester
  - Troubleshooting

- Senior Writing Fellows ............................................................................................ 9
  - The Role of the Senior Writing Fellow
  - Senior Writing Fellow Meetings

- Benefits of the Writing Fellows Program ............................................................... 10
  - Stipend
  - Campus Networking
  - Faculty Connections
  - Professional Development
OVERVIEW OF THE WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM

Over two decades ago, UD Honors Program students and faculty began to recognize the need for more attention to student writing, but no one wanted to take or teach another homogenized writing course. Responding to demands for more personalized, one-on-one writing assistance, the University Honors Program launched the Writing Fellows Program in the mid-1980s.

Writing Fellows work closely with faculty to facilitate the writing component of all Honors colloquia and other selected courses. Fellowships are primarily awarded to juniors and seniors who successfully earn entrance into and completion of Honors ENGL 316: “Peer Tutoring and Advanced Composition.” In 2003-2004, the Standard Fellowship offers $250 per semester while the Expanded Fellowship offers $500.

The UHP Writing Fellows Program is based on two assumptions:

• Writing is a long process that generally involves brainstorms, outlines, edits, and several revisions.
• Writing instruction works best when students receive personalized, one-on-one attention to their individual writing needs.

Prior to 2001, Writing Fellows worked almost exclusively with first-year students in Honors colloquia. In the most traditional model, a Fellow guided students through a single revision cycle for each of three different papers. Through written comments and 30-minute conferences, Fellows responded to such issues as interpreting assignments, developing theses, gathering and presenting convincing evidence, organizing an argument, transitioning between ideas, and sometimes, honing grammatical skills.

In 2001, the Writing Fellowship Program doubled in size from roughly 20 to nearly 40 Fellows. Every year, Writing Fellows now assist over 700 students! As we grew larger, our scope became more diverse. In addition to Honors colloquia, Fellows now work with McNair scholars, select capstone courses and sections of ENGL 110, Summer College and the University Writing Center. These new facets of our program are described in greater detail later in this handbook.

Fellows today also employ a greater variety of tutoring activities. Trained at every stage of the writing process and prepared to read a growing repertory of literary genres, Fellows assist students with brainstorming topics, research and reference, original creative works like sonnets or plays, and strategic planning for oral debates.

The Writing Fellows are eager to serve the Honors Program community and beyond in the 2003-2004 academic year.
MISSION STATEMENT

The UHP Writing Fellows are a dedicated group of undergraduate Honors Program students who assist their peers with developing and improving writing skills. Central to our mission is the belief that writing is a process. As such, Fellows continually strive to learn new and creative ways of writing and tutoring, while also respecting the individual approaches students and professors employ in their own work.

The goal of the Writing Fellows is to develop better writers, not better papers. They believe that the peer relationship creates an opportunity for strong improvements in writing. To establish this more personalized approach to conferencing, each Fellow meets with students outside of the classroom on an individual basis.

Writing Fellows use a variety of practices to help students with their writing, depending on the stage of the writing process and the needs of the student and professor. They help students interpret assignments and brainstorm their ideas. They assist students in revising their drafts, tackling such areas as organization, tone, the thesis statement, proper documentation, etc. Finally, at the other end of the writing process, they provide fine-tuned tips on polishing near-final drafts, using a variety of stylistic techniques. In short, by commenting on students’ papers, meeting with students individually, and generally being accessible during all stages of writing, Fellows help to ensure that each stage of the writing process plays its full role in creating a final, well-written composition.

BECOMING A WRITING FELLOW

Application to the Writing Fellows Program
Admission to the Writing Fellows Program is competitive. With the help of current Fellows, the Coordinator conducts an annual campus-wide search for prospective Writing Fellows each fall. Writing Fellows are selected according to their grade point averages, interpersonal skills, backgrounds in writing and tutoring, and interest in helping other students. In addition to the general search for potential Fellows, the Coordinator solicits nominations of well-qualified candidates from Faculty members and Fellows. Prospective Fellows apply in their sophomore or junior year, and if chosen, typically serve until they graduate.

Training
Successful applicants enroll in English 316 “Peer Tutoring and Advanced Composition,” an advanced composition course with a focus on responding to writing at the college level. Students receive training in peer tutoring through the study of composition theory, hands-on experience with peer editing and conferencing, and several writing projects. The course prepares students to tutor peers at many stages of the writing process. In addition, they learn how to meet the many different needs of students on writing projects typically used in the academic world: exposition, analysis, argumentation, and research. Students who complete this course with a B+ or higher are invited to serve as Writing Fellows in the fall. Fellows are normally accepted to hold Fellowships through
graduation, though accommodations are made to provide time off for student teaching, a senior thesis, or a semester abroad. English 316 fulfills the College of Arts & Science second writing requirement **only** for students who currently have 60 earned credit hours or more.

**Standard and Expanded Fellowships**
The Writing Fellows Program offers Fellows a choice of two different fellowships. The Standard Fellowship pays $250 per semester, and involves roughly 30 hours of work over the semester. This fellowship is based upon the workload of a fellow working with one half of the students in a typical honors Colloquium course. In this scenario, the Fellow spends half an hour commenting on each student's paper and half an hour meeting with him in conference. This cycle is repeated three times during a semester, once for each of the Colloquium's written assignments. This yields a total of 30 hours.

Expanded Fellowships pay $500 per semester, and involve roughly 60 hours of work. This Fellowship's workload is based upon the time required for a Fellow to work with an entire Colloquium course.

**Mentoring**
Students in English 316 are assigned a Writing Fellow mentor, who helps acclimate them into the Writing Fellow Program and serves as a tutor for English 316 writing assignments. Mentors are asked to meet informally with their mentee, discuss revisions of three writing assignments, attend at least one Writing Fellows Program meeting together, arrange for the mentee to observe them in tutoring sessions, and observe their mentee in tutoring sessions.

In the WF program, mentors should strive for three main goals; to comfortably ease mentees into a friendly circle of Fellows, to teach mentees what Fellowing is really like, and to help mentees become better writers. Ideally, the process will be a two-way street, and friends can be made along the way. To this end, here are a few tips for both mentees and mentors:

- **Show up on time.** Nothing says respect and courtesy less than "Oh, sorry. Have you been waiting here for the whole hour?"
- **Don't get in a rut.** Mentors, show off the Honors Center and other cool spots around campus, not just your personal table at Brew-Ha-Ha.
- **Be honest.** Mentors, if you haven't had time to read that ten page essay, don't fake it. Mentees, if you didn't have time to write that ten-page essay, 'fess up. It's not like we've never done it ourselves.
- **Talk about writing-as-a-process.** When you think about it, it's a pretty revolutionary idea and part of the mentor-mentee dynamic is to encourage new advocates for the writing process. If there's something you think is stupid about it, talk about that. Maybe you can come up with a practical solution.
- **Don't just talk about writing-as-a-process.** As exciting as the field is, it can sometimes be more productive to talk about stress on both sides. Mentors should be there for mentees who want to blow off steam, but mentees should be a resource for support and encouragement, too. Peers are easier to talk to.
• Be a resource. Mentors, your experiences at UD can help mentees figure out what they can do with their education here. There are more opportunities than meet the eye. Mentees, your experiences are just as valuable because they should help mentors shape the WF program to better fit its goals.

DIFFERENT WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAMS

Traditional Colloquium
The traditional role for a Writing Fellow is assisting Honors Colloquium classes. Such classes are usually composed of 20 honors students. They are taught by some of the most talented faculty on campus, and focus on a variety of interdisciplinary subjects.

Standard Fellowships involve working with about ten students. The Fellow should expect to spend about half of an hour fellowing each student’s paper and another half hour meeting with the student. This process takes place three times a semester, corresponding with three assigned class papers. Expanded Fellowships involve working with an entire colloquium (20 students).

Writing Center
Fellows assigned to the Writing Center join an established staff of experienced tutors who offer drop-in tutoring to students from across the university campus. For more information on the Writing Center, see www.english.udel.edu/wc/.

McNair Scholars
The McNair Scholars program (www.udel.edu/mcnair/scholars.html) provides a comprehensive array of services (research opportunities, mentoring, graduate school application seminars, tutoring, counseling, summer internships, etc.) to minority students designed to facilitate each participant's graduation and ultimate enrollment in doctoral programs. Roughly 20 students are enrolled in the program at a given time.

Fellows assigned to the McNair program work closely with the program coordinator, Maria Palacas, and help students with a variety of assignments, including research proposals, graduate school applications and regular class papers. The style of tutoring varies with each project assigned to the Fellow by the McNair coordinator, but in general Fellows should expect an experience more like that of the Writing Center Fellow than that of a Fellow assigned to a traditional colloquium. Typically, the Fellow makes himself available to students for paper conferences without having read students’ papers beforehand.

The McNair Scholars program offers Fellows unique challenges and opportunities, including the chance to work with a diverse group of students (all minority students) with a wide variety of writing assignments.
**Other Opportunities**

Fellows have recently worked with introductory English 110 classes, as well as Honors capstone courses. Typically, Fellows assigned to English 110 classes work on a consulting basis (much like Fellows do at the Writing Center). Students are encouraged to contact the Fellow if they would like help with their papers, but there is no formal requirement. Often, Fellows are assigned to a large number of students, because typically only a handful of the students regularly seek out writing assistance. Fellows do not necessarily have an opportunity to read and comment on students’ papers before conferencing with them. Fellows in the past have often engaged in E-tutoring, receiving a student’s paper via e-mail, and exchanging comments electronically with him/her.

Fellows assigned to an Honors Capstone course, or to any other course, find their job to be similar to a position at the Writing Center, though their clients are confined to the students in the class. Again, students’ use of the Fellow is usually voluntary and Fellows do not necessarily have an opportunity to read and comment on students’ papers before conferencing with them.

**WORKING WITH FACULTY**

**Collaboration Is the Key**

Collaboration with a faculty member is a fundamental part of the Writing Fellow’s experience. A Fellow might feel nervous or intimidated by the idea of working closely with a faculty member, but it helps to remember that these professors have chosen to work with the Fellows Program. In doing so, they welcome the opportunity to incorporate the writing process, and a Fellow’s crucial involvement in it, into their courses. The Fellow and the faculty member must work together to ensure a rewarding semester for everyone involved. (Please note: The following suggestions are modeled on the traditional colloquium Fellowship, but are applicable to most Fellow-faculty arrangements.)

**Opening the Lines of Communication**

Upon receiving your Fellowship assignment, contact your faculty member by phone or email (sometimes it is necessary to do both) to introduce yourself and arrange a meeting. This initial contact should take place as early in the semester as possible.

**The Initial Meeting**

For many Fellows, this is the first time they meet the faculty they will work with. For some, the Fellow-faculty interaction might be a new dynamic in an old relationship. In either case, the Initial Meeting is a chance to get a feel for a faculty member’s personal teaching style and to make a good impression. (Remember, each Fellow represents the program as a whole!)
Here are some suggestions for the initial meeting:

- Ask about the faculty member’s semester goals for the course as a whole and the collaboration with the Fellows Program. Talk about your own goals and work with your faculty member to establish a combined vision for the semester.
- Ask about the professor’s philosophy of or thoughts on the writing process and a Fellow’s involvement in it. Describe your personal thoughts on writing and the mission of the Writing Fellows Program.
- Ask for a copy of the course syllabus. (If you cannot get one at this time, try to address the following items informally.)
- Arrange a time for you to meet the class.
- If it seems necessary, urge your faculty member to stress your usefulness to the class.

**Reviewing the Syllabus**

Discussing the syllabus is a crucial step towards a rewarding experience for all:

- Make sure the syllabus gives you enough time to fulfill your Writing Fellow duties without throwing the rest of your busy life out of whack! Talk to your faculty member to arrange a schedule that works for both of you.
- If the syllabus includes the writing assignments, read this information as a student would. Ask for clarifications and expectations- this might help the professor sharpen or alter an assignment, which could help you and your students in turn. If the assignments are not on the syllabus, ask about the professor’s plans or ideas.
- Discuss your role as a Fellow in each assignment. You might be leading brainstorming sessions, reading drafts, assisting research, etc.
- Try to assess the professor’s willingness to accept deviations from an assignment’s proposed guidelines.
- Be sure to look over the whole syllabus, especially the grading policy, so you understand your students’ situation.

**During the Semester**

You might want to meet or email before each assignment to discuss any changes or developments in the assignment and make logistical arrangements as needed. When you are in the midst of a paper/assignment cycle, don’t be afraid to bring questions to the professor.

After each cycle, try to meet or email with the professor to discuss the results of the assignment or problems that arose.

**End of the Semester**

This is always a busy time, but a final meeting or email can help you and your faculty member assess your experiences.

**Troubleshooting**

Even in the best arrangements, Fellows can have difficulty interacting with faculty. In most cases, open, honest, and tactful communication between you and your faculty
member can alleviate stress and discomfort. Here are some issues a Writing Fellow might come across:

- A faculty member is hard to reach or find.
- An assignment is vague or awkward.
- A faculty member repeatedly urges a Fellow to address content or grammar in students’ work.
- A faculty member displays dissatisfaction with a Fellow when students’ writing does not seem drastically improved over the course of a semester.
- Students complain extensively to a Fellow about the professor. (Remember, students often feel a freedom to vent frustrations to a Writing Fellow. The Fellow must determine when simple frustrations turn into serious problems.)

In most of these scenarios, a Fellow might bring concerns directly, and respectfully, to the professor. If discomfort persists after some discussion or a Fellow wants help addressing the faculty member, the Fellow can always turn to a Senior Fellow or the Coordinator for assistance. If necessary, a Senior Fellow or the Coordinator can facilitate or mediate a conversation between a Fellow and a faculty member. Ultimately, communication is the key to a successful semester!

SENIOR WRITING FELLOWS

The Role of the Senior Writing Fellow

The Senior Writing Fellows are extra resources, beyond the faculty coordinator, to turn to for help with Writing Fellow issues. They help the Coordinator to stay in touch with Fellows, and likewise pass along Fellows’ concerns to the Coordinator. Fellows are expected to formally meet with their Senior Fellow three times each semester. These meetings are designed to help Fellows learn from their fellowing experience with students by sorting out what does and doesn’t work, and by troubleshooting any specific challenges they’re having. Fellows should feel free to contact the Senior Fellow with any concerns or issues they would like to discuss, and to set up additional meetings with the Senior Fellow as necessary.

Senior Writing Fellow Meetings

Senior Fellow meetings take place during or after each round of papers. Your Senior Fellow will contact you to set up a meeting time.

Before meeting with their Senior Writing Fellow, Fellows should do the following:

- Select a fellowed paper to share with the Senior Fellow. The paper could be one you feel you did a particularly good job of fellowing, one that posed a unique challenge, or even one that ended in disaster.
- Make a copy of this fellowed paper (with your written comments). You may want to make a copy for yourself as well so that you and the Senior Fellow will be on the same page when discussing it.
- Write a brief cover letter with background information for the Senior Fellow. Include the assigned topic, the professor, the reason you chose to share this
particular paper, and briefly describe your fellowing experience with this student. You might write about your initial reaction to the paper, the students’ reaction to your comments, and how the conference went.

- Please drop off the cover letter and a copy of your chosen paper in your Senior Fellow’s mailbox several days before your meeting.
- Bring any questions about specific problems you’ve encountered

**Benefits of the Writing Fellows Program**

**Stipend**
The Writing Fellowship involves a paid stipend. Fellows who hold expanded fellowships put in 60 hours with their students over the course of the semester and are paid $500. Fellows who hold standard fellowships put in 30 hours and are paid $250. Payments are made in two installments, one near the midpoint of the semester and one at the end.

**Campus Networking**
The Writing Fellows form a close intellectual community. They are drawn to becoming Fellows because of common intellectual interests, which can and often do serve as the basis for friendship and working relationships.

Here’s what some current Fellows have to say about their peers:

- “The biggest ‘perk’ of being a Writing Fellow for me is the community feel. I enjoy the other Writing Fellows. I know we are all a group of interesting, intelligent, fun people and I like recognizing familiar faces all over campus.”
- “I’m good friends with a lot of the Writing Fellows and I feel a lot of camaraderie with them all.”
- “I like all the other Writing Fellows and have always had a good time with them.”

Parties and events held at the Honors Center are often attended not only by Fellows, but also by prominent figures in the University and Honors community. Fellows have the opportunity to network with University Honors Program professors and ranking administrators at these events. They also have the chance to work with respected members of the University community by acting as Fellows for classes taught by those instructors.

**Faculty Connections**
Fellows often find that they make valuable connections with faculty members. Some Fellows use their faculty to tap into research opportunities, jobs, and summer internships. Other Fellows choose to work with a faculty member whose class they have taken in the past to maintain and deepen their relationship.

**Professional Development**
The specialized training that Fellows receive in ENGL 316 is a marketable commodity, as are the skills and experience gained by fellowing. Fellows can include this information on resumes and graduate/professional school applications.
In addition to the experience gained directly by fellowing, many Fellows participate in regional and national conferences where they have the ability to run and attend workshops and network with professionals in the field.

Some current Fellows can attest to this:

- “The biggest perk of being a Writing Fellow is being able to put it on my resume and getting a job as a result.”
- “I felt really empowered after presenting the results of my research at the National Conference of Peer Tutoring in Writing.”