

Appendix 1: Faculty Writing Fellows Program Proposal

Overview

This year, Curry College is establishing a Faculty Writing Fellows program to cultivate and support a culture of writing at Curry College. The program will support other efforts to retain and prepare students to be successful, bolster the vertical writing curriculum established through the General Education Program, and make written communication a hallmark of the Curry experience.

Fellows will take part in an intensive course during Spring 2020, led by the Reading and Writing Enrichment Coordinator (Heather Falconer). In the subsequent two (2) academic years, Fellows will serve as advisors on the teaching, response, and assessment of writing *within their discipline* for their respective departments and serve as members of the Writing Council to assess the RWE course requirements and implementation. Fellows also agree to teach at least one (1) RWE course each year for the three (3) years following, beginning in the 2020-2021 academic year¹. In return, Fellows will receive a 1 course release for the Spring 2020 semester, a Certificate of Completion to include in their DEC file, regular pedagogical and publication support, and the ability to make any course section they teach RWE (still subject to departmental, GECC, and faculty approval).

The Fellows structure is not a top-down one. We will draw on the collective knowledge of the community to determine how disciplinary differences play out in reading, writing, and critical reasoning. Understanding these differences will help our students because we will be able to articulate these differences and how they affect instructors' reading of student writing. This work will, however, be driven by scholarly literature in WAC/WID and current best practices in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL).

Fellows should either currently teach an RWE course or be interested in teaching an RWE course and may use the Fellows program to become certified to teach RWE courses, like we certify online teaching. Certification allows sufficient academic freedom for individual faculty members to run a course with an RWE enhancement without making all sections of the course RWE (subject to RWE and Gen Ed approval).

Timeline

Application Deadline: October 15, 2019 (please note that department approval is required)

Notice of Acceptance: October 21st.

Course participation: February 1, 2020 to April 31, 2020

Writing Council Service Term: August 2020 to June 2022

Part 1: Course Description

Fellows will participate in a hybrid “course,” a series of workshops and online activities specifically designed to make the reading and writing practices of their discipline explicit, as well as to provide pedagogical tools and resources for effective implementation in the classroom. Fellows will meet during the Spring 2020 semester, face-to-face twice in the months of February, March, and April, supplemented with online activities in a Blackboard course.

Workshop Module Descriptions (each 3 hours):

What is “good” writing?: Understanding disciplinary differences (*first Feb. session*)

Rooted in the who, when, where, what, and why of writing, this workshop will explore how our motives as writers are part of a system of disciplinary activity and how our experiences with these systems influence the ways we evaluate student texts. Fellows will experience and understand the significant differences in expectations students experience at Curry with regard to writing.

Critical Reasoning in the Disciplines (*second Feb. session*)

Critical Reasoning (or Critical Thinking) are terms that we hear quite a lot about in today’s academic climate, but what does it actually mean? This workshop begins by formulating a common definition of the term, followed by asking faculty to “map” what critical reasoning looks like in the field. How do they recognize good reasoning when they see it? Can they identify specific areas where students have challenges? These map and gap exercises will provide the foundation for later assignment designs.

The Reading-Writing Relationship (*first March session*)

While it is easy to see when students are struggling with writing, it isn’t always easy to see when they struggle with reading or how their reading practices are influencing their writing. This workshop will begin with a discussion of the cognitive relationship between the practices of reading and writing. This is followed by guiding faculty in activities to make their disciplinary reading practices explicit. We will practice classroom activities that will help faculty see where students are struggling in their reading of disciplinary texts, as well as those aimed at improving content retention.

Designing Effective Writing Assignments (*second March session*)

According to Melzer (2014), nearly 66% of writing assignments in college ask students to summarize content only. But what does summary actually tell us about our students’ learning? This workshop will explore the ways we can design writing assignments to see student learning (i.e., understanding content), reasoning (i.e., synthesizing information to form conclusions), and rhetorical skill (i.e., communicating as a member of the disciplinary community). We will draw on existing assignments to determine what they are asking students to do, discuss the types of writing assignments that are suitable for our specific courses, and work toward identifying a breadth of assignments that provide students an opportunity to better demonstrate what we wish to assess.

Fair Writing Assessment (*first April session*)

What makes an 'A' paper an 'A' and not a 'B'? How do we handle grammar and mechanics in student writing? What is a "fair" assessment of student writing in our disciplinary courses? At what point do we provide feedback and how much do we provide? This workshop will draw on the knowledge built in the previous workshops to clarify best practices in assessing student writing. We will investigate the intertwined nature of writing assignments with assessment practices and learn to design rubrics that streamline our grading, while also helping students understand our expectations as instructors. We will identify when formative and summative assessment strategies are most appropriate, and also discuss how common practices (like grading heavily for grammar and mechanics) can disproportionately harm certain population groups.

Multilingual Writers/Writing (*second April session*)

The work of learning to write and speak in another language is an incredibly difficult and time-consuming task. Many times, our multilingual writers are learning English as their third or fourth language and have to reconcile the linguistic structure of their other languages with one that had many hidden and illogical rules. This final workshop in the series will explore the ways in which our work with multilingual writers is different from those whose native language is English (even those who speak different dialects). We will examine the wide variety in fluency, accuracy, quality, and structure of writing between L1 and L2/3/4 writers and strategies for helping multilingual writers in our classrooms.

Part 2: Expectations of Service

After completing the course, individuals teach at least one (1) RWE course per year for three (3) years. Individuals will also serve a two-year term, during which they are expected to:

1. serve as advisors to faculty members within their respective department on the teaching, response, and assessment of writing within their discipline (e.g., assisting faculty with the drafting of new RWE proposals, discussing writing assessment practices within the department);
2. be observed in one (1) RWE course per year (by a prospective RWE instructor and/or RWE Coordinator);
3. meet as needed to provide feedback for curriculum changes, including RWE course requirements and RWE assessment;
4. share their new insights publicly, through ET dinners, Faculty Retreat, conference presentations, and publication.

Compensation

In return for their time and service, Faculty Writing Fellows will receive:

1. one (1) course release during Spring 2020;
2. a Certificate of Completion for their DEC file;
3. the ability to make any course section they teach RWE (regardless of whether other sections are designated as such);
4. ongoing support from the RWE Coordinator in publication and presentation opportunities related to writing studies (i.e., articles on teaching writing for disciplinary trade journals);
5. ongoing support from the RWE Coordinator for testing these same pedagogical principles in introductory/First-Year courses.

Faculty Writing Fellow Application

Return completed applications by 8:00 am, October 15, 2019 to Heather Falconer, RWE Coordinator.

Name:

Signature:

Department:

Rank:

Department Chair Signature:

The Faculty Writing Fellows program requires the following commitment:

1. Participation in a workshop series during the Spring 2020 semester (meetings times TBD). In terms of rigor, this workshop will be on par with a graduate-level course;
2. Teach one (1) RWE course per year for three (3) years (August 2020 to May 2023);
3. From August 2020 to May 2022:
 - a. serve as an advisor to faculty members within your respective department on the teaching, response, and assessment of writing;
 - b. be observed in one (1) RWE course per year (by a prospective RWE instructor and/or RWE Coordinator);
 - c. meet as needed to provide feedback for curriculum changes, including RWE course requirements and RWE assessment;
4. It is also anticipated that you will share, as appropriate, new insights publicly through ET dinners, Faculty Retreat, conference presentations, and publication.

In return for your time and service, you will receive:

1. one (1) course release during Spring 2020;
2. a Certificate of Completion for your DEC file;
3. the ability to make any course section you teach RWE (regardless of whether other sections are designated as such – subject to departmental, GECC, and faculty approval);
4. ongoing support from the RWE Coordinator in publication and presentation opportunities related to writing studies (i.e., articles on teaching writing for disciplinary trade journals);
5. ongoing support from the RWE Coordinator for testing these same pedagogical principles in introductory/First-Year courses.

Please answer the following questions on a separate page and attach to this cover sheet:

1. In no more than 350 words, please tell us why you are interested in participating in this program. Are there particular tools, techniques, pedagogical strategies, etc., that you are hoping to acquire? In what ways, if at all, are you looking to expand the use of writing within your courses and/or department?
2. At the time of application, which courses do you think you might like to enhance?