



the WORD

NEWSLETTER FROM WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM (WAC) PROGRAM

WAC EVENTS FALL 2013

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 31
12:00-2:00 PM
ROOM: AC-4M04

CETL PRESENTATION
USING TECHNOLOGY
TO SUPPORT WRITING
PEDAGOGY AND
STUDENTS' WRITING

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) will feature a workshop by the Writing Fellows. The workshop offers practical strategies for using technology for brainstorming, drafting, reviewing and citation processes.

We hope to see you there!

Welcome to Our Newsletter

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) upholds the principle that writing for undergraduate students should not be an ephemeral journey ending after first-year composition. Rather, all departments and all courses can implement writing in their curriculum.

The CUNY-wide WAC program launched in 1999. The writing fellows are the emissaries of the WAC program on all CUNY campuses. Writing Fellows are advanced Doctoral Students in a wide range of disciplines. CUNY is the only institution nationwide in which Writing Fellows are graduate students, rather than undergraduates.

Writing Fellows are well prepared and ready to assist the York College community: Faculty, Adjunct Instructors, Graduate Teaching Fellows, Staff, Students, and Tutors.

Writing Fellows have also worked with the Writing Center Tutors to develop resources. They assist with WAC evaluation and analysis and in the development of proposals, reports, assessment, and materials for students. Writing Fellows participate in CUNY-wide conferences and institutes.

A Message from the New Writing Fellows

We are here to work with faculty members on an individual basis to help design effective writing activities appropriate to the instructor's discipline and approach.

In Writing Intensive (WI) courses, we often work with a faculty partner on an ongoing basis to develop exercises and materials, and offer mini-lectures or workshops on writing within the context of the course.

A Report on 'Listening Tour' Workshops



York College is part of a nationwide "Listening Tour" sponsored by the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). Our event, "Listening to Students about Writing and Reading" was organized to reach out to incoming college composition students with the aim of better understanding their writing background and expectations toward college writing education. By increasing our awareness of student profiles and expectations, we can improve college writing education. This will provide a smoother transition from high school to college and improve the writing abilities of incoming students.

We conducted three "Listening Tour" workshops on September 24; one in Professor Matthew Corcoran's ENG 125 class, one in Professor Claire Serant's ENG 125 class, and another one open to all ENG 125 students. Each session lasted around 30-40 minutes and had 20-30 student participants. The students were divided into two focus groups and the facilitator asked the students 14 open-ended questions provided by CCCC. Students

actively participated and were willing to share their prior writing experiences. Some of them even mentioned the differences and the gaps they encountered in their transition to college.

The workshops were very successful and we appreciate all the participation from faculty, students and staff. The responses from students are especially important to us to make continuous improvements and progresses in structuring a series of writing courses. A summary of national results will be released to the media on "National Day on Writing".

Summary of Student Responses

- On average, students spend 18 hours writing per week. This includes both formal writing that they do for school or workplace and informal postings on Facebook, Twitter, or other social media.
- Most frequently, students compose their writing using a laptop/desktop. However, most students still utilize the traditional writing tools, such as pen and pencil especially for taking notes in the classroom.
- Students across different disciplines consider writing an integral part of their college education and a key to future career success. They regard writing as a means to develop their critical thinking skills in their majors and prospective professions.
- Even though students spend a significant portion of their writing time on social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and blogs, they don't consider them particularly effective to enhance their formal writing skills. Instead, they recognize the importance of formal writing skills for success in their future career and are eager to learn the methods for constructing formal writing documents.

Meet the Fellows

Writing Fellows are advanced PhD students at the Graduate Center, CUNY who have won competitive fellowships to serve York faculty and students by supporting WAC activity throughout the college. This year we have six new fellows.

Nazik Dinçtopal-Deniz

Nazik Dinçtopal-Deniz is a PhD candidate in the Linguistics Program at the Graduate Center. Her dissertation study focuses on the use of prosodic and syntactic information in sentence processing routines of native speakers of Turkish. Before coming to York, she taught various courses in Linguistics at LaGuardia Community College and Queens College. She currently teaches Turkish at Columbia University. As a Writing Fellow, she will be working with faculty on Discipline- and Assignment-specific Tutoring Tools (DATTs) to provide support for tutor-student collaborations for discipline-specific writing projects. She will also be designing and implementing workshops for Cultural Diversity Program faculty who teach writing intensive courses. Nazik is the editor for the Word (Writing Across the Curriculum Program Newsletter) and she is the Style Guide coordinator. She is looking forward to collaborating with faculty and other writing fellows at York this year.



Annabel D'Souza

Annabel is a doctoral candidate in the Urban Education: Science, Math and Technology program at the Graduate Center. In her research she explores how college chemistry students engage in the social and scientific skill of argumentation to deepen content knowledge and the classroom structures that support this. Previously, she has taught science education and science courses for the past three years at Brooklyn and Hunter College, supported science and math Noyce Scholars at Brooklyn and York College, coached high school science educators through the Math and Science Partnership-PERC program and taught chemistry and physics in public NYC high schools. She has experience with implementing technology to improve the pedagogy of writing. As a Writing Fellow at York, Annabel will be maintaining the Blackboard groups, researching journals for discipline specific strategies to support writing and collaborating with faculty and other WAC Fellows to improve writing pedagogy. She will also be coordinating a CETL presentation on how to utilize technology to assist students to advance different components of writing.



Hilal Erkovan

Hilal Erkovan is a PhD candidate at CUNY Baruch College in the Industrial and Organizational Psychology. In 2008, she received her Master's degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology. She has taught a variety of psychology classes including Cognitive Psychology and History of Psychology. She has experience in planning panels on a variety of pedagogical topics including issues for new graduate student teachers, syllabus preparation, course construction, and teaching about diversity. Her research focuses on diversity at workplace and work-family conflict.



Kevin Moran

Kevin Moran is a fifth year PhD student in Sociology. His area of research is in 'desistance', which is the process by which people stop committing crime. He reckons that this is more optimistic than asking why they should start. He also taught sociology and criminology at York College for two years and is genuinely delighted to be back. As a writing fellow Kevin is working with York faculty members to establish an online publishing and networking platform for the York College community. He also works with faculty to integrate Writing Across the Curriculum practices into their teaching and course syllabi. He gave up having spare time when he signed up to do a PhD, but hopes to get his black belt in Jiu-Jitsu someday. He also plays the lottery every week.



Hallie Scott

Hallie Scott is a PhD student in Art History at the Graduate Center. Her research focuses on the incorporation of conceptual practices into art schools in the late-1960s and 1970s. Before coming to York, Hallie spent three years teaching in the Art Department at Brooklyn College. She currently directs educational programming at the Wassaic Project, a contemporary art center in Dutchess County, NY. As a Writing Fellow, she will serve as a WAC liaison to the Writing Center and a coordinator for WAC events including a CETL workshop in Spring 2014.



Debby (Chih-Huei) Su

Debby (Chih-Huei) Su is a doctoral candidate in Finance at Baruch College. She is currently working on her dissertation exploring the impact of relationship banking on corporate mergers and acquisitions. Debby has taught various classes in Economics and Finance department at Baruch College for three years. As one of writing fellows at York, she will be maintaining and developing the Writing Across the Curriculum website, coordinating workshops with the STAR program, and collaborating with professors on writing intensive course materials.



Jonathan Hall

WAC Coordinator

This semester I'm serving in both my regular role as WAC Coordinator, and as Writing Fellows Coordinator while a colleague is on leave. I really enjoy working with the Writing Fellows as they pursue various projects to help faculty, departments, and programs develop their courses, assignments, and support materials to help improve student writing at York. My role as WAC Coordinator is to monitor and assess the progress of WI courses, to advise students about WI requirements, and to promote faculty development in writing pedagogy. This year it's important to monitor the effects of the changes brought by the Pathways initiative on our Writing Intensive courses, and to think about how best to develop the WAC Program in the future. If you or your students have any questions about writing intensive courses or requirements, or if you would like to work with a Writing Fellow, please contact me at jhall1@york.cuny.edu or ext. 5331.

