



University Writing Program
Penrose Library 202
2150 E. Evans
Denver, CO 80208
303.871.7448 Fax 303.871.7665
<http://www.du.edu/writing>

August 2011

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 aspects of ancient and contemporary rhetorical theory and practice, and students will study 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, including reading in primary sources. You'll apply concepts in analyzing a broad range of texts—for example, contemporary, historical, visual, electronic, in multiple disciplines—and in producing texts of your own.

Research is an important part of Honors Writing, but you'll go beyond the typical library research papers you undoubtedly have experienced. 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. For at least some class projects, honors students will take their study beyond the library and out into the field, conducting primary research. Depending on your section, you may design and implement a survey (quantitative research), interview experts or specific individuals or groups (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, including primary texts in rhetorical theory. 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 spring 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