

University of Chicago Writing Program

OPPORTUNITY APPLICATION PACKET 2023-24 ACADEMIC YEAR

Application Deadline: Wednesday, January 25th at 2:00pm CST

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We hire graduate students from all divisions and programs,
to teach students from all divisions and programs.

NB: We hire graduate students who are covered by the terms of their Pedagogical Teaching Plans and those who are not covered by said plans. Please check with your department to see if Writing Program positions are covered by the terms of your Pedagogical Teaching Plan. Some departments have asked students who want to teach outside their Pedagogical Teaching Plans to follow departmental policies for accepting opportunities outside their departments. Please check with your department to see if it has developed such a policy.

APPLICATIONS FOR 2023-24 ACADEMIC YEAR

OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE TO GRADUATE STUDENTS - BRIEF DESCRIPTIONS

Application Deadline: Wednesday, January 25th at 2:00pm CST

We offer several teaching positions for graduate students:

1. **Lectors** are graduate students teaching as course assistants in [our advanced writing course ENGL 13000/33000: Academic and Professional Writing \(a.k.a. Little Red Schoolhouse\)](#). Lectors typically work one or two quarters a year, depending on scheduling and course demand. Lectors may also have opportunities to work in summer quarter. Lectors must complete a training course in Autumn 2023. This course may be taken for credit (ENGL 50300: Principles of Teaching Writing). Lectors who complete the ENGL 50300 training course are eligible to teach as a Writing Tutor, Humanities Writing Intern, or as a Lector in other courses.
2. **Writing Interns in the Humanities Core** are graduate students who assist faculty by providing writing instruction in first-year Humanities Common Core courses. Writing Interns typically work for two quarters of an academic year (Autumn and Winter), depending on scheduling and course demand. Writing Interns must complete a training course in Spring 2023 or Summer 2023. This course may be taken for credit (HUMA 50000: Pedagogies of Writing). After successfully completing their training, Writing Interns may also be eligible to work as Writing Tutors.
3. **Writing Tutors** are graduate students who work individually with students in the Common Core sequences. Writing Tutors typically work one to three quarters a year, depending on scheduling and student demand. Writing Tutors must complete a training course in Spring 2023 or Summer 2023. This course may be taken for credit (HUMA 50000: Pedagogies of Writing). After successfully completing their training, Writing Tutors may also be eligible to work as Humanities Writing Interns. Writing Tutor positions do not count toward students' Pedagogical Teaching Plans.

For more information about the Lector, Writing Intern and Writing Tutor positions, see writing-program.uchicago.edu/jobs

General Qualifications

- A. We accept applications for Lector, Writing Intern, and Writing Tutor positions from those who are currently enrolled in a graduate degree program at the University of Chicago. You need not be in advanced residency to apply and to work in these positions.

We ask all graduate students to check with their departments to determine whether Lector or Writing Intern positions will count toward their Pedagogical Teaching Plan, and whether they are eligible to teach with the Writing Program outside of their Pedagogical Teaching Plan (if applicable). If your department has questions about the position(s) before they decide on eligibility, please encourage them to contact us at writing-program@uchicago.edu.

The Writing Intern position is highly competitive, and a limited number of Writing Intern positions are available. We encourage those who are interested in the Writing Intern position to also apply for one or both of our other positions, if they align with your pedagogical development goals.

- B. Current MAPH, MAPSS, and CIR applicants are an exception to our general qualifications about current enrollment in a degree program by special arrangement. We welcome your application!

- C. MAPH applicants who are incoming students must receive permission from their graduate departments prior to applying for 2023-24 Writing Program positions.
- D. **We welcome applicants from throughout the University.** You do not need prior experience teaching writing; you do not need to be in a literature department; you do not need to have been an undergraduate major in rhetoric, composition, or literary studies. You do not need to be a native English speaker.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS & PROCEDURE

The application requires the following six components:

1. **One Letter of Recommendation**

The letter of recommendation should be from someone familiar with your teaching or your potential as a teacher. It's less important to get a letter from someone who can speak to the quality of your scholarly work than it is to get a letter evaluating the way you interact in a classroom.

If you have no previous teaching experience, we suggest you ask someone who has seen you participate in a class, seminar, or workshop. The letter does not have to be from a member of the University of Chicago faculty, so if you have teaching experience at another institution, a letter from a faculty member there may be best. A second letter of recommendation is permitted, but not at all required.

Please ask your recommendation writer to send the letter by email to **writing-program@uchicago.edu** by the application deadline. Recommendations may not be accepted after Friday, **January 27th at 5:00pm CST**.

Submit all your other materials (below) to us on the Writing Program website by the application deadline. Prepare the five materials below **before** you start submitting them on our website, as they must be submitted at the same time.

2. **Personal Statement and Cover Sheet**

In 1-2 pages (single-spaced), please let us know about your writing and revision experiences, your approach to writing, and/or anything else you think relevant. The cover sheet is included in this packet.

3. **Resumé or Curriculum Vitae (CV)**

A resumé or CV detailing your education and teaching experience.

4. **Writing Sample and Cover Sheet**

7-10 pages (double-spaced). You are welcome to submit a *portion* of a longer paper. Do **NOT** put your name on this. The cover sheet is included in this packet.

5. **Sample Student Paper Comment**

The paper itself is included in this packet. Do **NOT** put your name on this. If Microsoft Word automatically inserts your name anywhere in the file, rest assured that we will take care to anonymize it before distributing the application to the reviewers.

You may take up to an hour to comment on the paper, using any combination of end comments and marginal comments that you think appropriate. We ask you to pretend you're writing to the *author* of the paper, *not* to us. We're interested in how you engage with the writer, and the way you use the paper comment as an opportunity to teach the writer something about writing.

When you have all of these items assembled and you are ready to fill out the application form, you may do so here:

<https://voices.uchicago.edu/writingprogram/jobs/apply/>

FORMS FOR APPLICATION MATERIALS BELOW

Cover Sheet One: Personal Statement Cover Sheet

Please create a copy of this cover sheet as a separate Word file and submit it with your other application materials.

Your first name:	Your last name:	Your email:

Recommender's name and email:

Personal Statement

In 1-2 pages (single-spaced), let us know about your writing and revision experiences, your approach to writing, and/or anything else you think relevant. You may paste your statement below or include it in a separate document.

Cover Sheet Two: Cover Sheet for Writing Sample

Office Use Only: Application number _____

Please paste this cover sheet to the beginning of your writing sample. To allow us to judge this portion of your application anonymously, **please do not include your name on this cover sheet or the writing sample itself.**

1. Is your submission (part of) a:

dissertation chapter journal article conference paper

paper for coursework

other: _____

2. Please provide a brief synopsis of the piece you have submitted: what is your overall argument, and/or what are the main points that you're trying to communicate to your readers?

3. Is this an excerpt of a larger project? If so, how does it fit into the larger project?

4. Who are your intended readers? What disciplines are you writing for, and what might your imagined audiences care about? [For example: perhaps you're writing for a Sociology audience, but also for a more interdisciplinary audience of scholars interested in urban studies.]

5. What about the piece are you most happy with?

6. Few writers believe their writing is perfect. You may feel that a central concept eluded description, or that a key paragraph escaped all bounds of rational structure, or that a sensitive issue might not have been framed in the best possible way. In a paragraph or less, please tell us what about this piece gave you the most difficulty as a writer.

Sample Student Paper for Commenting

For this portion of the application, we ask you to spend **no more than 80 minutes** to read the sample student paper below and perform two kinds of tasks, detailed below.

Context for this paper: Your student, Jamie, has sent the following draft to you and would like feedback. Don't feel that you need to demonstrate to us everything you know about writing; likewise, this is not a copyediting test. We are more interested in what you would do to support this student's growth as a writer.

Task 1: Diagnosing the Paper for Us.

After reading the sample paper, use the template below to list *for us* two writing skills that you believe the student has already mastered fairly well and two to three writing issues that you believe should be priorities for this student over the course of the quarter. Use the template provided below and limit yourself to about 50 words per item. Please spend no more than 20 minutes on Task 1.

Positive Writing Skills the Student Displayed	Writing Issues the Student Should Work On
1.	1.
2.	2.
	3.

Task 2: Write a Paper Comment to the Student. Write a fairly long, detailed comment (about 3/4s of a page, single-spaced) meant for the student writer, Jamie. You're welcome to include bubble comments as part of your feedback to the student. For this comment, use the paper as an occasion to teach the student one or at most two writing skills you believe will help the student address a writing issue you identified in Task 1. (Don't forget, the student won't have access to what you've written for us in Task 1. Anything you want the student to understand about their writing will have to be explained in the paper comment.)

While your comment should keep in mind that this is a draft that can be revised, your comment should, at the same time, teach the student something about writing that they can use in future papers. Please spend no more than 60 minutes on Task 2.

Submit Comment 1 and 2 as one Word document.

Balance of Power

In the Iliad, Zeus is described as by far the mightiest and wisest of the gods. The will of Zeus determines the events which occur throughout the war. In many instances, however, one finds evidence that this gap between the power of Zeus and the other Olympians is not nearly as wide as it is said to be. Not only do the other gods defy, trick, and resist Zeus, but at times they do so easily, and without showing any great fear of being caught and incurring his wrath. In some of his interactions with the other gods, especially those with Hera, Zeus clearly seems like the weaker of the two, and his wife easily fools and manipulates him. One must even question the strength of his will, since he cannot even easily control the actions of mortals all the time. That Zeus reigns over gods and men as the strongest being in the universe is clear, but it is doubtful whether the extent of his power is as great as he himself and others say. Through his interactions with mortals and the other gods, one sees that the power of Zeus, though said to be by far the greatest of all, is rather more limited in his power; and that the idea of a single supreme being is absent from the Homeric world, the power of heaven being more delicately balanced.

When the poet describes Zeus as the one “who rules the world,” (Iliad.15.443) he makes clear that Zeus is the master of all other beings. When Zeus himself, after ordering the other gods not to interfere in the war, says “you can never drag me down from sky to earth, not Zeus, the highest, mightiest king of kings...But whenever I’d set my mind to drag you up, in deadly earnest, I’d hoist you up with ease, you and the earth, and the sea all together...that is how far I tower over the gods,” (8.23-24, 26-28, 31) he shows that he believes his power is infinitely greater than the power of all the other gods. However, Zeus’ strength is not great enough to terrify the other gods into obeying him. When the poet says that Poseidon “surging in secret out of the gray surf went driving into the Argive ranks and lashed them on, and his churning outrage rose against great Zeus,” (13. 408-411) he reveals that the other gods are willing to disobey Zeus for the sake of accomplishing their own ends. Poseidon acts in secret so as to stop Zeus from physically preventing him from going down to the Argives. However, he still runs the risk of being caught, and he is willing to take that chance. When Iris rebukes him for his actions, he even dares to deny that Zeus has the right to give him orders, and that Zeus’ honors are greater than his own (15. 220-234).

Zeus is not only stronger than the other gods, but wiser than they are as well. Menelaus, crying out “Zeus, Father Zeus, they say you excel all others, all men and gods, in wisdom clear

and calm,” (13.727-728) reveals that all attribute Zeus with the greatest knowledge. Hera, however, tricks him easily, and makes him believe her lies with almost no effort. When Hera, having seen Poseidon fighting for the Argives, seduces Zeus into turning away from the war so they can make love, Zeus has no inkling that he is being tricked. Upon awaking, he sees what has happened, and chastises Hera. Replying “Never by will of mine did the god of earthquakes wreak havoc among the Trojan ranks and Hector and surge to help their foes...Not I...why I’d be the first to counsel him to take your lead, Zeus, wherever you command, my king of the black cloud,” (15.52-54, 57-59), she confidently lies to and flatters him, showing no sign of fear. When Zeus answers “Excellent Hera. Now, if in the years to come you will accord with me...Poseidon, bent as he is to go his own way, must change at once and wrench his will to ours,” (15. 63-64, 66-67) one sees that in only a few lines Hera has managed to completely dupe the wisest of all the gods.

Zeus’ will is the force which drives the events of the war and decides the fates of men. The poet establishes this early on, when he calls the many Argive deaths “the will of Zeus...moving towards its end.” (1.6) Zeus decrees the fates of the Greeks and the Trojans with his sacred scales (8.81-87). However, everything Hera and Poseidon accomplish while Zeus sleeps goes directly against his will. Even a mere mortal can come close to resisting the will of Zeus. When the poet tells us that Diomedes, tempted to try to kill Hector even though Zeus favors him, “was torn two ways—he’d half a mind to turn the team and take him face to face...Three times Tydides was tempted, heart and soul, three times from the crags of Ida Zeus let loose his thunder, the Master Strategist handing down a sign to the Trojans,” (8.190-194) he shows that even the will of a mortal can make a stand against the will of Zeus. Only after three attempts does Zeus finally over power Diomedes’ heart, and force him to turn back. Zeus’ will may be the strongest, but he does not accomplish his ends easily.

The fact that Zeus can at times be easily defied and resisted by the other gods, and that his will can be challenged by a mere man, shows that his dominance over gods and men is not as great as it is said to be. Zeus is indeed the strongest of all, but the extent of his supremacy is not so great that he can easily control the outcome of the war. Instead, he must work to keep men and the other gods in check. With Zeus as the example of the mightiest being in the Iliad, one sees that the idea of a truly supreme being is absent from the Homeric world. Zeus is undoubtedly the leader, but the distribution of power is not as one-sided as it is said to be. Rather, power within the Homeric divine world is portioned out more evenly, with different gods

asserting themselves at different times. Even Zeus has a little trouble making the war turn out the way he wants.

DEADLINES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

The Winter 2023 application **deadline** is **Wednesday, January 25th at 2:00pm CST.**

Once we receive your application, it will be assigned a number, and will be identified to the application readers only by that number. The writing sample and paper comment will be rated without any knowledge of who you are. Each application will be read by two people within the Writing Program.

[For more information about our open positions and the application process, please click here.](#)

or contact us at **writing-program@uchicago.edu**.

DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS OF WRITING PROGRAM OPPORTUNITIES

Lector: Academic & Professional Writing

(A.K.A. THE LITTLE RED SCHOOLHOUSE OR "LRS")

Position Description.

Academic and Professional Writing is a course in advanced writing for upper-level undergraduates and graduate students. At the undergraduate level, it addresses the needs of third and fourth-year students who are preparing for advanced writing challenges, including writing a B.A. thesis, applying to graduate school, and applying to professional school. The course meets twice weekly (T/Th, 2:00-3:20pm). Each week students attend one lecture given by the LRS faculty, and one Lector-run writing seminar with no more than **seven students**. The seminar discussions focus on students' weekly writing assignments. Lector responsibilities include preparing for and leading the seminar discussions, reading and commenting on all weekly papers for their seven students, and recommending both paper and course grades. Lectors may also hold occasional office hours and meet with students to discuss individual problems.

Commitment:

1. Attending one lecture each week
2. Preparing for and leading one writing seminar each week
3. Submitting written comments for seven papers each week

Training. Lectors are required to attend a quarter-long training course in **Autumn quarter.** This course typically meets on Monday afternoons from 3:00 PM - 5:50 PM. This course may be taken for credit (ENGL 50300: Principles of Teaching Writing). In addition, during their first quarters of work, Lectors are required to attend the weekly lectures with their students.

Compensation. In 2022-23, Lectors earned a base salary of \$3,000 per quarter. Some advanced graduate students may be eligible for a higher salary as determined by their Dean of Students. Lectors in the fifth year of Ph.D. study and beyond may be eligible for tuition remission in the quarters they work (check with your Division). We ask all graduate students to check with their departments to determine whether Lector positions will count toward their Pedagogical Teaching Plan, and whether they are eligible to teach with the Writing Program outside of their Pedagogical Teaching Plan (if applicable).

Further Opportunities. Once you have worked as a Lector and received satisfactory evaluations from the Writing Program and from your students, you may continue working as a Lector at either the undergraduate or graduate level. You may be eligible to work as a Writing Intern in the Humanities Common Core, if sections become available in Autumn or Winter quarters. You will not need to reapply to the Writing Program to obtain these positions.

Special Qualifications. The least important qualification is prior experience or an extensive background in teaching English. We have found that the most important qualifications are an analytical mind and the ability to work with undergraduates in a friendly and courteous way. About two-thirds of the Lectors selected regularly come from outside the Humanities Division.

Term of Appointment. Winter and/or Spring 2024; possible positions for Summer 2024. Lectors are appointed quarterly, and reappointment is contingent on satisfactory performance.

Writing Intern: Humanities Core

Position Description

The chief responsibility of the Humanities Writing Intern is to provide a writing component in a Humanities Common Core section of approximately **17-19 students**. The Writing Intern position is a highly competitive position. Graduate students from all divisions and programs are eligible to apply. The Writing Intern assists the University faculty member who teaches the section. The duties of Writing Interns will vary, but generally they read the course texts and attend class, read and comment on student papers, and teach writing in small seminar groups. Writing Interns may have the opportunity to lead one or two discussions of texts in the main class.

Writing Interns divide their class into seminar groups of no more than seven students, and meet with each of these seminar groups three times. Each writing seminar lasts 80 minutes.

Commitment:

1. Attending and reading for two class discussions per week
2. Preparing for and leading nine small group seminars over the quarter
3. Writing paper comments on half of the student papers (split with the instructor).

Training. Writing Interns must complete a quarter-long training course in **Spring 2023 or Summer 2023**. The seminar will require approximately three hours per week of class time and two hours per week of preparation. The training may be taken for course credit (HUMA 50000: Pedagogies of Writing).

Compensation. In 2021-22, Writing Interns received a base salary of \$3,000 per section per quarter. Some advanced graduate students may be eligible for a higher salary as determined by their Dean of Students. Writing Interns in the fifth year of Ph.D. study and beyond may be eligible for tuition remission in the quarters they work. We ask all graduate students to check with their departments to determine whether Writing Intern positions will count toward their Pedagogical Teaching Plan, and whether they are eligible to teach with the Writing Program outside of their Pedagogical Teaching Plan (if applicable).

Further Opportunities. Once you have worked as a Writing Intern and received satisfactory evaluations from the Writing Program and from your students, you are eligible for re-appointment as a Writing Intern in future quarters. You need not reapply to the Writing Program to be re-appointed as a Writing Intern, and you may take quarters off and return as your availability dictates.

Special Qualifications. You do not necessarily need specialized knowledge of the scholarly work done on the texts in a particular Humanities Core Course. Such knowledge helps, of course, but we have found that the most important qualifications are an analytical mind, the ability to read challenging texts carefully, and the ability to work with undergraduates in a friendly and courteous way.

Term of Appointment. Autumn and/or Winter quarter. Writing Interns are appointed quarterly, and reappointment is contingent on satisfactory performance.

College Core Writing Tutors

Position Description

Writing Tutors provide writing support on a one-on-one basis to writers in the Common Core sequences. They're not copyeditors or proofreaders; instead, Writing Tutors work with writers on individual papers in order to help improve writers' overall skills in academic argumentation and structure.

Writing Tutors can:

- Help writers brainstorm on how to get started on a paper or how to best approach a paper assignment or prompt, particularly in terms of how to construct an argument.
- Read a full or partial draft of a paper and comment on its overall argumentation (use of textual evidence, logical flow of argument, persuasive placement of points, etc.).
- Read a full or partial draft of a paper and comment on its organization, both globally and at the paragraph level.
- Make suggestions for how to revise a paper for greater coherence, clarity, and persuasiveness of argument.

Writing Tutors can work one to three 4-hour shifts per week in the Arley D. Cathey North Reading Room. Shifts are offered in the afternoons and evenings, Sundays through Fridays from Week 2 through Finals Week. Tutoring may also occur over Zoom if circumstances require us to do so.

Commitment:

1. Teach writing on a one-on-one basis to College Core students during a 4-hour shift each week for nine weeks.

Training. In Spring 2023 or Summer 2023, Writing Tutors complete the training course (HUMA 50000: Pedagogies of Writing) to learn writing principles as well as theories and practices in one-on-one pedagogy. Writing Tutors also attend brief staff meetings 1-2 times each quarter, such as the brief Tutor orientation session in Week 1 where new Tutors learn how to use the appointment management system.

Compensation. The beginning salary for Writing Tutors is \$17.00 per hour. Writing Tutors receive a \$0.50 per hour raise for each quarter they continue to work, up to \$23.00 per hour. The Writing Tutor position is not eligible for tuition remission, and does not count toward students' Pedagogical Teaching Plans.

Term of Appointment. Autumn and/or Winter quarter, with more limited availability in Spring. Writing Tutors are appointed quarterly, and reappointment is contingent on satisfactory performance.