

Instructor: Kristina Aikens  
Email: [Kristina.Aikens@tufts.edu](mailto:Kristina.Aikens@tufts.edu)

Phone: 617-627-4329  
Office: 720 Dowling Hall (ARC)

## Writing Fellowship Seminar

(EXP-0007-F) Fall 2011

Wednesdays, 6-8:30pm

### Course Description:

Congratulations on being chosen as a Writing Fellow! This course introduces you, as new Writing Fellows, to the practice of tutoring writing in the academy by providing opportunities to explore various approaches to writing and tutoring. The three-fold primary goals of the course are to provide:

- 1) an introduction to some of the theories and debates in the field of peer tutoring
- 2) practical exercises designed to develop tutoring skills appropriate to the needs of different writers, as well as awareness of your own writing process and tutoring style
- 3) a community of writers and a forum for discussing the challenges and rewards of specific fellowing experiences

In order to meet these goals, you will be asked to: read theoretical articles about tutoring writing; participate in class activities and discussions on topics related to tutoring and writing; collaborate and cooperate with fellow Fellows; and reflect regularly, both verbally and in writing, on your experiences with writing and tutoring.

### Course Requirements (to be explained in detail):

- participation and attendance
- careful reading of course texts
- regular blog posts and responses to others' posts
- essay (and drafts of essay) on "My Life as a Writer/Reader"
- written response to in-class mock fellowing session
- written observation of an experienced Writing Fellow
- written reflection on meeting with a Writing Fellow or Graduate Writing Consultant
- email "fellowing" of Boston Latin students
- two group presentations: grammatical concept and writing in the disciplines
- at least one midterm meeting with Kristina outside of class

**Course texts:** *A Tutor's Guide: Helping Writers One to One*, ed. Ben Raforth (bookstore)  
*A Pocket Style Manual*, Diana Hacker (provided at Orientation)  
*Writing Fellows Program Handbook* for 2011-2012 (provided at Orientation)  
Additional handouts (provided when assigned)

**Grading:** This course is graded Pass/Fail, with very high standards for a Pass. You are expected to perform at your highest ability. In order to pass the class, you must complete all assignments, and you may not miss more than three classes. It is possible to fail the class, and your performance in the class (even with a passing grade) does affect both your continuation in the program and consideration for future positions of leadership.

## **About the Course Requirements**

**Attendance and Participation:** Participation includes engaged and respectful contribution to class discussion, regular blog entries, preparation of readings, full involvement in group presentations and other class activities, and timely completion of assignments. In order to create a supportive community of writers and tutors in the course and the Writing Fellows program overall, your participation and collaboration is vital. You are responsible for the content of any missed classes, and more than three absences may result in a failing grade.

**Readings:** The readings for this course are designed to provide a solid background in the practical aspects, philosophies, and debates current to tutoring theory. Such readings allow us to have a shared vocabulary as Writing Fellows and provide a basis for navigating new situations and developing your own philosophies about and approaches to tutoring.

**Blog:** You will write weekly blog posts (at least 250 words each) reflecting on the readings or related topics. In addition, you will interact with others through writing, most commonly by responding to others' blog posts, which helps create a community beyond the classroom.

**“My Life as a Writer/Reader” essay:** What would a class about tutoring writing be without some actual writing? In addition to the Observation essay (described below), you will draft, receive feedback on, and revise a 4-6 page essay about your experiences and development as a writer and reader. You will also write a reflection on the experience of being “fellowed” in class.

**Observation of an Experienced Writing Fellow:** One of the most important parts of pedagogical training is observing experienced teachers/tutors in action. To this end, you will observe an experienced Writing Fellow conducting a session and then write about your findings in a formal observation essay. To contextualize the observation, you should use our readings and class discussions, and you may also wish to observe more than one session or more than one Fellow.

**Visit to a Writing Fellow or Graduate Writing Consultant:** If you are enrolled in a Writing Fellows class, you will meet with your Writing Fellow. If you are not enrolled in a WF class, you must make an appointment with a Graduate Writing Consultant to discuss a paper you are writing for a class or other project. In each case, you will write a reflection on the experience.

**Group Presentations on Grammar:** Although most time spent working with students on their writing focuses on “higher order” issues such as argumentation, logic, structure, and organization, fellowees invariably ask questions about grammar. Each group will prepare a short, engaging presentation on a grammar topic that demonstrates both an understanding of the concept and the ability to clarify it for a non-expert. Presentations must be approved in advance.

**Email “Fellowing” of Boston Latin students:** You will be assigned two seniors from Boston Latin high school and will write a letter of feedback to their college application essays.

**Meeting:** You are required to meet with Kristina outside of class at least once, mid-semester. Please feel free to make additional appointments to see me beyond this required meeting if you ever wish to discuss your experiences in the course or as a Writing Fellow!

## SCHEDULE

Notes: Schedule is subject to change. All readings are from *A Tutor's Guide (TG)* unless otherwise noted.

### Sept 7      Metaphors and Perfectionism

**Readings:** “Shitty First Drafts,” “Perfectionism” by Anne Lamott (handout)

**Blog:** Post reflections on your writing identity

### Sept 14      The Art of Tutoring: Prevailing Philosophies

**Read:** “Minimalist Tutoring” by Jeff Brooks (handout; also available at:  
<http://writinglabnewsletter.org/archives/v15/15-6.pdf>)

“Responding to Student Writing” by Nancy Sommers (handout)

“Revision Strategies of Student Writers and Experienced Adult Writers”  
by Nancy Sommers (handout)

“What Line? I didn’t see any Line” by Molly Wingate (*TG*, 9-16)

**Due:** First draft of essay (4-6 pages) about My Life as a Writer/Reader

**Bring:** Bring to class: 1) two hard copies of your essay and 2) a copy of one of  
your papers with a professor’s comments

**Blog:** Post your reflections on the readings

**Note:** Read your partner’s draft and email a response by noon on Sept 21

### Sept 21      Revising and Following a Fellow Fellow

**Readings:** “Setting the Agenda for the Next Thirty Minutes,” William Macauley (*TG*, 1-8)

“Organizing Ideas: Focus is the Key” by Alice L. Trupe (*TG* 98-106)

“Helping Writers to Write Analytically” by Ben Raforth (*TG* 107-114)

**Due:** **BY NOON TODAY email response to your draft partner** (be sure to  
read the response you receive before class as well)

**Bring:** 1) copy of draft, 2) notes for your following session, 3) hard copy of your email  
response to your draft partner

**In class:** Following sessions

**Blog:** Post your reflections on the readings (optional: you may also post all or part of  
your essay to share (or you can post revision at a later date)

### Sept. 28      Encountering Resistance and Other Difficult Situations; Session Notes

**Readings:** “(Non) Meeting of the Minds: A Study in Frustration” by Nicole Kraemer  
Munday (*TG* 17-22)

“Talk to Me: Engaging Reluctant Writers” by Muriel Harris (*TG* 23-33)

“Tutoring in Emotionally Charged Situations” by Corinne Agostinelli,  
Helena Poch, and Elizabeth Santoro (*TG* 34-40)

**Due:** Reflection on in-class mock following experience

**Blog:** Post reflections on readings and/or vignettes

*Individual meetings with Kristina between 10/5 and 10/26*

### Oct. 5      Public Speaking Workshop; Using Research and Writing in the Disciplines

**Readings:** “Using Others’ Words: Quoting, Summarizing, and Documenting Sources”  
by Mary Mortimore Dossin (*TG* 159-165)

**In class:** Guest speakers: Megan Stahl and Michael Lueger

**Blog:** Reflections on writing with research and/or writing in your discipline

**Oct. 12**      Grammar for Tutoring: Questions of Style

**Readings:**      “Can You Proofread this?” by Beth Rapp Young (*TG* 140-158, including appendices)

**Due:**              Final, revised version of “My Life as a Writer/Reader” essay (hard copy)

**Bring:**            Bring to class: 1) an example of good writing (published or not, by you or not) and 2) a copy of an academic paper you have written

**Blog:**            Post reflection on personal relationship to style and/or grammar before class; after class, post write-up of paramedic method exercise

**Note:**            **Group grammar presentations begin this week.** Groups presenting this week must have already received Kristina’s approval on their presentation.

**Oct. 19**      The American Academy: Working with Non-Native Speakers of English

**Readings:**      “Crossing Cultures With International ESL Writers: The Tutor as Contact Zone Contact Person” by Carol Severino (*TG* 41-53)  
“Guilt Free Tutoring: Rethinking How We Tutor Non-Native-English-Speaking Students” by Susan Blau and John Hall (handout)

**In class:**        Watch videos of students talking about writing in different countries

**Blog:**            Post reflections on readings

**Oct 26**      Complications: Style, Creativity, and Tutoring Advanced Students

**Readings:**      “Is there a Creative Writer in the House? Tutoring to Enhance Creativity and Engagement” by Wendy Bishop (*TG* 74-84)

“A Balancing Act of Efficiency and Exploration: Tutoring Writers in Advanced Classes” by Pavel Zemliansky (*TG* 85-97)

“Tutoring in Unfamiliar Subjects” by Alexis Greiner (*TG* 115-120)

**Blog:**            Post reflections on reading

**Nov 2**      Complications: Voice and Power

**Readings:**      “De-Centering Student Centeredness” by Catherine G. Latterell (handout)

“Transgressive Hybridity: Reflections on the Authority of the Peer Writing Tutor” by Jason Palmeri (handout; also available at <http://www.writinglabnewsletter.com/archives/v25/25.1.pdf>)

**Blog:**            Post reflections on readings

**Nov 9**      Complications: Voice and Power, continued

**Readings:**      “The Death of the Profane” by Patricia Williams (handout)

**Due:**            Worksheet on “The Death of the Profane”

**Nov. 16**      Complications: Working With Advanced Students, continued  
**Readings:**    Continued from previous weeks  
**In Class:**     Workshop of well-written essays  
**Due:**            Observation of an Experienced Fellow (if you haven't already turned it in) and  
                      Reflection on meeting with a WF or GWC (if you haven't already turned it in)

**Nov. 23**      Thanksgiving week  
                      No class—enjoy your break!

**Nov. 30**      Complications: Working With Students with Disabilities and Learning  
                      Differences; Referring Students to Resources; Fellowing Forum  
**In class:**      Visit from ARC staff

**Dec 7**         Fellowing Forum  
**In class:**      Discussions of fellowing experiences and colloquium; wrap up  
**Blog:**            Post final reflections on fellowing experiences and/or class