TITLE: UH Manoa Writing Mentor
DEPARTMENT: English
REPORTS TO: Dr. Jim Henry, UH Writing Mentors Coordinator
POSITION STATUS: 1/4 time Teaching Assistantship (10 hours per week)

POSITION SUMMARY: Mentors are assigned to sections of English 100 to assist faculty primarily by holding regular individual conferences with students, first to get to know them and then to seek ways to enhance their writing prowess. Other work entails regularly attending classes and helping the instructor in such tasks as facilitating peer review. Our program, unique in the U.S., seeks to provide English 100 students with valuable support in the form of your expertise as a writer and as a UH Manoa student. We also seek to help you hone your skills and knowledge as a writing consultant in the tradition of composition and rhetoric.

Your ten hours of weekly work include three hours per week attending class, six hours holding individual conferences and documenting this work (though these hours may vary per week), and an hour per week divided among the following: conferring with the course instructor, reading and/or preparing for bi-weekly roundtables of mentors, and making entries in your Composition log book.

Principal Responsibilities and Duties

1. Attend All Classes and Collaborate Closely with the Instructor. Your primary responsibilities are to the instructor of the course and to the students in your section. You should attend all class meetings of your section of English 100, and you should remain in close contact with the instructor. Your instructor may want you to play a strong role in the classroom, or s/he may prefer that you remain on the periphery. Meet with the instructor to determine this role at the earliest possibility, and consult with the instructor during the term to assure that you are on track. Under no circumstances should you undermine the authority of the instructor, and under no circumstances should you grade, or be asked to grade, student writing.

2. Meet Regularly with Students. Hold regular weekly conferences with the students in your section. Within the first two weeks of the semester, you should hold an introductory interview with each student in your section. After that, you should try to meet with each student at least once every two to three weeks, timing your meetings with each student so that s/he gets advice at different stages of writing: prewriting or brainstorming, drafting, revising, re-revising, editing, etc. You will find that your role as a mentor often goes beyond conveying purely cognitive skills and requires you to address other hindrances that may be impeding student success. It also entails recognizing your professional limitations, e.g., making referrals when a problem extends beyond your expertise and training. Although the job requires that you develop rapport with students, it is important to maintain certain professional boundaries as you tread a fine line between representing the institution and advocating for students. Advise students that your role in representing the institution requires you to report to your supervising instructor any disclosed transgressions of university policy or intentions to harm oneself or others.

3. Document Your Work. As our initiative is funded through the Chancellor's office, we must document our work. Complete a Mentor's Log for each individual session that you hold with students and submit these logs regularly to the Mentoring Coordinator, Holly Bruland (mentor@hawaii.edu). At the end of each semester, you will be asked to complete a summative report and to participate in an exit interview.

4. Attend Mentoring Roundtables and Workshops. We will schedule regular roundtables and workshops. These meetings will sometimes revolve around assigned readings chosen to help you perform in conferences or in the classroom, and sometimes they will require a brief report on your work to the group. Treat these meetings professionally, as you would treat any other course in English.

5. Communicate Extenuating Circumstances. If any situation arises that may require emergency intervention or counseling beyond your purview, communicate immediately with Jim Henry (jmhenry@hawaii.edu).

6. Wonder. You can't be required to wonder, of course, but we hope this experience will prompt you to wonder regularly about the complexities of representation and self-representation in discourse. Such wonder lies at the heart of composition studies, and we hope you will leave this foray into composition with ways to wonder that will serve you in the future professionally and intellectually.