

Spring 2019

Dear Potential Writing Fellow:

This letter is aimed at clarifying for you, from the very outset, what it means to become a part of the Writing Fellows Program.

Writing Fellows are specially selected and trained Barnard undergraduates who work with their peers to strengthen student writing in all disciplines. Students in all majors are encouraged to apply. We are of course looking for strong readers and writers, but equally crucial to being a Writing Fellow is an ability to connect with other people.

Writing Fellows staff the Barnard Writing Center (for a minimum of an hour every week) and, in addition, work in different courses across the curriculum. They are/have been attached to courses in Anthropology, Architecture, Art History, Asian and Middle Eastern Cultures, French, Biology, Dance, Economics, Education, English, Environmental Science, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Psychology, Religion, Sociology, Theatre, and Women's Studies.

The onerous part of being a Writing Fellow occurs during the week that rolls around three times in the course of the semester when each Writing Fellow must find the time and energy to read and confer with (up to) fifteen students on their papers.

This can be done. Writing Fellows have been doing it, and doing their own work, and flourishing in each, since 1992. But the commitment of time and energy—of mind and heart—is a serious one; current Fellows say it is the equivalent of taking another course. If you feel that you cannot make such a commitment, please do not apply to the program. We ask of Writing Fellows, moreover, that they commit to working for at least three semesters, one of those being the semester immediately following the training course. Please take this into consideration as well.

The salary for working as a Writing Fellow is \$1050 per semester.

A word about the training course: "The Writer's Process" is a semester-long workshop (4 credits), taught by Pam Cobrin (Director of the Writing Program), in the teaching of writing. It is an intense experience (which does not mean we don't laugh a lot). Students write a minimum of three essays and an ongoing journal; they also work with each other's writing and with that of students in First-Year English and First-Year Seminar. Toward the middle of the semester, they begin to help staff the Writing Center. And of course, they read a great deal—not only Strunk & White on grammar and style, and nuts-and-bolts articles on how to talk with students about their writing, but also a significant amount of theory: about what constitutes a text and who constructs it (the writer? the reader?), about how we make meaning and how race, ethnicity and gender influence our writing and reading, etc. As a writing fellow in training you are not financially compensated, but receive academic credit for your participation in the course. Please see page 11 of this application for an approximate hourly breakdown of the work that will be required of you in the course.

All of us in the program believe that becoming a Writing Fellow is a privilege, as well as a responsibility. If you are still intrigued by the idea, we urge you to join us.

Sincerely yours,

Pam Cobrin
Director, Writing and Speaking
Programs

WRITING FELLOW APPLICATION

Deadline: Friday, February 22 at 5pm

*Please submit your completed application to Professor Pam Cobrin's office in 216 Barnard Hall
(you can leave it on her door if she is not there).*

Name:

Graduation Year:

Email Address:

Phone:

Projected Major:

Instructor in First-Year Writing (or equivalent):

Instructor in First-Year Seminar (or equivalent):

Faculty member whom you have asked for a recommendation:

*The Faculty Recommendation Form appears at the end of this application. Faculty recommendations are due no later than **Friday, February 22nd at 5pm**. They should be sent to Pam Cobrin in 216 Barnard Hall or emailed to pcobrin@barnard.edu.*

Please indicate below the courses you have taken at Barnard/Columbia and the grades you received:

Please list your work and/or volunteer experience, including the dates (or attach a resume):

Please list your prior experience in tutoring or peer counseling:

Are you fluent in a language other than English: ___ yes ___ no

WRITING FELLOW APPLICATION

Supplementary Materials

1. Please tell us, in a page or so, why you would like to be a Writing Fellow, how you yourself go about writing, and how that might relate to your interest in working with other people's writing.
1. Please include in your application a 3-5 page sample of your own recent writing, preferably for a Barnard class. It should include, if possible, your instructor's comments.
1. Attached to this form is a paper written for an actual college course. Imagine yourself as a Writing Fellow – write comments aimed at helping the writer revise. You may write in the margins or on the back of each page, and include an endnote at the end of the paper. What are its strengths? What still needs work?

Please return this application by **Friday, February 22nd at 5pm** to Pam Cobrin (Director, Writing and Speaking Programs) in 216 Barnard Hall. You can leave your application on the door if she is not there.

We will contact applicants whom we wish to meet with via email on November 7th to schedule an interview during one of the following days: November 7th, 8th, or 9th.

***Please note that as a program at a women's college, Writing Fellows use women-centered language in our institutional communications regarding students. We also value the individual identities that students, faculty, and staff bring to campus. We encourage all members of our community to respect the pronouns as shared by each individual .*

WRITING FELLOW APPLICATION

Sample Paper

The Power of Patriarchy

Apuleius's "*Cupid and Psyche*" as well as Beaumont's "*Beauty and the Beast*" both grapple with similar motifs such as love, marriage, and morality. Both these stories aim to teach morals, however, due to a uniting theme of patriarchy; the power and privilege a man has simply because of his gender, it seems that only the women in both stories bear the pressure of upholding good morals and being seemingly perfect.

In both stories, the females have to be virtually perfect in order to be married, only to be married to flawed men whose flaws they are expected to fix. The Beast is a very rich man, he lives in a castle, has servants, and eats lavish food. Regardless, the Beast cannot find a wife, and is considered flawed because of his scary appearance. However, the Beast is not flawed because of his appearance, he's flawed because he is selfish. He states, "And if your daughter should refuse to die in your place, swear that you will return in three months". He threatens the life of a man he hardly knows and worries a loving daughter, all for his own gain, so that he may find someone to love him and therefore, fix his flaws. Which is understandable, not everyone is perfect however, due to patriarchy the story has no room for flawed women. Having flaws, and being able to have someone to help one work past them, is only a male trait in this story. Beauty's sister's are horrible and are constantly filled with jealousy and envy, yet instead of finding someone who can fix their flaws, they end up in unhappy marriages. "The eldest had married a man of wit, but he was so in love with his own good looks that he admired himself from morning till night" (222 Beaumont). Even though Beauty's sisters are wretched, nobody's perfect and everyone deserves a love that makes them a better person. Yet the beast, who has no wit and wanted to kill a poor man over a few roses, is able to find love even in his worst state because he is male. Even in *Cupid and Psyche*, Psyche is beautiful, good-natured, and kind yet still she cannot find a

husband. Finally she finds one in Cupid, only for him to leave her and claim to no longer trust her because she wasn't content with marrying someone she couldn't see. "Throughout the day, except for the strange companionship of the voices she was alone--This half and half companionship could not fully content her; still she was happy and the time passed her swiftly." (Apuleius 201). In having Psyche as a wife, Cupid has someone that no one, not even the goddess Venus, can surpass, but because Psyche is female there is a power hierarchy. Thus, he expects her to be happy with having half of a man while he is allowed to have all of her.

Although this text does promote good morals, and aims to teach lifelong lessons it does perpetuate the impossible idea of a perfect woman. When the Beast explains how he was turned from a man to a beast he says, "An evil fairy condemned me to retain that form until a beautiful girl should consent to marry me" (Beaumont 224). He doesn't elaborate any further and beauty doesn't challenge him to. Beauty is expected to ask no questions and literally turn him from a monster to a good man and she does exactly what is expected of her. Even Psyche is expected to ask no questions about what her husband, Cupid, actually looks like. Instead she is supposed to happily rely on faith. "Throughout the day, except for the strange companionship of the voices, she was alone, but in some inexplicable way she felt sure that with the coming of the night her husband would be with her. And so it happened" (201 Apuleius). This quote explains how the only way she got through her first day, after having to leave her family and all she's ever known behind, is by faith. Even though her feeling was correct, and she was with her husband that night, she still settles for not being able to see him. Still she did not ask any questions, instead she was grateful for the little of him she was able to have. What both these authors may not realize is that by creating these perfect characters, Psyche and Beauty, whom can never exist in reality, they are allowing the readers to absentmindedly aspire to be something that they can never be.

Even though there are great lessons to be learned from this story, do they may come at too high a cost.

Due to patriarchy the females of both stories are unable to create their own destiny's. It is the Beast who creates Beauty's destiny. Ironically, in sacrificing herself for her father, it is Beauty who chooses that destiny. "I assure you, father, that you will not go to the castle without me, you cannot prevent me from following you. I would rather be devoured by this monster than die of the grief which your death would cause me" (219 Beaumont). If beauty was not the picture of an ideal woman, kind, honorable, and brave, she would not have sacrificed herself and thus chosen an already set destiny. Furthermore, it is these same valuable traits that allow her destiny to be created for her. For only a special woman, with a truly pure heart, would be able to fall in love with a Beast, and in doing so choose an already created destiny. Beauty's sister's also chose their fate when they marry into their unhappy marriages. Psyche chooses an already created fate when she sits on the "hilltop in the darkness, waiting for she knew not what terror" (200, Apuleius). From then on events are set in motion, due to her kind spirit and heart she has sacrificed herself, and also her destiny. Beavcause, Although these women choose these destiny's, they do not get to create them.

Due to patriarchy only the females bear the pressure of having to be perfect, while simultaneously fixing others flaws. If they cannot be perfect they endure grave consequences. "When at last he lay sleeping quietly, she summoned all her courage and lit the lamp" (202 Apuleius). Psyche was not able to live her life never having seen what her husband looks like. Thus, she betrayed his trust and watched him as he slept, he fled, leaving her alone. Therefore, the females can only transcend these pressures once they begin to question their male counterparts, and expect the same from them as they do from themselves.

WRITING FELLOW APPLICATION: Faculty Recommendation

Deadline: Friday, February 22nd, 5pm

Student Name: _____

Recommender's Name: _____

Due to the shortened timeline of this application process we are not requiring a formal letter of recommendation. Rather we ask that you email Pam Cobrin with a brief statement providing your impressions of the student.

Please rate the applicant on the following qualities:

On a scale of 1 (poor/absent) to 10 (outstanding), please rate:

The applicant's written communication:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The applicant's oral communication:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The applicant's interpersonal skills:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The applicant's level of intellectual curiosity:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The applicant's level of responsibility:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The Writer's Process: Student Responsibilities

- 1). Read 1-3 articles/essays/chapters prior to each class discussion
- 2) Provide a (brief) reading response to for each class
- 2). Write 3, approximately 5-7 page papers over the course of the semester.
- 3). Meet with Professor Cobrin to conference about each paper; meetings totaling approx. 1-2 hours over the course of the semester.
- 4). Meet with your peers to conference about each paper; meetings totaling approx. ~10 or more hours over the course of the semester.
- 5). Work with ~5 students in an attached class on 2 papers; work totaling approx. ~15 hours in total.
- 6). Staff the Writing Center for one hour per week, starting in late Fall; ~5-6 hours in total.