



the WORD

NEWSLETTER FROM WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM (WAC) PROGRAM

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WAC EVENTS SPRING 2013

Watch out for these upcoming events!

Presentation: The Art of Scientific Writing

We are planning a presentation that will focus on ways to write in the sciences.

STAR Workshop: Student E-mail, Study Skills, & Time Management

Writing Fellows are designing a workshop for students about adjusting to life as a college student. Workshop will cover tips on effectively communicating with faculty and staff members.

Workshop for Juniors applying to CUNY Pipeline Program

Writing Fellows are designing a workshop for students to help with the application process & personal statements.

CUNY Pipeline: Get Ready for Graduate School

By: Arnaud Gerspacher

The Writing Fellows are involved with helping students apply to the CUNY Pipeline Program, an opportunity for juniors to prepare them for graduate work. Organized by the Office of Educational Opportunity and Diversity Program at the Graduate Center, this program aims to nurture and develop under-represented groups with ambitions for pursuing a Ph.D. in any discipline (excluding law and medicine). **The six-week program (June-July) offers courses and research projects, workshops on how to apply to graduate school and study for the GRE. Financial aid (\$4,600) covers the cost of graduate applications fees and the cost of taking the GRE. The deadline to apply to the Pipeline Program is March 7th.**

Where do the Writing Fellows come in? We hope to be a pipeline to the Pipeline, working with students through in-class workshops and individually during office hours. All students encouraged to apply to the program are welcome to be advised on how to write their personal statements and project proposals. Having gone through the graduate school process ourselves we hope to convey solid and helpful advice.

For more information on the Pipeline Program see <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/oedp> or email oadpmail@gc.cuny.edu.

Pathways and WAC

By: Jonathan Hall

Everyone on the York campus is certainly aware that CUNY's Pathways initiative is bringing rapid change to our general education curriculum, with initial implementation scheduled for the Fall 2013 semester. But faculty and students may be less aware of the impact of these changes on our writing intensive courses.

Because some courses that students have relied upon for lower-level WI credit are no longer part of the general education requirements, students may find it more difficult to fulfill their graduation requirements. Therefore, our request to faculty and departments is to consider offering more lower-level writing intensive courses, either as an elective to attract more students to your department's offerings, or, if you have a flexible core general education course, to designate some or all sections as WI. This can be done on an ad hoc, semester-by-semester basis (some sections may be WI and others not). Faculty who wish to offer writing intensive sections should consult with their department chair before submitting.

Our comprehensive faculty handbook for teaching writing intensive courses, as well as other resources for WAC faculty, may be found on the WAC website at <http://www.york.cuny.edu/wac/for-faculty>.

NOTE THAT THE PROPOSAL DEADLINE FOR AD HOC WRITING INTENSIVE COURSES FOR FALL 2013 AND SUMMER 2013 IS FEBRUARY 28, 2013.

The WAC Coordinator, Prof. Jonathan Hall, jhall1@york.cuny.edu x5331 is available for consultation.

Guided Paper Starters (GPS)

By: Jack Spear

If you are looking to introduce students to writing in a particular style, **Guided Paper Starters (GPS)** can be a great source of help. GPS provide information on formatting and structure both for general writing and also for writing in various disciplines, including English, Psychology, Health Education, Social Work, Nursing etc. These writing handouts guide students through the writing process and they can also be used in class.

GPS are available at the WAC website and at the Writing Center.

**Interested in working with a Writing Fellow?
Get your spring semester requests in early!
Contact Writing Fellows Coordinator Shereen Inayatulla:
sinayatulla@york.cuny.edu or ext. 5187**

WAC Fellows to Launch Workshop on Composing Student E-mails

By: Tim Susse

Despite what many students think, e-mailing is a complex writing task. The writer must consider how to format the message, address the recipient and include the necessary information to get her point across. She must also take in to account the tone of her e-mail and the expectations of the recipient regarding spelling and grammar.

The result, as many professors know, is frequently a garbled e-mail from students. Most faculty have received messages written in text language, with no identifying information and it is sometimes unclear as to why it was sent.

In response to this need, the **Writing Fellows are designing a workshop** for students about adjusting to life as a college student. The workshop will cover the role of faculty and staff at the college and how to communicate with them appropriately.

During the workshop students will learn to use appropriate e-mail addresses, include salutations and closings, and make the point of their message clear. Students will also do exercises ensuring that they know how to use correct spelling and pay close attention to the tone of any communications with faculty and staff.

The Fellows intended to launch the workshop with the STAR program this fall but, due to Superstorm Sandy, was postponed until the spring. The STAR workshop will include extra information about the development of good study skills, critical reading skills and time management.

Professors interested in giving similar workshops for their students can find materials, including Power Point slides, on the WAC website in January.



Writing fellows: Nataliya G. (left), Tim S., Jack S., Nawshin H. and Arnaud G. (photo credit) Coordinator: Shereen I. at weekly meeting.

Recap CETL Workshop: Assess, Mark, Comment or Correct?

By: Nawshin Hoque Kutub

Writing Fellows hosted a workshop for the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) titled "Assess, Mark, Comment or Correct? Responding Effectively to Student Writing." The Fellows gave a powerpoint presentation with practical examples and guidelines for:

- Correcting and assessing electronic versions of drafts which enables speedy and efficient feedback.
- Common problems with commenting.

The CETL presentation generated dialogue among faculty about their commenting and grading practices. Here are six tips discussed at the workshop for your consideration.

6 Ways of Responding to Student Writing

1. Treat it like a conversation with the student;
2. Use marginal comments that are not too short but not too long;
3. Marginalia should hone in on recurring patterns (but also intersperse positive feedback);
4. Comment at the end should synthesize marginalia, and should be no more than 3 or 4 high order errors;
5. Errors are usually more than errors – they necessitate interpretation;
6. Commenting will always be more seamless if your prompt and rubric set up successful writing.

On Writing: Tips from Great Minds

By: Nataliya Gavrilova

"To write well, express yourself like the common people, but think like a wise man."
—Aristotle

"Writing is the geometry of the soul." —Plato

"The last thing one discovers in composing a work is what to put first." —Blaise Pascal

"No tears in the writer, no tears in the reader. No surprise in the writer, no surprise in the reader." —Robert Frost

"And by the way, everything in life is writable about if you have the outgoing guts to do it, and the imagination to improvise. The worst enemy to creativity is self-doubt." —Sylvia Plath

"Research is formalized curiosity. It is poking and prying with a purpose."
—Zora Neale Hurston

"What cannot be said above all must not be silenced but written." —Jacques Derrida

"The road to hell is paved with adverbs." —Stephen King



*"The first draft of anything is S***"*
—Ernest Hemingway