



University Writing Program  
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Dear DU Honors Student,

I'm writing to explain some of the learning opportunities unique to the Honors Writing course (WRIT 1733). Each section of this is designed with Honors students in mind. You can expect a high level of intellectual rigor and an innovative approach to writing at the university level. Honors Writing is not the kind of introduction to essay or expository writing that we imagine that you've had in high school or elsewhere. It is interdisciplinary in scope and asks students to engage with different academic, civic, and popular discourses. You can expect to write in situations and genres you have not encountered in other writing classes. Our approach promises to challenge students to read critically, think rhetorically, and write more effectively.

WRIT 1733 will include instruction in rhetorical theory and practice, and participants will become conversant with rhetorical concepts such as ethos, pathos, logos, kairos, stasis theory, and so on. You may have encountered some of these previously, but we'll take up their study in more depth, perhaps even including reading in primary sources. With an understanding of the ancient origins of rhetorical theory, you'll be able to apply these concepts for analyzing a broad range of texts—for example, contemporary, historical, visual, electronic, in multiple disciplines—and for producing texts of your own.

Research will be an important part of Honors Writing, but we'll go beyond typical library research papers you might have experienced. Of course, WRIT 1733 will become familiar with the myriad research tools and resources available on campus, including electronic databases, special collections, and government documents. But university research takes many forms, in many traditions. (The fancy word for how various traditions develop and share knowledge is "epistemology.") Accordingly, WRIT 1733 will explore implications for writers using those various traditions. Honors students will have the opportunity to take their study beyond the library and out into the field to conduct their own primary research. Field research in this course may involve the design and implementation of a survey (quantitative research), conducting an interview with a local expert (qualitative research), or close observation and documentation of socio-cultural phenomena (ethnographic research), to offer but a few examples.

Sections of WRIT 1733 may focus on a central theme, and will include complex readings of interest to students across the disciplines. Within this framework, Honors students will be invited to choose and direct their own work.

If you have received AP, IB, or transfer credit for WRIT 1122, you should enroll in WRIT 1733 during the winter quarter; when you complete the course, you will have finished the first year writing requirement. If you don't have credit for WRIT 1122, then you should enroll in WRIT 1622: Advanced Writing Seminar during the winter quarter, followed by WRIT 1733 in the spring.

Writing professors are happy to address your questions about the specifics of our individual courses or about the guiding principles behind our approaches. Please feel free to contact individual instructors or the Director of Writing, Dr. Doug Hesse, with your questions. We look forward to seeing you in our Honors Writing classrooms!

Sincerely,

Doug Hesse, Director and Professor