Colby Writing Project Curriculum Development Grants
For Introductory Writing Intensive Courses
Round 4 – Spring 2012

Description
In May 2010, Colby College launched an initiative to improve our students’ writing skills across the disciplines. Approved by the faculty, this initiative reflects the commitment of the Colby community to excellence in writing as a lifelong practice. Now named the Colby Writing Project, the initiative is expanding the number of writing-intensive courses throughout the curriculum in a fashion that engages our students in repeated opportunities to improve their writing skills across all four years of study. The first phase of the Colby Writing Project invites faculty across all disciplines to create introductory writing-intensive experiences; these W1 courses, together with sections of EN115, will fulfill the W1 requirement for first-year students. All introductory writing-intensive courses will be capped at 16 students. The curricular content of these courses will reflect the discipline in which they are offered but will differ from other courses within a department or program in terms of their writing intensity.

With the generous support of a Davis Educational Foundation grant, the Colby Writing Project Steering Committee is now inviting faculty with continuing academic appointments to submit proposals for introductory writing-intensive courses to be taught beginning in the 2012-2013 academic year. Successful applicants will receive a grant of $3,000, priority access to curricular development workshops and training seminars, and preferential support from the Farnham Writers’ Center that includes access to writing fellows to provide tutorial and pedagogical support when the courses are taught. Up to three more W1 grants will be awarded during the 2011-2012 academic year.

Common Understandings
An important aspect of an expanded introductory writing-intensive curriculum at Colby is the focus it brings to shared principles of excellent writing, no matter the discipline. Whatever the subject, course proposals should include curricular content that incorporates the following common understandings for introductory writing-intensive courses at Colby:

i. Students must write on a weekly basis, either formally for a grade or in an ungraded fashion across a variety of modes.
ii. During the course, students will normally be expected to write three to four essays, with revision, for a term total of approximately 20 pages of graded writing.

iii. Instructors will make use of rubrics or explicit guidelines in the assessment of their students’ writing. These guidelines will be communicated to the students in advance of the assigned writing exercise.

iv. Course work may include peer editing, in-class writing, and other writing opportunities such as journals, blogs, speeches, editorials, summaries, response papers, and position papers.

v. For each essay, students will receive feedback on their writing in an individual conference, either with the instructor or a writing fellow.

vi. Students will learn and use appropriate documentation and citation styles.

vii. Students will learn the meaning and consequences of plagiarism.

viii. Instructors must assign a grammar and usage handbook, or its equivalent, as a reference. The director of the Farnham Writers’ Center will provide recommendations upon request.

**Grant Guidelines**

- Proposals for introductory writing-intensive courses are welcome from Colby faculty members with continuing appointments.
- Proposals for revisions to existing courses will be considered, and are encouraged.
- Each successful applicant should plan to teach the newly developed course in at least two of the next three academic years, beginning in 2012-13. Recipients will receive their grant in the initial pay period of the term they first teach their course.
- Instructors may teach the newly designed introductory writing-intensive courses more than once in the same academic year.
- Each faculty member teaching an introductory writing-intensive course will have the support of a writing fellow trained and employed by the Farnham Writers’ Center. Writing fellows will serve as liaisons between the instructors and the students to the Farnham Writers’ Center and to reference librarians and may provide tutorial instruction as well as peer review and tutoring sessions for assigned essays or papers.
- Applications for team-taught courses will be considered, either in conjunction with an Integrated Studies Program Cluster or for two courses with a thematically-tied
curriculum across multiple terms (e.g., fall/JanPlan or JanPlan/Spring). Proposals will be strongest if the proposed W1 course can stand alone if necessary.

**Curricular and Pedagogical Course Development Support**

Faculty members who receive grants are encouraged to participate in curriculum development workshops to be held in the spring of the 2011-2012 academic year and in subsequent academic years. These workshops will provide specific pedagogical and curricular design support to faculty as they develop their courses. The Colby Writing Project Steering Committee will also provide support for training seminars for all faculty to facilitate a sharing of best practices in the teaching of writing. The Farnham Writers’ Center will provide additional support for methods of assessment, tutorial assistance, and curriculum development.

**Application Process**

Please submit your application electronically and include:

1. Your name and academic appointment;
2. A draft description of your proposed course that articulates the most important learning goals;
3. A preliminary syllabus or tentative outline of topics to be covered in the course;
4. A statement describing how this course will meet the common understandings outlined above and how your course might make use of a writing fellow; and
5. A statement of support from your department chair or program director that addresses how this offering will affect both staffing and the broader curricular goals for the major.

**Timetable**

The deadline for this round of applications is Friday, March 16, 2011. Please email your application to Paul Greenwood (pggreenw@colby.edu).