Graduate Assistant Handbook
Department of English Writing Program
Portland State University
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Welcome to the Portland State University Department of English Writing Program! You have been selected to teach and tutor in our program because we are convinced of your potential to be an excellent teacher. We trust you to make principled decisions in all you do. In turn, we will work to provide the best support system we can to help you in your efforts.

This handbook will provide you with an overview of who we are, how the program is organized, and what you can expect in your new job. The information, guidelines, and policies that follow are here for your reference. As you teach for us, questions will occur to you about what to do, when, or what might be most appropriate or most effective in handling any number of instructional or professional issues. We hope you will find useful answers here—or at least a starting point for answers. If this handbook works as it should, it will help make your experience teaching for us a smooth and positive one and it should make the classes and tutorials that undergraduates take from us the best we can offer.

Special thanks to the University of Minnesota and the University of Massachusetts, Amherst for ideas drawn from their handbooks.
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Overview and Program Information

Mission Statement of the Writing Program

The Writing Program’s mission is to enact the English Department’s mission of promoting writing in all its forms—professional and technical writing, creative writing, basic literacy—as well as the reading and critical interpretation of texts. Our mission includes explicitly connecting writing with the reading, interpretation, and the production of texts. In making writing, reading, critical thinking, and effective assessment central curricular components of all of our classes and our outreach, we help the University create a democratic citizenry that is fully capable of responding thoughtfully to diversity, conflict, and potentially volatile public issues.

What’s the Writing Program like?

Overall, PSU’s English department writing programs and course offerings have expanded to include creative writing in fiction, nonfiction and poetry, in addition to technical writing, publishing and many other kinds of writing. The writing program that you will be working in, however, is focused mainly on academic writing, thus it includes a variety of general and specialized lower and upper division courses in different aspects of academic writing and both the Writing Center and the Writing Intensive Course program.

Our Students

Our common concern is to provide PSU students with the best instruction in writing that we can. We want to give them “portable skills” that they can take with them to other classes, to the workplace, and to their personal lives. They need our help to write at the college level. Since writing is the primary means of examination in college, their ability to write will in great part determine if they succeed in school. Of course, we can’t do everything in one tutorial session or in one course, but we can move our students significantly further along in their development as writers.

We work with an interesting and varied group of students. PSU is an urban school, and as such, serves a wide variety of needs in the Portland community. Of its twenty-two thousand undergraduates, many are first-generation college students, the first in their families to attend college. Many transfer to PSU from other schools. In fact, PSU has so many transfer patterns that one person tried to count them all and stopped at fifty-seven. Some students transfer in from community colleges or private schools and some even take classes simultaneously from both our institution and one or two others. Other students start out at PSU, knowing from the start that they intend to transfer out in a year or two. Though many students are typical college-age, many others are older students, with some even retirement age. Our students are as diverse as Portland itself, representing a variety of ethnicities and races. But, in particular, PSU has a large “non-native speaker population,” that is, international students from around the world who come here to study and newly American students who emigrated here from other countries. Most students work part-time, and so are juggling the demands of school and work. And they enroll in a variety of majors from art to engineering. The seven thousand graduate students, too, come from a variety of fields and backgrounds and also need help with writing in their disciplines.
You will find too a varied set of writing needs and abilities in the students. Some will write better than you do, while others need help with the basics. Most will fall somewhere in between. Most GAs agree that the PSU students are a rewarding group to work with—open, friendly, appreciative, and willing to tackle the activities we devise for them.

Writing Requirements at PSU

PSU is unlike many schools that require students to take several freshman writing courses or one freshman writing course and one upper division writing course in order to graduate. Instead, here students enroll in an innovative four-year cross-disciplinary program known as University Studies (UNST), in which writing; critical thinking, technical literacy, and numerical literacy are integrated into UNST courses. The English department assists instructors and students in University Studies in a variety of ways—by holding faculty workshops, holding workshops for students in UNST classes, tutoring their students in the writing center, leading intensive tutorials through WR 199 for UNST students in the writing center, and other ways. Students also practice writing through the Writing-Intensive Course Program (WIC) in which courses designated writing-intensive have a graduate assistant who helps with informal and formal writing. And, students may take writing courses in their major and/or in our department.

How then do we define the English department writing program since writing is not mandatory? We see ourselves as writing specialists who offer a variety of general and specialized courses, studios, tutorials, and workshops for students and those instructional units (departments, schools, programs) who want them. Our writing courses are taken by students who feel they need a course in order to learn to write well, or who think they may need it for transferring to another institution or for future employment, or whose major unit requires one or more writing courses. (See Appendix 2 “Writing Across the Curriculum at PSU”.)

What Our Courses Do

To fulfill our mission, we give students “portable skills” that they can take with them to other writing situations. Classes are primarily student-centered with much active learning and opportunity to write formally and informally; instructor lectures are likely to be “mini-lectures” with more instructor energy going to facilitating active learning and writing. Other courses are more specialized in focus. We start from the premise of respect for our students and a willingness to work with them in order to help them grow as writers, readers, and literate citizens of our community.

The following features characterize all our writing courses:

1. Break down each writing assignment to include activities supporting invention, revision, and editing.
2. Use group work and/or pair work at all stages to encourage invention, revision, and editing; also to provide a peer audience.
3. Provide lots of written and oral responses to student writing both from the teacher, other students, and the writer himself or herself at the various stages of the process.
4. Emphasize writer reflections on writing through reflective memos.
5. Feature multiple drafts and opportunities for revision.
6. Provide writing opportunities in a variety of genres; material and audience determine what is an appropriate genre.
7. Focus special attention to the rhetorical context, that is, the audience, persona, and purpose for the writing.
8. Give attention to appropriate textual conventions of the final product.
9. Encourage mechanical correctness, grammar, sentence level work during the editing stage of the process; but not a major part of the course.
10. Make critical readings a part of the course, but as a point of departure only, not as the main feature of the course or as models for imitation.
11. Offer samples of both student texts and professional texts used not as models but as samples of approaches to rhetorical problems and needs.
12. Feature the old modes of discourse (description, argumentation, etc.) as processes when breaking down an assignment, rather than as rigid forms.

So long as individual instructors work within the above framework, you are encouraged to develop your own writing assignments, activities, and readings. Not every instructor has to do the same thing on Tuesday and Thursday, so long as we share the features of this common approach.

Regular Academic Writing Courses Offered by the Writing Program

WR 115 Introduction to College Writing (4)
A writing course for lower division students who need additional time to practice college writing; includes the same features as WR 121, but offers a more intensive focus on building confidence, finding a voice, and understanding academic conventions. Includes individual attention and individual goal-setting; can be helpful for students who do not feel ready for the writing required by FRINQ or by WR 121.

WR 121 College Writing (4)
A writing course for lower division students, in which students develop critical thinking abilities by reading and writing, increase their rhetorical strategies, practice writing processes, and learn textual conventions. Includes formal and informal writing; responding to a variety of readings, sharing writing with other students, and revising individual pieces for a final portfolio of work; can be helpful for students who could benefit from a writing course rather than taking just FRINQ alone.

WR 211 Writing Practice (4)
A writing course for lower division students, particularly sophomores who wish to work on their writing skills at their own pace through an individualized writing program. Writing processes, peer workshops, and one-to-one conferences aid students in realizing their goals. For SINQ students or those who have taken FRINQ or WR 121.

WR 222 Writing Research Papers (4)
A writing course that focuses on writing and research processes. Since so much of the writing that students do in the academy involves secondary research, this course deals comprehensively with
finding and narrowing topics, locating materials, integrating secondary research with one’s own text, and more. Can be helpful for students in lower division to mid-career who are looking for a course that focuses specifically on research writing.

**WR 227 Introduction to Technical Writing (4)**

A writing course that provides practical experience in forms of technical communication, emphasizing basic organization and presentation of technical information. Focuses on strategies for analyzing the audience and its information needs.

**WR 323 Writing as Critical Inquiry (4)**

A writing course for upper division students, which offers sophisticated approaches to writing and reading. Students enhance critical thinking abilities by reading and writing challenging material, refine their rhetorical strategies, practice writing processes with special attention to revision and style, and write and read in a variety of genres. Includes formal and informal writing, sharing writing with other students, and preparing a final portfolio of work. Can be helpful for upper division students who need or want additional writing practice in academic writing at a fairly sophisticated level.

**WR 333 Advanced Writing (4)**

An expository writing course for upper division students who have taken FRINQ or two other writing courses and who want additional writing practice, perhaps for writing senior papers or for preparation for work or graduate school. Essay writing at a sophisticated level.

**Specialized Academic Writing Courses Offered by the Writing Program**

**WR 115 and WR 121 College Writing for International Students (4)**

Created specifically for international, ESL or ENNR students, it is identical to regular sections of WR 115 and WR 121, but is also designed to address the special cultural needs that students may have in adjusting to North American academic writing. If you have a student in your class who is having significant writing and perhaps speaking problems, you can recommend this course.

**WR 200 Writing about Literature (4)**

An introductory writing course for lower division students studying literature in English or foreign language departments. It covers the reading and interpretation of texts, critical approaches, the conventions of writing about literature, and documentation. Also ways of integrating formal research into a written analysis of literature. Uses a portfolio approach with special attention paid to writing processes, peer review in workshops.
WR 210 Grammar Refresher (2)

A writing course for students who wish to refresh their grammar skills. Using informal and formal writing, it focuses on parts of speech, sentence construction, and punctuation; tracking particular grammar problems; and learning to edit.

WR 300 Specialized Topics in Rhetoric and Composition (4)

Study of a variety of issues in the practice of rhetoric and composition. Includes such topics as writing and critical reasoning, writing with technology, and writing in the disciplines. May be repeated for credit with different topics.

WR 323 Writing as Critical Inquiry for International Students (4)

Created specifically for international, ESL, or ENNR students, it is identical to regular sections of WR 323, but is also designed to address the special cultural needs that students may have in adjusting to North American academic writing. For upper division students who may need additional writing practice and reflection on cultural practices in academic writing.

WR 324 Advanced Writing about Literature (4)

For upper division students studying literature in English or foreign language departments. It covers advanced issues in reading and interpreting literary texts, critical approaches, and the conventions of writing about literature, including documentation. Emphasizes writing and research processes, includes peer workshops.

WR 394 Writing Jobs for English Majors (4)

A community based learning course for English majors who want to practice writing on the job and to plan how to use their English major to get a job. Students volunteer in the community, learn about and practice public relations writing and writing on the job, and share writing and community experiences with one another. Beyond that, they will get first-hand experience in performing community service for a nonprofit organization. If there are social causes that students care about, they can use their writing to make a difference. Speakers who were themselves English majors and now have found careers in which they use their degrees will also share their strategies and experiences. For students who are wondering what in the world to do with their English major. Special attention to every student’s concerns, with each student completing the course with a career path in mind.

WR 399U Writing and the Nineteenth Century (4)

This course also fulfills one course requirement for the Nineteenth Century Junior Cluster as well as the Freedom, Privacy and Technology Junior Cluster. Among authors to be studied are Marx and Engels, Whitman, Wordsworth, Perkins Gilman, Darwin, Thoreau, Chekhov and others. The Nineteenth Century was a vibrant time in which voices for social change realized in the twentieth century took root. Reading and writing about these materials will make students aware of how it is a time fully alive in the present.
WR 212 Introduction to Fiction Writing
WR 213 Introduction to Poetry Writing
WR 214 Introduction to Nonfiction Writing
ENG 100 Introduction to Literature
WR 199 Tutorials for FRINQ students

Students in Freshman Inquiry who need extra help with their writing can sign up to work with a writing consultant for one hour each week of a quarter. The tutor helps them set goals, meet the demands of their FRINQ course, and generally progress as writers. Each quarter the student earns one credit.

Learning Outcomes

All of our writing courses have learning outcome goals. What follows is an example of learning outcomes for a WR 121 class.

Writing 121 College Writing

Writing 121 serves as an introduction to college-level writing for freshman and sophomore students. Using both formal and informal writing, students increase their rhetorical knowledge, develop critical thinking abilities by reading and writing, practice writing processes, and learn various textual conventions. Activities are collaborative and participatory, with peer workshops providing opportunities for students to share reading and writing with one another. Both formal and informal writing are included, with formal writing to total 12-15 pages.

As an introduction to general expository writing, students should leave with portable skills they can transfer to other academic, professional, and personal writing situations.

Student outcomes from the course include the following:

Rhetorical Knowledge

✓ Make appropriate decisions for a variety of rhetorical audiences
✓ Focus on a purpose
✓ Respond to the needs of different audiences
✓ Develop persona using appropriate voice, tone, and levels of formality
✓ Write in several different genres
✓ Understand the conventions of textual structures in different rhetorical contexts

Critical Thinking, Reading and Writing
✓ Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communication
✓ Understand a writing assignment as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing primary and secondary sources
✓ Integrate their own ideas with those of others
✓ Understand that they have something to say, that writing can help them say it, and that their ideas are part of a larger discourse community
✓ Recognize that reading and writing are connected by speaking and that they are life skills that extend into their own lives
✓ Learn to respond to texts by critiquing, comparing, and interpreting them
✓ Understand the relationships among language, knowledge, and power

Writing Processes

✓ Be aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text
✓ Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading
✓ Understand writing as a recursive process that permits writers to use later invention and re-thinking to revise their work
✓ Learn to critique their own work and others' works using different kinds of feedback based on different writer needs
✓ Learn to balance the advantages of relying on others with the responsibility of doing their part

Knowledge of Conventions

✓ Learn a variety of structures for different kinds of texts
✓ Develop knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
✓ Practice appropriate means of documenting their work
✓ Demonstrate the competent use of syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling
Teaching and Tutoring in the Writing Program

What’s an English GA-ship like?

GA-ships here are professional opportunities designed to allow you to learn many facets of teaching writing in a collaborative and supportive writing program. Your GA appointment is a kind of apprenticeship in which you not only practice teaching but also learn about being an academic professional—what it means to be a member of a writing program and an English department. Most GAs will tell you that it’s both intellectually challenging and rewarding. But they’ll tell you too that it’s a lot of hard work. All assignments officially are set at 15 hours a week, with two of these hours devoted to holding office hours to meet with students if you are teaching or WIC-assisting. But GAs sometimes work much more, as they juggle their writing program assignments with their own work as graduate students.

You will be doing a variety of assignments, including teaching your own courses and tutoring in a writing center. You will also have the opportunity to participate on academic committees and to gain administrative experience by serving as assistant director of writing. In addition to taking English 518, the year-long teaching practicum, you’ll be participating in a variety of other supportive activities, including teaching observations, special workshops, and other exchanges of “best practices.” Most GAs find that when they reflect after a year or two of all these collaborative activities, they feel equipped to take on any teaching challenge that is thrown their way. Along with the rewards of working with PSU students, GAs say that developing close collegial relationships with other GAs, exchanging ideas about scholarly work and teaching, is also a benefit of the program. Some former GAs stay in touch for decades after graduate school. You’ll be sharing an office with several other graduate students and will no doubt find that the sharing of ideas about your teaching and scholarly work is invaluable.

Assignments as a Graduate Assistant

Assignments for First Year GAs

First-year GAs typically tutor in the writing center for one quarter and teach WR 115 or WR 121 College Writing for two quarters. All assignments offer valuable professional experiences.

Writing Center Tutor: You help students one-to-one with the writing problems they bring into 30- to 60-minute sessions at the writing center. Typical problems include getting started writing, organization, and revision and editing. Many students are non-native speakers of English who need help not only with the conventions of using the English language, but also with the conventions of North American academic writing. As a tutor you may also work in special intensive quarter-long tutorials with a small number of Freshman Inquiry (FRINQ) students for one hour each per week. And you may tutor or teach a small studio of talented high school creative writers. Throughout the quarter you may also present in classes on various aspects of writing: invention work, ways to revise, how to work in groups, and other topics. Dan DeWeese coordinates the writing center.
Teaching WR 115 or WR 121 College Writing: You teach your own class of mainly freshmen, from various fields for an entire quarter. Typically, these courses feature three or four major writing assignments and a process-oriented approach using peer workshops, student-teacher conferences, and writing portfolios. Each teacher develops his or her own class plan, syllabus, and assignments, though we will spend time together working on learning outcomes, syllabi and possible class activities during the week-long fall workshop. During the term, English 518 Teaching College Writing is the main place where you will cover the many topics involved in teaching writing, from encouraging revision to managing the classroom.

Assignments for Second Year GAs

Second-year GAs will indicate teaching preferences to the Director of Writing. Ideally, each GA will get at least one of his or her preferences, and each GA will likely teach each quarter, although you may opt to spend a term in the writing center. However, enrollments and needs can be unpredictable, leading to cancellations and changes. This unpredictability means that you may not necessarily get your preferences or may need to fill a role as a teaching assistant or teaching a section of WR 211 or WR 323.

All assignments are made as equitably as possible, balancing the program’s needs with your professional goals.

The Writing Program’s Support System

During the one or two years you spend in the writing program, you will engage in supportive activities designed to help you develop as a teacher. The terms that best describe the program are “teachers’ collaborative” and “teaching as reflective practice.” That is, the writing program is:

- a place where teaching is seen as intellectually challenging work.
- a place to learn and share strategies for teaching.
- a place to reflect on and develop your individual strengths as a teacher.
- a place to contribute your ideas and energies to building and sustaining our writing program.

Components of this support system include:

- **Fall Workshop**: All new GAs spend a week getting oriented to the program, to one another, and to teaching writing.
- **English 518**: This course is a 1-credit year-long seminar in teaching writing that includes readings, group activities, practical strategies, informal sessions on current issues and insights in the classroom and tutorial sessions, speakers on teaching strategies, and many other activities. Fall quarter will be devoted to the nuts and bolts of teaching writing—writing processes, responding to writing, ESL issues, classroom management, building syllabi and assignments. Winter and spring quarters are more open-ended. GAs help set the agendas for winter and spring.
- **English 519**: This is a 1-credit year-long seminar in teaching for 2nd year GAs where generally, we deal with advanced issues and activities in teaching writing and continue the development of the theoretical and practical expertise of the graduate teaching assistant in advanced areas of college composition teaching. May be repeated up to three times for credit.
- **Writing Center and WIC activities**: Those GAs with writing center assignments in a particular
quarter will participate in the meetings, readings, and self-assessments associated with those assignments.

✓ **Class Observations:** Throughout the year, you may observe other instructors as they teach and tutor, and they may observe you. Most GAs find these observations enormously helpful because you have the opportunity to see other teachers with other styles at work and to get feedback on your own work.

✓ **Creating Class Materials:** During your assistantship, you will be creating class materials that you can use for a teaching portfolio. These materials will be beneficial if you decide to pursue a teaching career.

✓ **Multiple Assessments of Your Work:** Since so much of the program is based on teaching as reflective practice, you’ll be writing self-assessments, getting the assessments of the Director of Writing, your peers and course evaluations completed by your students. All of these will give you different perspectives on your teaching and tutoring.

✓ **Writing Program People:** Hildy, Dan, Susan, the assistant director, and the other GAs are terrific resources for you. Come talk to any of us, any time; that’s why we’re here.

**Key Contacts**

- **Dr. Susan Kirtley,** Director of Rhetoric and Composition  
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- **Amyl Freeberg,** Office Manager  
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  503-725-3562  
  freeba@pdx.edu

- **Mizuki Hisaka,** Graduate Coordinator  
  Neuberger Hall 411  
  503-725-3623  
  grdstudy@pdx.edu

**The Writing Center**

Knowledgeable and friendly tutors offer help with all phases of writing for all students, including non-native speakers and students with learning disabilities. Students can call 503-725-3570, stop by Cramer Hall 188F for an appointment, or visit the website at [writingcenter.pdx.edu](http://writingcenter.pdx.edu).
Writing Resources

For Non-Native/English Language-Learning Speakers and Writers:

- Portland State University Intensive English Language Program (IELP)
  [pdx.edu/esl/ielp-learning-center](pdx.edu/esl/ielp-learning-center)

- Rong-Chang Li English as a Second Language
  [rong-chang.com](rong-chang.com)

- Dave’s ESL Café
  [eslcafe.com](eslcafe.com)

For Writers with Learning Disabilities:

- Disability Resource Center
  116 Smith Memorial Center
  503-725-4150
  [drc.pdx.edu](drc.pdx.edu)

- Student Health & Counseling
  Learning Disabilities & ADHD Assessments
  University Center Building, Suite 200
  [pdx.edu/shac/test](pdx.edu/shac/test)

- Colorado State University Teaching Strategies for Students with Learning Disabilities
  [writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/ldteach](writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/ldteach)

Research and Writing Resources:

- PSU Library Research Survival Handout
  [lib.pdx.edu/instruction/survivalguide](lib.pdx.edu/instruction/survivalguide)

- Purdue University Writing Lab: Using MLA & APA Formats; Citing Electronic Resources
  [owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/584/03](owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/584/03)

- Jack Lynch’s Guide to Grammar and Style
  [newark.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing](newark.rutgers.edu/~jlynch/Writing)

- Merriam-Webster Dictionary and Thesaurus
  [merriam-webster.com](merriam-webster.com)

- University of Massachusetts, Amherst - General Online Writing Resources
  [guides.library.umass.edu/collegewriting](guides.library.umass.edu/collegewriting)

Recommended Handbooks for Writers and Guide to Conducting Research:

Order from PSU bookstore or directly from publisher.
✓ *A Writer’s Reference*, Diane Hacker (Bedford St. Martin’s) writing handbook
✓ *The Curious Researcher*, Bruce Ballenger (Allyn and Bacon) – guide to writing research papers

Guides to Writing in the Disciplines:

Order any of these books from the PSU bookstore at portlandstatebookstore.com or directly from the publisher.

**Addison-Wesley Company, Short Guide Series**
[longman.awl.com](http://longman.awl.com)

✓ *A Short Guide to Writing about Art*, Sylvan Barnet
✓ *A Short Guide to Writing about Biology*, Jan Pechenik
✓ *A Short Guide to Writing about Chemistry*, Herbert Beal & John Trimbur
✓ *A Short Guide to Writing about Film*, Timothy Corrigan
✓ *A Short Guide to Writing about History*, Richard Marius
✓ *A Short Guide to Writing about Literature*, Sylvan Barnet
✓ *A Short Guide to Writing about Music*, Bellman
✓ *A Short Guide to Writing about Science*, David Porush
✓ *A Short Guide to Writing about Social Science*, Lee J. Cuba

**Bedford/St. Martin’s Publishing**
[bedfordstmartins.com](http://bedfordstmartins.com)

✓ *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, Mary Lynn Rampolla
✓ *Writing in the Sciences*, Ann Penrose & Steven Katz

**Pearson Higher Education Publishing**
[pearsonhighered.com](http://pearsonhighered.com)

✓ *Writing about the Humanities*, Robert DiYanni
✓ *Writing and Thinking in the Social Sciences*, Sharon Friedman
✓ *How to Write Psychology Papers*, Les Parrott III
✓ *Writing for Psychology*, Christopher Thaiss & James Sanford
✓ *Writing for Law Enforcement*, Christopher Thaiss & John Hess
✓ *Writing About Theatre*, Christopher Thaiss & Rick Davis
✓ *Researching and Writing in the Humanities*, Christine Hult
✓ *Researching and Writing in the Social Sciences*, Christine Hult
✓ *Researching and Writing in the Sciences and Technology*, Christine Hult
Written Resources

The English Conference room (407 Neuberger Hall) is our base of operations, where we meet for English 518 and other workshops and meetings. You are also welcome to study or work in there when it is not in use—it’s a room for everyone in the Department of English, including all of you. Please check the schedule posted on the conference room door or inquire with any of the department administrative staff to confirm availability.

The Resource Library consists of a section of handy books that you may find useful to consult for your teaching—ideas for teaching of all sorts, sample essays, special books of teaching research writing, argument, literature, creative writing, and others. You are welcome to check out any books.

You are also encouraged to contribute to the books; we are happy to get any good material since this enables collaboration and sharing of best practices.

Electronic Resources

The writing program website contains an instructor resource section that provides a wide variety of electronic resources and can be found at english.pdx.edu/writingstudies/instructors.

The Assistant to the Director of Writing

Though all the members of the writing program are always available to GAs, the assistant director is an especially helpful ally. Each quarter we appoint a 2nd year GA and whose job is to work with the writing program as the Assistant Director of Writing. This person helps with the fall workshop, with large group meetings, serves as a member of several department and university writing committees, and helps with other matters to do with writing. He or she is also encouraged to help in building the program, with each of the assistant directors who have served so far making a valuable and lasting contribution. Though all GAs are helpful to one another, often the assistant director has some additional insights just because he or she is so closely tied with administration. So if you are seeking advice or information, the assistant director is often a good place to go or to start. Every assistant director has been or will become a polished diplomat—trustworthy and willing to keep anything confidential that you wish. All 2nd year GAs are welcome to apply for the assistant director position.

Professional Development

We want your graduate work at PSU not only to move you forward as a scholar, but also as a professional. Graduates of PSU go on to a variety of careers—teaching, writing, working in nonacademic careers, or pursuing more advanced degrees. The extensive teaching and tutoring experience you get here is certainly a key piece in adding to your professional development. But we also have several other activities:

- **Graduate Student Organizations**: These groups provide professional development activities, social events, and a place for students to have a voice in the graduate programs. This last year we had not only several professional development workshops, but also gatherings to read scholarly writing, creative writing, and nonfiction writing. Visit english.pdx.edu/StudentOrg for a listing of our organizations.

- **Career Opportunity Panel**: Several PSU graduates share their varied experiences on the job.
market, explaining not only what they do, but also what their paths have been. An inspiration and invaluable source of ideas.

**Workshops:** In recent years, GAs have had the opportunity to work with professionals with national reputations, such as Peter Elbow, Kathleen Black Yancey, Bruce Ballenger, and Victor Villanueva.

**Conferences:** Part of academic professionalism is presenting papers and attending conferences each year. This practice introduces you to a wider range of academic ideas than may be offered locally and gives you a means of sharing your scholarly and pedagogical work.

Department of English Terms of Employment

Your Commitment to Teach

When you agree to work for us, we assume you will continue through your entire 9-month contract. If, for some reason during this time, you cannot continue, you need to notify the Director of Writing at least five weeks into the term previous to the term for which you will leave (i.e. if you have to leave spring term, give notification five weeks into winter term). Of course, exceptions are made for serious illness or emergency.

Terms of Employment

As an instructor in the program, you need to fulfill these obligations each year:

- First-year GAs should attend the fall workshop and complete Eng 518, the year-long teaching practicum.
- Second-year GAs complete Eng 519, a one-credit extension of the practicum, which is designed to be a supportive informal course covering advanced issues in teaching.
- All GAs are responsible for checking their PSU email account on a regular basis, as that is our primary means of communication.
- If you are teaching, have your class fill out the standard evaluation form at the end of the quarter. When we get the results, a copy will be returned to you and a copy will be reviewed by the Director and kept in your file.
- Each quarter the Director of Writing will ask to see:
  - A copy of your syllabus (beginning of quarter).
  - A copy of your grades (end of term).
  - A copy of your course evaluations (end of term).
- Fulfill your teaching and tutoring assignments responsibly.

Terms of Reappointment

GAs are appointed for one academic year at a time (nine months) and reappointment is not automatic. To be reappointed after your first year, you need to participate in all activities and fulfill all obligations to the program as outlined above. Reappointed is determined by the Director of Writing. An evaluation based upon your academic progress and performance as a graduate assistant will be conducted and will include a review of your self-assessment materials, student evaluations,
observations from the Director of Writing and other’s observations of your teaching/tutoring/teacher assisting, and general collegiality, all of which should all be satisfactory.

Termination of Appointment

An appointment may be terminated at any time because of unsatisfactory academic performance, such as probation status, or for failure to register for and complete satisfactorily a minimum of 9 graduate credits in a term, or if the services provided are judged unsatisfactory or unnecessary. A graduate assistant who has been terminated by the Department may petition the Dean of the appropriate School/College for review of the termination action. After review, the Dean of the appropriate School/College will confirm the termination or reinstate the appointment. Termination of the appointment is not subject to the administrative rules of the Oregon State Board of Higher Education and Portland State University.

Summer Employment

There are no Graduate Assistantships offered through the Department of English during the summer. We do have a limited number of positions in the summer at the Writing Center and as a WIC Assistant. Work-Study jobs also pay fairly well at PSU. Otherwise, you are left to your own devices in the summer.

Salary for Your Appointment

A graduate assistant is provided a salary on a monthly basis as compensation for the service that has been provided. The salary is not directly dependent on the actual number of hours worked each month, but rather is paid for satisfactory performance of professional responsibilities as required by the Department Chair or program Director. However, as a guideline, the following can be used:

Each term is 13 weeks. 13 weeks/term x 40 hours/week x .3 FTE = approximately 156 hours/term. If students are teaching assistants and do not work during vacation, they would work about 15 hours per week; if they work the entire term, they would work about 12 hours per week (156 hours/13 weeks = 12 hours per week). Term dates are defined as follows: Fall term, September 16 – December 15; Winter term, December 16 – March 15; Spring term, March 16 – June 15.

Graduate Assistant Salary levels are determined by the University and set annually at the beginning of each fiscal year beginning July 1. You can find the listing of salary rates for the current academic year on the Graduate Studies website pdx.edu/ogs/graduate-assistantships.

For the 2013-2014 academic year, First-Year Graduate Assistants in the Department of English are appointed as a GTA II for a 9-month contract at .30 FTE for a total amount of $6,372.00. You can expect $708.00 per month from October through June.

For the 2013-2014 academic year, Second-Year Graduate Assistants in the Department of English are appointed as a GTA III for a 9-month contract at .30 FTE for a total amount of $7,074.00. You can
expect $786.00 per month from October through June.

Tuition Waivers

All Graduate Assistants must register for and successfully complete a minimum of 9 graduate credits applicable to their degree program each term of the assistantship. These courses must be taken for a letter grade to be used towards degree completion requirements and cannot be audited. Students should note that fees for online classes, both hybrid ($120) and fully online ($240) are paid by the student and are not covered by the terms of a Graduate Assistantship. Any credits in excess of the 9 graduate credits per term are the responsibility of the student. The 2013-14 graduate assistant tuition remission paid a minimum of $3,000 Fall, Winter, and Spring Terms. Although the Technology Fee, Resource Fee, and Student Services Fee have been incorporated into the tuition structure, students will be responsible for Building, Incidental, Academic Student Recreation Center (ASRC), and Health Service Fees ($421 per term), regardless of the remission amount indicated by the FTE. Students will also be responsible for the health insurance premium ($594 per term) unless they have insurance through another source (employer, parents, spouse, etc.) and are therefore eligible for a waiver. See pdx.edu/shac/insurancebenefits for information about the waiver process. No vacation, medical, dental, or retirement benefits are paid, and no time toward tenure is accrued. You can review the Graduate Assistant Tuition Policy and the current Graduate Tuition and Fee schedule on the Graduate Studies website at pdx.edu/ogs/graduate-assistantships.

If a Graduate Assistant only needs 5 credits in their final term of study to graduate, they may take a reduced course load. The Graduate Assistant must have an up-to-date, approved Degree Completion Plan. The Graduate Assistant must notify the Graduate Coordinator at grdstudy@pdx.edu a term prior to the final term of study in order to qualify for the 5-credit course load. The Graduate Assistant will receive the usual stipend and a 5-credit remission.

Contracts and Pay

The Graduate Coordinator will prepare your contract. Your contract will be made available to sign several weeks prior to the beginning of Fall term, effective for the academic year. You must come to the Department of English to sign your contract. After your contract is signed, you will need to go to the office of Human Resources to complete the necessary paperwork to establish identity and employment eligibility. You will need to take two forms of ID with you when you go to HR (driver’s license, passport, voter’s registration card, US social security card, etc.) Human Resources is in the Market Center Building, 1600 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 518.

The pay period for the entire year is the 16th of the current month through the 15th of the next month. Checks are distributed the last working day of the month, with the first check following the last day of the first pay period. If you have not elected to be paid by electronic deposit, you must pick up your check at thecashiers office on the first floor of Neuberger Hall with a picture ID. If you do not get a check, please advise Amyl as soon as possible, but you may also have to call HR. All employees are expected to work within the guidelines of Portland State University, the Oregon University System, and the American Federation of Teachers, as well as those policies of the English Department. If there is any question regarding department policy or procedure please ask.
As a Graduate Assistant, your direct supervisor is the Director of Writing. If you have any student issues, questions about policy or procedure, anything at all related to your work please feel free to approach the Director of Writing or the Office Manager.

Policies for Teaching

Office Hours

Before the quarter begins, please advise Amyl or the front desk staff of the best way for students to contact you. This should include on-campus office hours and your current PSU email address. This information will be posted online and on the bulletin boards outside the offices.

If teaching, you need to establish office hours immediately, inform your students on your syllabus, and inform the Department of English via email at eng@pdx.edu, so they can post your hours near the door of your office. Plan to hold at least two office hours a week and be available for appointments with students at other times.

How Students Can Contact You

Have students contact you via your PSU email account or meet with you in your office during appointed times. Do not give the Graduate Assistant Office or Department of English office numbers out to students as a way to contact you. It’s up to you whether you give out your home phone or not, but for your privacy and protection, it is advisable not to do so.

Program Books

Each year the Director of Writing, in consultation with the current GAs, agrees upon the recommended texts for WR 115 and WR 121. If you are a first year GA, these are the texts you will use for your courses. In your second year as a GA, you will select the texts for your classes.

Student Registration in Your Courses

Before the first day of classes you will get a class list of all students in your class.

Keep in mind that class limits are set at 20 for WR 115 and 25 for WR 121 and WR 323. Don’t be tempted to allow students over that limit, as you can’t always tell whether students will later drop your course. There are always other sections either that term or another term that the student can take. At the other end of the spectrum, each class should have a minimum of 10-12 people or it may be cancelled. On the first day of class, the students in your course may not match your class list. What should you do?

**If a student is on your list** but doesn’t show up for the first day of class, you may administratively drop them by filling out and add/drop form with the student's name, PSU ID and your class information. Turn this in to the registrar's office on the bottom floor of Neuberger (as an instructor, you do not have to wait in line).

**If a student is not on your list** but attends the first day asking to add your class, you may add them
if you have space in the class or last-minute or administrative drops. The student will need to bring an add/drop form for you to sign. The student then takes the form to the registrar to register for the class. A student adding your course should attend class as normal even before official registration is completed.

Course Evaluations

Every course taught in a classroom is to perform a course evaluation during the last two weeks of the term. Evaluations allow for student input on the effectiveness of your teaching for consideration of future assignments and your performance evaluations, as well as the content of the course and some data on learning outcomes. Student evaluations must be solicited and collected as objectively as possible and have no influence on student grades. For these reasons, please follow the evaluation process as closely as possible.

An envelope with the evaluations for your class will be put into your department mailbox about three weeks prior to the last class meeting. It is recommended that the evaluations be performed close to the end of the term but not on the day of the final, with as many students present as possible. Announce to the class that you will be leaving the room about ten minutes prior to the end of class and ask for a volunteer to assist. Conduct your class as normal. The student volunteer will wait until you leave the classroom, and then distribute the evaluations. The volunteer will then fill out an evaluation and wait in the classroom to collect all the evaluations and put them into the envelope.

The evaluations are confidential, so the student is not to look at or sort them. The student volunteer will then bring the envelope to the English Department office in NH 405. Once the evaluations are received, they will be scanned electronically, and you will receive your course evaluations by email after the grading deadline. Instructors are not to have any contact with the completed evaluations until they are released to them after the grading deadline. You will need to forward a copy of your course evaluations to the Director of Writing for each term you are listed as the instructor of record.

Canceling Class for Professional or Personal Reasons

Your contract for teaching includes an expectation that you will attend all course sessions during the term. However, occasionally, you may need to cancel a class. If you know that you must miss a day or two for professional reasons (e.g., giving a paper at a conference), you should arrange ahead of time for a substitute and notify the Director of Writing by providing a written statement of the reason for the cancellation, the substitute you have lined up, and the day you will miss. GAs often substitute for one another in cases like these.

If an absence is due to an emergency or illness, you must notify the Director of Writing and the Department of English main office with as much notice as possible. If the office or the Director of Writing can find a substitute for you, they will do so. If not, then the office staff will post a cancelation notice on the classroom door and attempt to notify students by email prior to class time. You may choose to send your own notification email to your class, in which case please let us know so we don’t duplicate the process.
Papers, Records, and Confidentiality

All employees of PSU must comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). According to university policy student papers cannot be left outside of a secure area. Please have all students hand in papers either directly to you, or arrange a box or envelope for them in the office NH 405. The same applies to the return of papers once graded. If you use the office to house graded student papers for pickup, please provide a box or folder to contain them and advise students of a deadline to retrieve them. When the deadline passes, you will need to come and either put them in the recycling/shredder or retain them. Papers will not be kept in the main office after the deadline due to limited space. As an instructor of record and under record keeping guidelines, you are required to keep your grades and any grading notes for a period of two years, but not the actual student work.

Student records and papers are confidential, and students do have a right to see their records upon request. Student records do include retained papers, grading notes that were shared with other faculty or academic committees, and any and all correspondence regarding the student or student performance. Your personal grading notes that were not shared with any other party are not considered official records and do not need to be shared at the student’s request.

FERPA provides guidance for the disclosure of student information. As most student information is confidential, and the student has the right to request that no information of any kind be released without their specific authorization, it is best to refer all third party or parental requests for information to the Dean of Students Office (503-725-4422) rather than provide information yourself. Specific information on record keeping and retention policies under the state of Oregon can be found at arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/rules/oars_100/oar_166/166_475.

Managing Students

Student Attendance

Since so much time in our writing classes is spent on participatory activities, students simply must attend class regularly for them to function well. Students should attend every class meeting, be on time and prepared, and remain in class until the end of the class period. Students should be allowed some absences in case of illness or emergency. After more than one week’s worth of absences, however, his or her grade may be lowered; with over two week’s worth of absences, he or she may fail the course. Students are responsible for completing missed assignments and should contact you, preferably in advance, to rearrange deadlines if a missed class is unavoidable.

This is the program guideline, but note that the operative word for penalties is “may.” It’s up to you to decide what is fair in each individual case. Keep in mind that you will almost certainly have to make some judgment calls that are exceptions to/interpretations of the absence rules. Just use common sense and rely on your sense of what’s fair to the student and equitable to the other students. Feel free to consult with the Director of Writing if you are uncertain about how to call a specific case.

Students on School-Sponsored Activities

Athletes, musicians, and other students may participate in school-sponsored events that will cause
them to miss some classes. These absences are not automatically “excused,” however. If students will miss class because of school activities, they should meet with you early in the term to notify you of when they will be absent and to arrange completion of their work. Options may include turning work in early and turning in additional assignments.

If you find that they will miss more than 20 percent of the course or consistently miss key dates, such as workshops, you may tell them either to enroll in a different section or to enroll during another quarter in which their attendance will not be a problem. Your policy on absences for school-sponsored events should be clearly stated in your syllabus.

**Students Participating in Religious Observances**

If a student tells you he or she must miss class to participate in a religious observance, grant permission and confer on how to rearrange deadlines. Students must still complete any work for you or their colleagues.

**Students with Disabilities**

The DRC or Disability Resource Center is the office at PSU that assists students with disabilities. They can assist with working out appropriate lesson plans and assisting students and the faculty who serve them to provide an effective learning environment if there are special needs. This can mean changing deadlines or preferred method of paper submission, including a note-taker in the classroom, or providing syllabi or course materials at an earlier date than the first day of class. If you have any questions, please call the DRC.

All PSU syllabi should have a statement that addresses the DRC and how to access that office. This protects you and the student from liability and ensures that they get what they need to succeed. It is the students’ responsibility to register with the DRC and communicate a need to you officially in order to expect special accommodations. We recommend you include the following paragraph in your syllabus.

“Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Students with accommodations approved through the DRC are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through the DRC should contact the DRC immediately at 503-725-4150.”
Student of Concern Committee and other Student Resources

Occasionally a student may bring an issue to you that may cause you some concern. If you believe that a student is in crisis or threatening to themselves or others, it is not an emergency situation, and calling campus security is not appropriate or prudent, please advise the Department Chair and contact the Dean of Students Office. The DOS has a group called the Students of Concern Committee. This group of PSU administration can provide resource information and assistance to students and faculty in a confidential manner that protects the student’s right to privacy under FERPA.

Office of the Dean of Students
1825 SW Broadway, 433 SMSU
Portland, OR 97207
503-725-4422

Student Conduct

It is important for you to set a tone in your classroom of being respectful, cordial, and fair with students and to expect the same in return, both in how they behave with you and with other students. The Policy Statement on Rights, Freedoms, and Responsibilities of Students at PSU says:

A student who enrolls in a course has responsibility to observe the standards of academic performance defined by the instructor and the standards of conduct established by the instructor so as to ensure the freedom of the instructor to teach and the freedom of the other students to learn.

This means that a student’s disruptive behavior is not acceptable and it is your responsibility to maintain order. If a student becomes disruptive, try first to deal with the problem as discreetly as possible with a glance or by moving physically towards the student. Try taking the student aside privately after class to speak with him or her about the problem. If the problem persists or gets worse, you may ask the student to leave the class. At this point, or if the student becomes a chronic problem, speak with the Director of Writing, who can help you strategize or can mediate the problem with the student himself/herself. In an extremely rare worst-case scenario, in which a student becomes verbally or physically threatening to you or to another student, you should dismiss the class and notify Campus Security immediately. Then contact the Director of Writing. Remember, the program is here to support you, so, by all means, don’t suffer in silence if you encounter a problem student.
Emotionally Distressed Students

Students signal distress in a variety of ways—depression, hostility, disruptive behavior, withdrawal, sudden absences for a prolonged period of time, etc. Because we have such small classes, know students by name, and simply have more opportunities to interact, writing instructors are likely to notice problems. If you have a distressed student, talk to him or her privately and express your concern and willingness to listen. Many times this will help the student. But, if the problem seems more serious, refer the student to the Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) at 503-725-2800. If the student is exhibiting extreme behavior, contact Campus Security at 503-725-4404 for immediate help.

Student Complaints

Occasionally, you may have a student who has a complaint about you. Grades, policies, and teaching style are often the source of the problem. In accordance with the English Department’s policy on student complaints, a student who comes to the Director of Writing is always asked first if he or she has spoken to the instructor. Generally, the Director of Writing will listen to the problem and offer advice on how to negotiate with you. At that point, you may hear from the student. Keep in mind that when a student has a complaint, often he or she is inexperienced at negotiation. Your encounter is in itself a “teachable moment” for you to help them learn about professional diplomacy. Most cases end here, however if the problem still isn’t resolved the Director of Writing will step in to mediate the problem more directly. In the rare cases in which the student wishes to pursue a formal grievance, he or she is advised to consult with the Office of Student Affairs.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment violates PSU policies for its faculty, staff, and students. The university defines sexual harassment as “the use of power or authority by one person to pressure another into accepting unwelcome verbal, physical, or sexual conduct.” It is conduct “that has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s academic or work performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile educational or working environment” or “where it is understood explicitly or implicitly that submission to such conduct is a condition of one’s grade, participation in an educational or employment activity, or employment decision.”

Be aware that sexual harassment is a very serious offense. Certainly, an instructor should not sexually harass a student. But he or she needs to take care also not to behave in ways that a student might misconstrue as sexual harassment. If, in turn, you find yourself sexually harassed by a student, or if a student complains that he or she is being harassed by another student, these too are violations of the student Conduct Code. Speak with the Director of Writing who will work with you to resolve the problem.
Safety and Security Issues

Emergencies

FOR MEDICAL, CRIMINAL AND OTHER EMERGENCIES: CALL 9-1-1

For situations that do not require 9-1-1 but are of immediate concern, call the Campus Public Safety Office emergency 503-725-4404 (5-4404 if you are calling from a campus phone).

Non-Emergencies

Some of you will be on campus evenings and weekends. Keep in mind you can call Campus Security (5-4407) if you need non-emergency assistance such as a locked classroom door, escort service, sudden power outage, etc. The office is located in Shattuck Hall 148 (SW Broadway & College), next to Neuberger Hall.

If you observe a non-student (this can sometimes be hard to tell) who seems to be hanging around the hallways, or someone who causes you concern, contact the Campus Public Safety Office. If you are not sure whether or not you should be concerned, call anyway.

Grading and Assessment

Course Components

Students complete three or four writing assignments that undergo multiple revisions. Grades for the course are based on more than just the final drafts, but also include substantial credit for process work and participation activities. Students must complete all assignments in order to pass the course. Instructors may choose whether they want three or four assignments, so long as the total number of final pages for all assignments taken together is approximately fifteen pages for WR 115 or WR 121 and twenty pages for WR 323.

Criteria for Formal Writing Assignments

You set the requirements and grading criteria for specific assignments based on what you want your students to learn. The grade is not determined by whether the student produces a nice piece of writing per se, but by the extent to which they are able to grasp the point of the assignment. For example, in a narrative assignment in which students writes about a personal experience that changed them, you would want to base your final grade on:

- The amount and effectiveness of the detail
- The overall chronological organization and how it fit with content
- How the writer was able to reflect on the meaning of his or her experience
- Whether it held your interest as a reader and whether you were able to follow and to visualize the story told
Criteria for Informal Writing/Process Work

Skim through to get a sense of length and depth. Then sample a few entries to get some idea of the thoroughness of student responses. Tell the students that they can include a note if they have any particular piece they would like for you to see and comment on, or, if there is something they would rather you didn’t see.

A: Exceptionally thorough, imaginative, thoughtful work. All assignments completed.
B: Good work, above and beyond satisfying the basic requirements.
C: All assignments complete, acceptable work.
D: Some assignments complete.
F: Few or no assignments complete.

Grading

Final grades are entered on-line. Grades are due the Tuesday after finals week by 5 P.M. The university system stops providing instructor access at that time, and the following day the grades are rolled over to the student’s records. If grades are not submitted for whatever reason by 4:59 P.M. on Tuesday, an M will show on the student’s grade report.

Amyl Freeberg is an alternate grader for all English/Writing classes. If you are unable to enter your grades, or need help submitting them (preferably well before the deadline) please contact Amyl at 503-725-3562. Full instructions for grading, submitting a change or late grade may be found on the following website: pdx.edu/registration/online_grading.html

Please be aware of the PSU policies on giving Incompletes. As a GA, providing an Incomplete instead of a grade is not recommended due to the short-term nature of your hiring and the department’s inability to fairly provide a grade in your absence. Incompletes should only be given if a contract is written and agreed upon by both the instructor and the student. Please read the PSU policies on giving Incompletes (pdx.edu/registration/grading-system), and contact the Director of Writing before you issue an Incomplete.

Academic Honesty

Portland State University takes academic honesty very seriously.

The student Conduct Code, which applies to all students, prohibits all forms of academic cheating, fraud, and dishonesty. These acts include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, buying and selling of course assignments and research papers, performing academic assignments (including testing and examinations) for other persons, unauthorized disclosure and receipt of academic information, and other practices commonly understood to be academically dishonest.
Acts of academic dishonesty may result in one or more of the following sanctions: a failing grade on the exam or assignment for which the dishonesty occurred, disciplinary reprimand, disciplinary probation, loss of privileges, required community service, suspension from the University for a period of up to five years, and/or dismissal from the University.

Helping Students Avoid Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism

✓ Stressing the writing process is your best defense against student plagiarism. If students are brainstorming topics and doing invention and revision, it is harder for them to plagiarize.
✓ Design assignments that are unusual enough that it’s harder for students to turn to a “paper mill” for a paper.
✓ Spend plenty of time teaching students how and why to cite secondary sources. Have them practice the difference between paraphrase and word rearranging.
✓ Have students turn in copies of the parts of secondary materials they use or an annotated bibliography.
✓ Explain what plagiarism is, how seriously you and PSU take it, and how serious the penalties are. Try to clear up student misperceptions about it.
✓ Make students aware that it is easy for you to spot stylistic differences in writing and that you have access to “paper mill” sites, as well as plagiarism checkers.
✓ Give special attention to explaining the cultural implications of plagiarism, since for many ESL students, conventions around citing others are very different from American conventions.
✓ Explain the special problems that material pulled from the web poses. Students often need special help citing and evaluating web sources. Provide examples of how to cite electronic sources.

What to Do if You Suspect a Student of Plagiarism

If you suspect a student has plagiarized, most often because the style or level of intellectual sophistication is very different from the usual work, it is important not to accuse the student outright of plagiarism. Instead, meet with the student and ask for all process materials (drafts and revisions) and all secondary sources (partial copies and notes). Using these materials, take a pedagogical approach in working through a part of the paper with the student, showing where and how ideas need to be documented or where what looks like quoted materials needs to be cited and put in quotation. This kind of one-on-one work focused on rhetorical issues in writing can often solve the problem. Send the student away to correct the problems and return with a new draft. If the paper in question has no secondary sources and you suspect it is a “canned” paper, ask not only for the process work, but also insist on major revision, so that the student must change the paper.

These strategies can be particularly helpful with “naïve plagiarism,” where students are genuinely confused about it and need to be walked through the process. They can also help with cases of “intentional plagiarism,” when you don’t have sufficient proof to show plagiarism.

Portfolios, which have so much revision of drafts, provide you and your students with a second and even third chance to amend scholastic dishonesty of all kinds.

If these efforts do not work, or if a student goes ahead and turns in an obviously plagiarized draft, and you have evidence to support your claim, then you and the Director of Writing will report the case. PSU policy allows you to fail the paper. But if the grade is lowered because of plagiarism, the
case must be reported both to explain the changed grade and to give the student the right to appeal.

Be sure to consult the Director of Writing at any time in a plagiarism problem, but especially when the initial approach described above does not work. Academic dishonesty is a very serious accusation and must be handled carefully for the protection of everyone involved.

Online Teaching Resources on Plagiarism

- Preventing Plagiarism — University of Minnesota
  
  [writing.umn.edu/tww/preventing](http://writing.umn.edu/tww/preventing)

- Plagiarism: What It Is and How to Recognize and Avoid It – Indiana University
  
  [indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml](http://indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml)

- Avoiding Plagiarism – Purdue University
  
  [owl.english.purdue.edu](http://owl.english.purdue.edu)

**Getting Started at PSU**

**Set up your ODIN account**

This account allows you to access PSU's computer labs and wireless network, includes a PSU email account, and permits access to electronic storage space on PSU servers. Create your account online by going to oam.pdx.edu and following the instructions on your admission letter. If you have misplaced your letter of admission, or are having other difficulties logging-in, please contact the Office of Information Technology help desk for assistance at 503-725-HELP (or 503-725-4357). One of the features of your ODIN account is file storage space (H: drive) on the PSU server. On campus computers, you can access this space from My Computer in Windows or from the Finder in Mac OS. This space is also accessible from off-campus. Go to [oit.pdx.edu/off-campus-access](http://oit.pdx.edu/off-campus-access) for instructions on how you can access your network drive from off-campus.

**Obtain PSU ID Card in Neuberger Hall Lobby**

Approximately a week after registering for classes you will receive your PSU Student ID Card in the mail. Your first ID card shows your student ID number, but it does not include your photo. When you arrive on campus you will need to go to the ID Card Office in the lobby of Neuberger Hall and have your photo taken. It will cost $6 and you will receive your new ID card in the mail within a week. After activation, this will replace your non-photo ID. You should activate your ID card as soon as possible. Make sure that your address is updated so that your ID card gets to you in a timely manner. You can update your address online at [banweb.pdx.edu](http://banweb.pdx.edu).

**University Email Account**

You will receive a PSU email account once your graduate student status is established. After you have acquired your PSU Student ID number, the OIT (Office of Information Technology) located
in the basement of Smith, Room 18 will set up an Odin and email account for. Email can be accessed from any location by going to mail.pdx.edu. Your pdx.edu email will be used for student contact and the communication needs of the department. Please remember to give this email address to the department for student referrals.

Transportation and Parking

All GAs are responsible for their own transportation and parking needs. The University is easily accessible via public transit. The University also has several secure indoor bicycle parking facilities and limited, on-campus car and motorcycle parking. The Transportation and Parking Services office offers public transit passes, campus parking permits, and bicycle facility parking permits. Parking prices vary for full day, evening, or half-day permits. Many lots also have metered parking.

Prices and purchase information can be found at pdx.edu/transportation.

Parking and Transportation
1812 SW 6th Avenue
PO Box 751
Portland, OR 97207-0751
psupark@pdx.edu
Phone: 503-725-3442
Fax: 503-725-6245

Graduate and Faculty Campus Resources

Library Services

For full privileges, GAs must be entered into the Universities database system by the Registrar and Human Resources. This usually takes five to ten business days from the date your contract is signed. Check in at the Circulation Counter on the first floor of the Millar Library to confirm that your borrowing privileges have been updated. To start using Library services, you will need a PSU ID card and an ODIN computer account. This will allow you to access the full range of Library services from the library website at library.pdx.edu. The Library also maintains a web page of Library services links at lib.pdx.edu/role_based_services/faculty.php.

Instructional Development Support Center

The Instructional Development Support Center (IDSC) is a robust multimedia computing lab open specifically to faculty, graduate students, and staff at PSU. The lab provides a unique environment for users to develop exceptional multimedia products that enhance pedagogy and research. The IDSC is eager to assist faculty in this sense with traditional teaching media and emerging technologies. The lab houses state-of-the-art multimedia hardware and software on both the Macintosh and Windows platforms. The range of resources and services includes, but is not limited to, digital video and audio production, image manipulation, interactive multimedia development, desktop publishing, graphic design, web development, media archiving, OCR, PDF development, large and standard format color printing, and DVD authoring.
While the IDSC is geared to be a self-service lab, they seek to provide timely technical assistance to lab clients as needed. Experienced staff members are available for consultation, training, or individual project support. The IDSC is located next to User Support Services in the basement of Smith Memorial Student Union, Room 18. You can find more information about IDSC at their website: pdx.edu/oit/idsc-lab-policy

Classroom Technology

All the of the class rooms you will be using are considered high-tech rooms and are equipped with a pull-down or electric projection screen, a ceiling-mounted digital video projector, wall-mounted speakers, an instructor’s podium or desk, a PC, a DVD/VCR player, and, often, a document camera. In order to use the technology in these rooms, you needn’t reserve any extra equipment; however you should be trained on how to use the system. Email av@pdx.edu to schedule training. If you require immediate assistance with a technology classroom please call 503-725-9100.

Audio Visual Services

Audio Visual Services (AV Services) checks out audiovisual equipment to current PSU faculty, staff, and graduate students for classroom use in addition to providing training on equipment in technology classrooms. To reserve equipment you must have an account with their office. To create an account you must be a current PSU faculty, staff or graduate student and come to the AV office in person to present your PSU photo ID card. Once an account has been created equipment reservations can be made over the phone (503-725-9100) or in person at the AV office. While AV Services supports the equipment in classrooms, they do not support software installation requests or provide computer software support. For computer support please contact User Support Services (Help Desk) at 503-725-HELP (4357) or help@pdx.edu. For more information please go to the AVS website found at cavs.pdx.edu/avs/index.php.

GA Office

Office Space

GAs are assigned offices in 378 Neuberger Hall, where you will be sharing your space with several other 1st and 2nd year GAs. You’ll soon find that your office mates are an invaluable source of teaching information, so expect to share ideas, solve problems, and enjoy one another’s company. Most GAs find their colleagues to be among the best aspects of the graduate program. Because this area is shared, please be respectful of others and do not use the space for purposes outside your teaching responsibilities. The office is equipped with several working computers and a printer, but there are also computer labs available in Neuberger, Smith, and other halls on campus. Janitorial service is infrequent, so please do not throw food away in the office. There are trash and recycling bins in the hall outside the office. If there are issues with the room, please contact the Department of English Office Manager, who can notify Maintenance. There are also some cleaning supplies in each office that you can use yourself. Finally, do not remove furniture or other elements of the office. If something has become a problem, let the Department of English Office Manager know so that she can take care of it.
Office Keys

It takes three working days after the work-order is submitted for keys to be assigned to you. A key to the GA office (NH 378) will be waiting for you to sign for at the beginning of your contract. You will need to take your ID to pick up your key(s) at the Facilities Office on the second floor of the USB (University Services Building). This building is located on Montgomery and Sixth, next to the Koinonia House [KHSE]. Your keys are your responsibility; the university will charge you $50.00 per key if lost. Due to University security concerns and a tightening of access and key policies, it is now mandatory for you to return all PSU keys at the end of your contract. Keys are to be returned directly to the Facilities Office, who will report their return back to the department. Neuberger Hall is open generally 6 A.M. to 10 P.M. throughout the week and is closed most Sundays and PSU holidays. After-hours building access is restricted to full-time faculty and some staff.

Telephone/Voice Mail

There is a telephone in the GA office NH Room 378. It does not have voice mail attached to it. If you give out this number, 503-725-3583, for student calls, you can only receive them if you are in the room. It is better to have students contact you through your PSU email account.

Mail Boxes and Mailing

You will have a mailbox in the department office. Please check with the front desk person for the location of your box. There are two outgoing mailboxes, one for on-campus and one for off-campus mail. These are large wooden cubbyholes that are labeled, beside faculty boxes. Campus mail should be sent in campus envelopes (recycled envelopes found in the top drawer of mail station), and marked with campus delivery codes (found in the online Faculty & Staff directory at pdx.edu/directory). Off-campus mail should be stamped if it is personal, or please attach a mail card for all work related mail (found in top drawer).

Office Supplies and Services

Office Supplies

There are limited supplies available in the English Department office supply and copy room. If you need something that is not there, see the front desk staff.

Photocopies

Each GA has a photocopy account. The copy machine in the department office will be programmed with the last four digits of your PSU Student ID number for copying. Enter your number, press the “ID” button and you will be ready to copy. The machine has standard functions, but if you need help the front desk person or a work-study student is available to help you during regular office hours. If we have work-study students available in the office, they can photocopy or scan your syllabi, and your mid-term and final exams for you at your request. You are responsible for everyday photocopies. Please allow two working days for all department copy requests, as there may be other obligations at the same time.
Faxing

The departmental fax machine is located in the inner office with the copy machine (NH Room 405A). The number is 503-725-3561. Directions for use are posted to the right of the machine. The front desk staff or a work-study student will also be available to help you during regular office hours. If the fax is long-distance, please ask for help as an additional long distance charge code must be used. You are welcome to send outgoing faxes to order desk copies, etc, but please do not use the fax for personal documents.

University Phone Numbers and Websites

Helpful University Websites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Calendar</th>
<th>pdx.edu/registration/academic-calendar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>pdx.edu/hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office of Information Technologies</td>
<td>oit.pdx.edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland State University Bulletin</td>
<td>pdx.edu/oaa/psu-bulletin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My PSU</td>
<td>my.pdx.edu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Health and Counseling</td>
<td>pdx.edu/shac/insurance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Helpful University Numbers

Note: If you are on campus, you need only dial the last 5 digits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main English Department line and front desk</th>
<th>503-725-3521</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Susan Kirtley, Director of Writing</td>
<td>503-725-2248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amyl Freeberg, Office Manager</td>
<td>503-725-3562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mizuki Hisaka, Office Spec II/Grad Secretary</td>
<td>503-725-3623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Resources</td>
<td>503-725-4926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Security Non-Emergency</td>
<td>503-725-4407</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Security Emergency</td>
<td>503-725-4404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANY EMERGENCY</td>
<td>911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mail and Shipping Addresses

Campus Mail

Department Office: Neuberger Hall – Room 405
Campus Mail Code: ENG

Shipping Address for Packages

English Department  
Portland State University
725 SW Harrison, Room 405
Portland, Oregon 97201

Mailing Address

English Department
Portland State University
PO Box 751
Portland, Oregon 97207-0751