

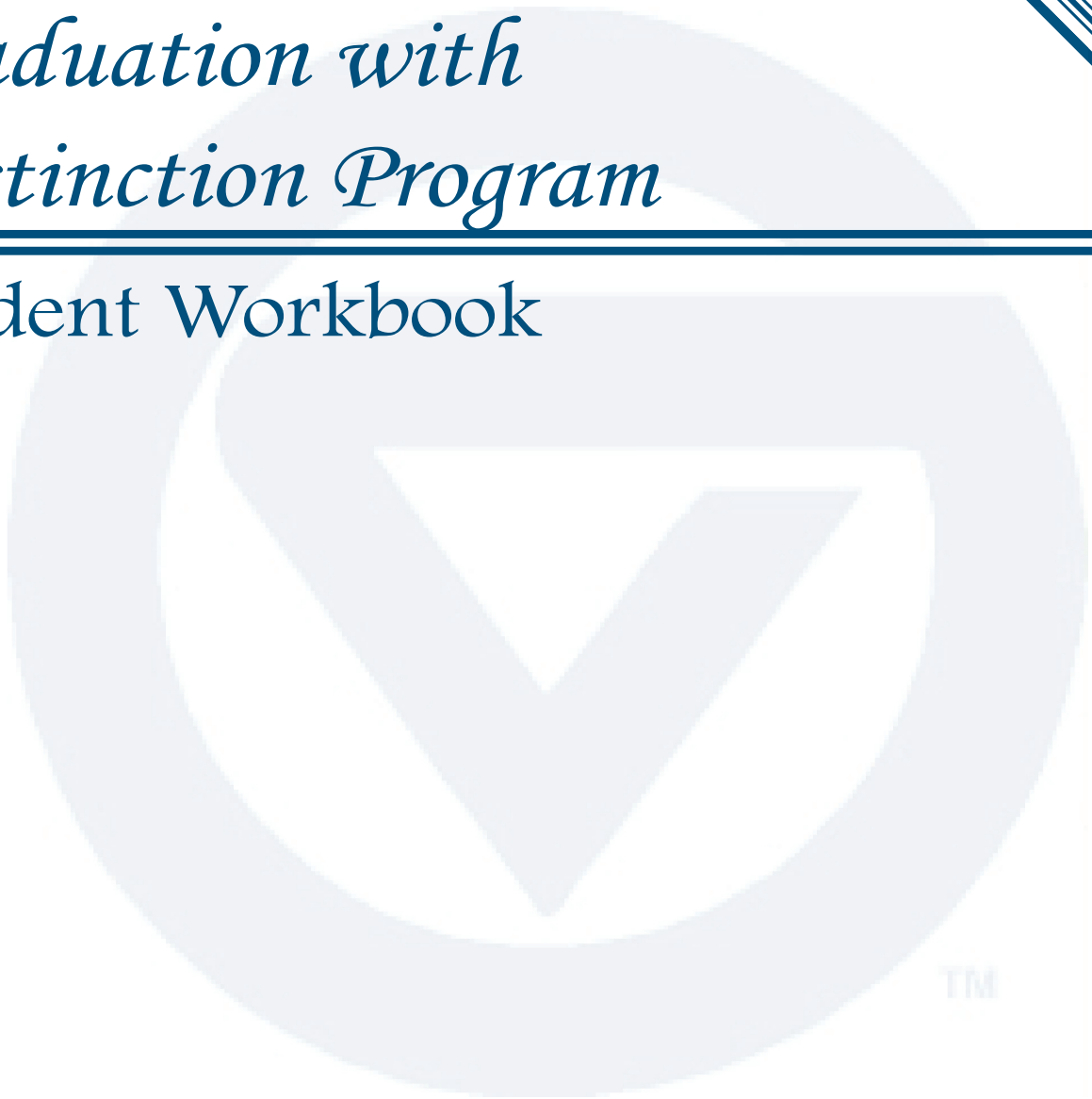


Grand Valley State University  
Writing Department

# *Graduation with Distinction Program*

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## Student Workbook



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## ***Before you begin!***

*To make your journey through this program a little easier, look for the Helpful Hint! and side note boxes. Important information is located here.*

***Good luck and have fun!***





*“Quality is never an accident;  
it is always the result of high  
intention, sincere effort,  
intelligent direction and  
skillful execution; it  
represents the wise choice of  
many alternatives.”*

*~ Willa A. Foster*

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# Program Overview

Helping the individual reach their full potential is the goal of Grand Valley State University. The Writing Department has implemented the Graduation with Distinction program, encouraging writing majors to pursue a wide variety of experiences and accomplishments to add to their regular curriculum over a two-year span. Often these out-of-class activities enrich our lives, shape us, and help us to be the active, creative humane people we aspire to be. The Graduation with Distinction program recognizes those students who pursue and achieve excellence beyond the classroom.

Graduation with Distinction allows students to explore different interests throughout an extended series of independent studies. While there are guidelines that must be followed in order to meet the requirements, there is flexibility as to how they can be met. This program is based entirely upon the initiative of the student. Participation is encouraged but not required.

***Still got questions about the program?***

***Well, we've got answers...***

**Q: What are the benefits of this program?**

- Graduating with honors
- Exposure to a variety of writing skills in many different kinds of learning opportunities (this is great for job skills!)
- Notation on your degree (also looks great on resumes)

**Q: When can I get started?**

**A:** Ideally, you will begin the program working with your advisor in your sophomore year, and should be able to complete all components in two years.

**Q: I don't have to start until sophomore year?**

**A:** Toward the end of your freshmen year you should begin looking into whether or not you think the Graduation with Distinction program is right for you. A couple of things you may want to do to aid your decision are to talk to your advisor about any questions you may have concerning the program, review this workbook, or contact the Writing Department for additional information.

## ***Sign me up!***

*To begin, we've put together some information that you should bear in mind while you're completing the program. We hope the provided information will be helpful in your academic journey here at Grand Valley....let's begin!*

# *Getting Started*

## **Eligibility:**

Any writing major is eligible to participate in the program. There is no official “enrollment” required, however, you should express the intent to pursue the program by submitting a form to a departmental advisor. As stated in the overview you should begin planning for this program with your academic advisor at the beginning of your sophomore year. You should be able to complete all the necessary requirements in two years. Participation becomes officially recognized only upon completion, which is signaled by the submission of your final portfolio to your advisor. At this time, your GPA must be at least 3.0 within your Writing major.

## **Your Responsibility:**

As stated in the overview, this program is based entirely on your initiative. You need to seek and complete all the appropriate activities, retain any required documentation, and keep in regular contact with your advisor. Don’t worry, this workbook will provide you with the framework, but you are responsible for enacting the program.

## **Time Commitment:**

The total time commitment should be roughly equivalent to two additional courses. Typically, Level A activities require a semester-long commitment while Level B activities require a briefer, yet substantial-commitment. These levels and the programs are explained on the next page.

### ***Helpful Hint!***

*If you do not know who your advisor is it’s okay. You can contact the academic advising office and ask them which advisor has been assigned to you. Usually once you have declared your major you will be assigned an advisor.*

*You can also contact the Writing Dept. if you have additional information. See the Resource Appendix (p.21) for more information.*

### ***Helpful Hint!***

*Once you decide to pursue the program you should hand in the request form to your advisor letting them know that you are serious about the program and would like to begin as soon as possible.*

*You can pick up a form at the Writing Department: 326 Lake Ontario Hall*

## Components:

You will need to choose four of the five following program components to complete.

- Writing Among Disciplines
- Writing in Off-Campus Communities
- Writing Across Cultures
- Writing as a Professional
- Writing for a Publication or Performance

Each component allows you to apply your writing skills and talents to a specific project. However, in order to receive credit for a component within the program, you must finish either one (1) Level A activity or two (2) Level B activities.

The activities listed under each component are offered as suggestions. You and your advisor should not limit yourselves to only these suggestions. Instead they should be used as a guide toward tailoring the program and the activities that suit you. Many of the activities within the components will likely have a certain degree of overlap with one or more of the other components. You and your advisor should work together to ensure that you complete the program with a broad range of activities represented.

## Recognition:

Those students who complete the program and meet all the requirements will be honored at graduation with a notation in the program, as well as an Honor Cord. In order to be recognized at graduation, the program must be complete by the time a student's graduation audit is requested. Additionally, the Writing Department will sponsor a luncheon honoring those students and their families, and the students' names will be added to a plaque in the Writing department.

### ***Helpful Hint!***

*You are not limited to the Level A and Level B activities listed. You can work with your advisor to come up with activities that work and best suit your interests, so make sure to contact your advisor right away!*

# Writing Among Disciplines

When you major in a discipline, your purpose is to demonstrate mastery in that particular field. This component builds on the idea of mastery, allowing you the opportunity to erase disciplinary boundaries in the following kinds of projects:

**Collaborative:** projects or activities completed by multiple creators (the student in collaboration with other students, faculty, or professionals), who may come from the same discipline. These activities are expected to be multidisciplinary in concept.

**Interdisciplinary:** projects or activities which have multiple collaborators from different disciplines.

**Transdisciplinary:** projects or activities completed by a single creator (the student), which are multidisciplinary in concept.

The best projects and activities will combine disciplines in new ways. When appropriate, you should accompany projects with a paper that includes a statement regarding the value of this particular interdisciplinary activity. Projects submitted in fields that are by definition interdisciplinary, such as hypertext media or writing for the web, must show how their project transcends the traditional interdisciplinary nature of their field.

## Level A

- ☐ Complete an internship in a setting that encourages interdisciplinary activities.
- ☐ Publish and distribute a project such as a literary journal, magazine, or short film.
- ☐ Student Summer Scholars Project (must be interdisciplinary in nature).
- ☐ Collaborate with a student from History (or another discipline) to write a history of an organization.

## Level B

- ☐ Present an interdisciplinary paper at a local/regional/national conference, such as Student Scholarship day.
- ☐ Present an interdisciplinary project in a public setting on a local/regional/national level (this can include a class presentation, if the presentation goes beyond the normal requirements of the course).
- ☐ Publish and distribute a project such as a literary journal, magazine, or short film.
- ☐ Lead a workshop or a discussion group.



# *Notes*



# Writing in Off-Campus Communities

## Helpful Hint!

*Because you will be participating as an unofficial representative of GVSU's Writing Department, you should seek approval from your advisor. The Writing department does not want to contribute to the already-high rate of turnover among community volunteers, and the best way to do that is to make sure you are matched with the right program.*

While completing a degree in residence on the GVSU campus, your purpose is to ensure a coherent experience among the university's graduates. This component gives you the opportunity to use your writing, reading, and design skills beyond the campus setting for the benefit of local or regional residents.

Activities in this component are volunteer activities that serve a community organization of some kind. Each year, the Writing Department will publicize a number of volunteer opportunities arranged specifically for students with abilities in writing, reading, or document design. The department will co-sponsor these activities through organizations such as the Heart of West Michigan United Way and the Grand Rapids Public Schools, aiming primarily to serve needy urban populations. Should you choose to participate, you will be connected to a liaison from the sponsoring organization, and be given a specific job or project to work on. The examples below may count as either Level A or Level B activities, dependent on your time/product commitment.

- ☐ Meet weekly after school in a middle school tech lab with the student staff of the monthly school newsletter, tutoring students in both newsletter writing and document design.
- ☐ Conduct resume-writing and business-correspondence tutorials with women preparing for the job market while pursuing their GED high-school equivalency diploma through the Vandenberg Adult Education Center.
- ☐ Respond weekly to the writing of one teacher's 3rd-8th graders as the students practice for the annual MEAP test in the Language Arts.
- ☐ Develop promotional materials (brochures, posters, web pages) for the Community Media Center's Future Kulture program supporting youth and media.
- ☐ Conduct weekly tutorials with resettled adult refugees through Catholic Human Development Outreach's Intensive Vocational English program.
- ☐ Develop promotional materials (brochures, public service announcements, programs, web pages) for the annual Arts Jam fundraising event promoting art and music programs in the public schools.

# *Notes*



# *Writing Across Cultures*

You, as a student, come to college already intuiting the power of language within cultures. As a Writing major, you learn more consciously to use the power of language. This component allows you to explore the power of language across cultures.

Upon graduation from GVSU, you may find yourself working for organizations with global and multicultural interests. This component gives you experience working in professional or scholarly capacities across cultures. The activities within this component range from studying abroad to contributing to community and campus cultural events.

## Level A

- ☐ Study abroad for at least six weeks, keeping a travel/learning log.
- ☐ Complete a writing-related internship abroad.
- ☐ Volunteer to work as an English Language Services conversation partner.
- ☐ Work as a Multicultural Assistant to a campus living center/dormitory.
- ☐ Participate heavily in the Model Arab League.
- ☐ Volunteer with a literacy program targeted at second-language speakers (Grandville Avenue Library, for example).
- ☐ Write a cultural history (of a group, or an organization, or another student from a different culture).

## Level B

- ☐ Participate in a week-long Spring Break Abroad program (through Seidman), keeping a travel/learning log.
- ☐ Give a presentation at an academic conference with international or intercultural theme.
- ☐ Contribute writing/design work to the publicity or materials for an intercultural campus event.

# *Notes*



# Writing as a Professional

The goal of the Writing major's curriculum is to prepare you with the theory needed to eventually succeed as a practicing writer. This component's purpose is to allow you to gain practical experience related to the field of writing. Ideally, you will apply skills acquired through the Writing Department's curriculum to the kinds of work professionals in the field regularly engage in. This component is also designed to help you acquire new skills and a growing sense of yourself as a professional within the field of writing.

Your preparation as a writer can lead to freelance work; teaching opportunities; jobs in the fields of grant writing, technical writing, medical writing, legal writing, editing, information design, user interface design, web design and development, interactive design, usability, and journalism; and lifelong engagement with other professionals. Therefore, the activities you find in this component range from completing an internship to participating in a professional organization or society to completing *ad hoc* tasks within the department, university, or another organization.

## Level A:

- ☐ Complete an internship as a professional writer (see Internship Appendix (p. 23) for ideas).
- ☐ Serve as an editor-in-chief or genre editor (for department publications such as Fishladder and "In Writing") or section editor for The Lanthorn.
- ☐ Serve as a Web designer or a Web master for department publications such as Fishladder, for student societies such as the Writer's Society or the Sociology Club, or for nonprofit organizations such as the Adopt A Family Network.
- ☐ Direct the Writing Department's student reading series.
- ☐ Serve as a reporter, a contributor, or a writer (e.g., for school newspapers or newsletters).
- ☐ Win an award or a scholarship from a professional organization in the field.
- ☐ Serve as a consultant in the Meijer Center for Writing.

## Level B:

- ☐ Attend or lead technology workshops.
- ☐ Attend a professional conference or workshop.
- ☐ Apply for a research grant or national undergraduate scholarships (e.g. from STC or ACM SIGDOC).
- ☐ Participate in local or national design competitions (from local STC chapter).
- ☐ Maintain membership in local writing-related organizations such as Writers' Maintain membership in national writing-related organizations such as Society for Technical Communication or PEN.
- ☐ Produce broadsides for a public reading (such as the Student Reading Series).
- ☐ Serve as a submissions reader for Fishladder Society.

# *Notes*



# *Writing for Publication or Performance*

The purpose of submitting completed work in the context of a college course is to evaluate how well you have internalized and represented the curriculum of that course. This component gives you the opportunity to go beyond the classroom and present your creative, critical, or professional work to a wider audience at the campus, local, regional, and national levels.

Performance and publishing signify an endpoint to the creative process, an interaction with the world beyond the classroom - this signifies a step toward thinking of yourself as a professional, and participating in those activities that a working writer does.

## Level A

- ☐ Publish a substantial piece of writing in a regional or national market.
- ☐ Present work at a regional or national conference.
- ☐ Win the department Intro Awards contest.

## Level B

- ☐ Give a public reading of your own work.
- ☐ Publish a substantial piece of writing in a campus market (e.g. Fishladder, In Writing, The Lanthorn).
- ☐ Place in the GVSU Oldenburg Writing Contest
- ☐ Read or display creative writing or scholarship at Student Scholarship Day.
- ☐ Read/perform work on the radio or television.
- ☐ Create a public poetry (or art, or performance) installation.
- ☐ Maintain (and post at least weekly to) a professionally-slanted blog.

### ***Remember!***

*You are NOT limited to just these Level A and Level B activities. Work with your advisor to find an activity that best suits you!*



# *Notes*



# Component Checklist

*The checklist below will help you keep organized while completing the two-year program.*

**Choose four of the five components you would like to pursue:**

- ☐ Writing Among Disciplines
- ☐ Writing in Off-Campus Communities
- ☐ Writing Across Cultures
- ☐ Writing as a Professional
- ☐ Writing for Publication or Performance

**Choose whether you will follow the A or B level component requirements for the program components you choose.**

- |  |                                  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Writing Among Disciplines              | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |
| Writing in Off-Campus Communities      | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |
| Writing Across Cultures                | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |
| Writing as a Professional              | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |
| Writing for Publication or Performance | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |

## ***Helpful Hint!***

*Once you've selected your four programs and their respective components you are ready to begin completing the required tasks. This will continue throughout your next two years at Grand Valley.*

*As you finish the requirements in each of the four components, mark them as complete here.*

- ☐ Writing Among Disciplines
- ☐ Writing in Off-Campus Communities
- ☐ Writing Across Cultures
- ☐ Writing as a Professional
- ☐ Writing for Publication or Performance

*Once you have finished completing all the tasks required in each of the four components that you chose, you are now ready to begin assembling your final portfolio!*

*Notes:*

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***Remember!***

*The entire program must be completed by the time you are ready to turn in your graduation audit to the registrar's office. At this time you must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher.*

# Final Portfolio

## *The Final Portfolio is designed to provide:*

- Documentation of successful engagement with the Graduation with Distinction program
- Reflection of student participation and contribution to personal and professional development
- Tangible evidence for students to use in future professional environments
- The department a means of recognizing and celebrating the achievements of graduation students and alumni

## **Each Portfolio must include:**

- ☐ Resume/Curriculum Vita that reflects your engagement with various program components.

### ***Side Note:***

*The resume might make mention of internships, volunteer commitments, descriptions or major projects, honors/awards, publications, or presentations or other GWD work.*

- ☐ Brief reflection that introduces the artifacts included in the portfolio and describes your involvement in program.

### ***Side Note:***

*The general audience for the reflective narrative is the Writing Department faculty and students who are interested. The narrative should clearly state which four components you chose.*

- ☐ The Portfolio must include a selection of between four and eight artifacts that were generated during your engagement with the four chosen components of program.

### ***Side Note:***

- *These artifacts might include publications, internship projects or journals, or brief reflections about GWD activities.*
- *At least one artifact from each component must be included in your portfolio.*
- *Upon your graduation, the Writing Department will retain your portfolio for assessment and archival purposes. Thus, it is your responsibility to keep copies of originals of all artifacts submitted in the portfolio.*

## ***Important Info!***

*Portfolios do not have a standardized 'look' or layout. You are responsible for deciding how to best reflect your achievements from participating in the program.*

*on*

*u apply for graduation through the registrar's  
to verify successful completion of the Graduation  
be read by other faculty members and students  
arning about your experience.*

***Submission Guidelines!***

*The portfolio is due to your advisor at the time you apply for graduation through the registrar's office. The portfolio will be read by your advisor to verify successful completion of the Graduation with Distinction program. The portfolio will also be read by other faculty members and students in the Writing Department who are interested in learning about your experience.*

***Submission Guidelines!***

*The portfolio is due to your advisor at the time you apply for graduation through the registrar's office. The portfolio will be read by your advisor to verify successful completion of the Graduation with Distinction program. The portfolio will also be read by other faculty members and students in the Writing Department who are interested in learning about your experience.*

*Notes:*

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# Final Checklist

*In order for the Writing Department to recognize your completion of the program, make sure you have all the following complete:*

**Four out of the five components are complete:**

- ☐ Writing Among Disciplines
- ☐ Writing in Off-Campus Communities
- ☐ Writing Across Cultures
- ☐ Writing as a Professional
- ☐ Writing for Publication or Performance

**Either Level A or Level B of the four components you chose are complete:**

- |  |                                  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Writing Among Disciplines              | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |
| Writing in Off-Campus Communities      | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |
| Writing Across Cultures                | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |
| Writing as a Professional              | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |
| Writing for Publication or Performance | <input type="checkbox"/> Level A | <input type="checkbox"/> Level B |

## ***Helpful Hint!***

*Refer to this checklist only after you have completed all the required components and only once you are ready to register for graduation.*

**Your portfolio is complete with the following components:**

- ☐ Resume/Curriculum Vita
- ☐ Brief reflection
- ☐ The four to eight required artifacts
- ☐ Submitted completed portfolio to your advisor
- ☐ Submitted graduation audit to the registrar's office

***Notes:***

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***Congratulations!***

*You are now on your way to receiving official recognition for the Writing Department's Graduation with Distinction Program!*

# Resource Appendix

## Writing Faculty and Advisors

<b>Clark, Patricia</b> 616.331.3199 337 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Kaitany, Andrea</b> 616.331.3538 348 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Royer, Dan</b> 616.331.3488 326A Lake Ontario Hall
<b>Donovan, Brad</b> 616.331.8717 307 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Kelley-Lafata, Kim</b> 616.331.8029 329 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Schaub, Mark</b> 616.331.3603 303 Lake Ontario Hall
<b>Dwelle, Ronald</b> 616.331.3418 301 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Kountz, Carol</b> 616.331.3367 302 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Schendel, Ellen</b> 616.331.3546 305 Lake Ontario Hall
<b>Frerichs, Catherine</b> 616.311.3499 324 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Lestat, John</b> 616.331.8028 213 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Sun, Huatong</b> 616.331.8542 312 Lake Ontario Hall
<b>Gibbons, Teresa</b> 616.331.8027 333 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Losey, Kay</b> 616.331.3188 335 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Temple, Cathy</b> 616.331.3684 339 Lake Ontario Hall
<b>Gilles, Roger</b> 616.331.3209 347 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Lotz, Mary Jean</b> 616.331.8031 313 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Treanor, Sister Lucia</b> 616.331.8543 334 Lake Ontario Hall
<b>Haven, Chris</b> 616.331.3190 345 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Lubic, Tamara</b> 616.331.8032 343 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Van Sickle, James E.</b> 616.331.8037 309 Lake Ontario Hall
<b>Hecksel, Arlene</b> 616.331.8024 346 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Mulally, Dauvan</b> 616.331.3547 310 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>White, Julie</b> 616.331.3072 331 Lake Ontario Hall
<b>Hulst, Craig</b> 616.331.8026 311 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Nelson, Wendy</b> 616.331.8034 340 Lake Ontario Hall	
<b>Iadonisi, Richard</b> 616.331.3243 215 Lake Ontario Hall	<b>Priolo, Pam</b> 616.331.8033 341 Lake Ontario Hall	

### The Writing Department

616.331.3411  
326 Lake Ontario Hall  
[www.gvsu.edu/writing/](http://www.gvsu.edu/writing/)

## Meijer Center for Writing and Michigan Authors

### Allendale Location:

616.331.2922  
120 Lake Ontario Hall

Mondays-Thursdays: 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Friday: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Sundays: 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.

### Pew Campus/Downtown Location:

616.331.6407  
101B DeVos Hall

Mondays -Thursdays: 4 p.m. - 8 p.m.

[www.gvsu.edu/wc](http://www.gvsu.edu/wc)



# *Personal Contact Appendix*

*Keep track of all the contact information you compile throughout the program here:*

*Important Numbers:*

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*Important Websites:*

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*Other:*

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# *Internship Appendix*

*Below is a list of internship possibilities based on the information from the websites of a few technical communication programs. These are just a few possible internship possibilities to help you in finding one that fits you!*

## **Activities and types of companies:**

- Computer documentation (software company)
- Web site design and implementation (non-profit organization)
- Researching, writing, and editing fundraising documents (non-profit organization)
- User-reference manual for computer inventory system (hardware supplier)
- Information gathering, creation of bookkeeping manual (supermarket chain)
- Data analysis (medical research center)
- Assistant project manager (consulting firm)
- Video and multimedia solutions (web design company)
- Web site tutorial, class instruction and instructor's manual (educational institution)
- Newspaper editor (university newspaper)
- Usability testing and research (software company)
- Legal cases and documents (law firms)
- Medical reports (medical labs)

## ***Job titles:***

- |   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| • <i>Advertising Copywriter</i>                 | • <i>Interaction Designer</i>  |
| • <i>Computer Instructional Designer</i>        | • <i>Usability Consultant</i>  |
| • <i>Copy Editor/Reader</i>                     | • <i>Content Developer</i>     |
| • <i>Corporate Communications Specialist</i>    | • <i>Information Architect</i> |
| • <i>Correspondent</i>                          |                                |
| • <i>Editorial Assistant</i>                    |                                |
| • <i>Policy and Procedures Analyst</i>          |                                |
| • <i>Publications Researcher</i>                |                                |
| • <i>Radio/Television Copywriter/Researcher</i> |                                |
| • <i>Reporter/Staff Writer</i>                  |                                |
| • <i>Technical Editorial Assistant</i>          |                                |
| • <i>Technical Writer</i>                       |                                |
| • <i>Information Developer</i>                  |                                |
| • <i>Web Designer</i>                           |                                |

# *Notes*





# Grand Valley State University

## Writing Department



*Student Workbook designed by:*

*Monica Jovel  
Meahgan Pear  
Stevi Riel  
Tara Wilkinson*