

Writing Development Initiative 2017-
2018

Proposal Application
Form

Please answer the following questions as clearly and concisely as possible. When you have answered the questions, please indicate Chair approval in the space provided at the end of the form, and send the completed pdf version of the form to academicskills.utm@utoronto.ca. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Michael Kaler (michael.kaler@utoronto.ca). Proposals must be submitted by **April 16, 2017**.

Please identify the course or courses affected (as applicable): **ENG202Y5Y**

Briefly (150 words maximum) introduce the course, its position in its program, and writing assignments or instruction that have typically been used.

This course is a foundational historical survey of British literature from the Middle Ages to the end of the 18th century. It has formerly been one of two alternately required courses for the major (alternate ENG201Y5Y); but following the departmental curriculum reform now underway, this course will be required for all English majors. Its instructional form is lecture with weekly tutorials; assignments include two essays, two essay proposals, and two in-class tests. In the long term, my intention is to transform the course into a full active-learning experience, combining the course's lecture and tutorial hours and moving the whole into the largest of the new Active Learning Classrooms in North 2 once the building opens in 2018; the introduction of formative assessments and peer-feedback activities under the WDI would facilitate that transformation.

Indicate the desired learning outcomes for the proposal (as distinct from those for the course or courses as a whole), and how these learning outcomes relate to the learning outcomes of the course, courses, or program: that is, please indicate how the activities described in the proposal complement the rest of the student learning in the course or courses affected.

Writing assignments will become scaffolded, so that students will have the opportunity to review and revise their writing multiple times prior to final assessment; this aligns with the program requirement that students learn to write coherently and persuasively as a core element of the English major. The students will be given feedback on all aspects of essay writing, but particularly the skills of thesis formulation, close reading of textual evidence, and argumentative structure, with attention paid also to grammar, style, and MLA format.

Students will engage in directed peer feedback throughout the course, writing and reacting to small-scale formative assignments to be kept in a writing journal; this will enable them to learn how to analyze and constructively critique their own writing and their peers', and will enable them to build up a small body of their own work as a comparison point to what they are reading.

Students will learn, at various points in the course, how to compose at a basic

level in a variety of literary forms that they encounter throughout the course; this will enable them to remember and understand the techniques of literary composition, and will also help them to increase their confidence in their own writing beyond the form of the English essay.

Provide a basic overview of the strategies that will be used to improve students' writing— e.g., extra feedback on writing assignments; the use of scaffolded writing assignments; writing instruction; etc.

The students will engage in small, low-stakes writing assignments throughout the course; they will learn to assess their performance on these in peer-feedback groups. Progress in these assignments will be kept in writing journals, which their TAs will regularly check for progress.

The larger scale, summative assignments such as essays will undergo a process of drafting, revision, and resubmission; the TAs will provide targeted feedback as part of this process. The submission of a first draft will be required as part of the submission of the final essay; the first text submitted to the TAs will be regarded only as a first draft, even if it is submitted on the due date of the final essay, at which point late penalties will begin to be applied. In other words, the students will not be able to skip the drafting stage and still have the essay count for full marks.

If applicable, indicate how Teaching Assistants will be used in the project.

In addition to the TAs leading tutorial hours and marking assignments as they are now, there will be additional hours funded to cover the added feedback. Much of this work will be done as part of the existing tutorial time, but some must be added for the marking and assessment of drafts. Once the course is converted to a full Active Learning environment, the tutorial hours will be re-distributed into hours in the ALC, leading activities and discussion in that context.

Indicate whether additional TA training (beyond the WDI Writing TA Training session for new TAs) will be required and, if so, indicate the number of hours/TA (maximum 4), content of the training, and its relationship to the proposed student assessment or instruction.

For the coming year, TAs will need an hour of additional training in the supervision of peer feedback groups to ensure this technique's effectiveness; additionally, they will need an hour of training in the provision of targeted formative feedback on drafts. For the following year, they will also need an hour of training in the use of the Active Learning Classroom.

Describe the writing tasks incorporated as a direct result of the additional funding requested, and provide details on any writing instruction to be provided that relates to these tasks. If the funding is supporting an increased number of graded writing assignments, please indicate the number of additional words students will write.

The students will not be given additional graded writing assignments; rather, they will be given additional time and feedback on their essay drafts. This will require the TAs to have sufficient time to mark up and provide feedback on these drafts. The TAs will be marking up the drafts for all core skills, including thesis development, structure, argument, use of textual evidence, grammar and style, and MLA format.

Their smaller, peer-assessed formative assignments will be kept in a writing

journal; the completion of this journal will be checked as part of their participation mark, but the assignments in it will not be marked as summative assessments. These assignments will include the formulation and refinement of research questions; the imitation (as noted previously) of certain literary and rhetorical forms; and brief personal reactions to their reading.

Clearly state the number of students participating in the project. If applicable, indicate the maximum enrolment for the relevant course(s) and the final enrolment in the course(s) the last time it was/they were offered. Please also indicate the course's or courses' relationship to the broader program of study.

The course has a cap of 150; the final enrollment this year was 108. The course is foundational to the program as a whole, and once the curriculum reforms now underway are official it will be required for all students in the major.

Provide details on how the funded activities will impact and support students, if the proposed project is not restricted to a specific course (or courses).

Not applicable

Indicate any other resources you will use to support your project (library, RGASC, online resources, etc.).

The RGASC will provide training support for the TAs and will help the instructor formulate and assess the new kinds of assessment in the course. At least some of the peer assessment and writing journals may be hosted on Blackboard; the library will be an invaluable resource for this purpose. During the transition to the ALC, the Active Learning Classroom Community of Practice and the UTM library will also be invaluable resources in making the shift.

Include a detailed budget.

The main requirement will be additional TA hours; at a rate of \$42.26/hour for 3 TAs, with 150 students enrolled in the course, I expect the additional TA budget to read as follows:

3 hours of additional training x 3 TAs: \$380.34

**25 hours of checking writing journals for completion (10 minutes/student):
\$1056.5**

150 hours of provision of draft feedback (30 minutes/student/draft; 2 drafts to be revised, 1 each term): \$6339

Note that the extra time per student works out to 35 minutes per term for a two-term course.

TOTAL: \$7775.84

Please confirm that you (as the Instructor and/or originator of the proposal) approve this proposal and indicate approval here with a check mark:



Please confirm that your Chair supports this proposal and indicate approval here with a check mark:

