Guide for WIT Course Instructors:
Working with the WIT Coordinator your LWTA and

This document explains what is involved in working with the WIT Coordinator and an LWTA as a course instructor involved in WIT (Writing Instruction for/by TAs). Please also see the WIT Description and the LWTA Duties and Timeline.

Working with the WIT Coordinator:
The Writing Coordinator and the LWTA will meet with you before the beginning of the term to discuss the plan for integrating writing into your course, including how you’d like to use the additional TA hours provided by WIT and answer any questions you may have. The WIT Coordinator may also be present at TA training sessions, benchmarking meetings, and other meetings with TAs where writing assignments, activities, and assessment are being discussed. The WIT Coordinator provides guidance and advice on the best ways to integrate writing into your course.

Working with the LWTA:
The LWTA helps you and your TAs integrate writing instruction into your course. The LWTA can provide advice and feedback on writing assignments and rubrics (scoring guides), but is not responsible for creating these. The LWTA can also help you develop instructional material for TAs and students such as assignment guides and resources or tutorial/lab lesson plans related to writing. The LWTA will meet with you and the WIT Coordinator near the beginning of term to discuss WIT, answer your questions, and explain the specific role that she or he will play in supporting your course. The LWTA also runs training sessions for WIT course TAs, to be scheduled at the beginning of the term, and facilitates or helps you facilitate benchmarking meetings (moderated group marking sessions) for writing assignments.

How the WIT Coordinator and LWTA can support your course:
- In the planning stage of the course, give feedback on the scheduling and sequencing of writing assignments to allow TAs enough marking time and students enough time to implement feedback and revise their assignments.
- Review and give feedback on course materials related to writing (e.g., assignments, rubrics, instructional material for TAs), or plan writing activities.
- Help create rubrics (evaluation criteria) to be used by TAs (and if you wish shared with students) for writing assignments.
- Suggest writing activities that can be used in lectures.
- Suggest writing activities that TAs can do in tutorials/labs that target writing skills.
- Provide instructional material and supporting documents for TAs to help them integrate writing instruction or writing activities into tutorials/labs.

The WIT Coordinator and LWTA also have a wealth of resources from previous years’ WIT courses, from the College Writing Centers, and from LWTAs in other departments, which might be useful for your course. These resources might be ideas for writing activities or teaching materials, or documents/previous assignments that you and your LWTA can adapt to the needs of your course.

When you meet with your LWTA before the start of term it is a good idea to figure out how much time he or she will have for your course.
The LWTA has approximately _____ hrs to devote to your course, broken down as follows*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meetings/communication with departmental WIT Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benchmarking meetings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meetings/communication and collaboration with course instructor and</td>
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<td>departmental WIT coordinator on assignment design, instructional plans</td>
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<td>and teaching material</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meetings/communication with individual or groups of TAs to plan tutorials,</td>
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<tr>
<td>discuss grading issues (outside of benchmarking) &amp;/or prep for these</td>
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<tr>
<td>meetings</td>
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<td>Planning and delivering writing workshops to students</td>
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*These categories are not absolute and may overlap.

For more info on working with the LWTA, see the *WIT Description* document.

Below is an example of how a writing assignment might be developed collaboratively by the Instructor, LWTA, and Writing Coordinator:

⇒ LWTA, Writing Coordinator, and instructor consult in the planning stage of the course, and decide to develop a writing assignment for the course based on an already-existing assignment, by integrating more writing into that assignment.
⇒ Course instructor provides a draft of the assignment to LWTA.
⇒ LWTA suggests revisions/additions to the assignment, in consultation with Writing Coordinator. (Instructor and LWTA might meet at this stage to discuss the assignment.)
⇒ LWTA and/or Writing Coordinator suggest developing a rubric for the assignment.
⇒ LWTA provides a rubric sample that was used in another course that might be adapted to this assignment.
⇒ Rubric is adapted by Instructor and/or LWTA, with input from Writing Coordinator if necessary.
⇒ LWTA meets with TAs and Instructor during regular TA meeting to help introduce the assignment, discuss how the assignment will be introduced in tutorials, discuss any additional needs of TAs.
⇒ LWTA meets with TAs and instructor shortly after assignments are handed in by students to lead a benchmarking session for the assignment.

If at any stage you are unclear about what the LWTA’s role is with respect to developing a particular assignment or activity, communicate this to the LWTA as soon as possible so that the LWTA’s role can be clarified.

**TA Hours Allocations:**

WIT hours for *training* and *benchmarking* should be included separately in the DDAH form. The hours listed under “extra grading hours” in the course TA budget are not the only hours meant to be devoted to grading writing overall, since one of the aims of the program is to integrate writing more into the course content. In addition, not all of the ways of integrating writing into the course necessarily involve additional grading. “Extra grading” hours need not be listed separately in the DDAH form. For more information on how many WIT hours your course TAs are allocated, see the *Course WIT TA Budget* document.
Benchmarking:
Benchmarking (a moderated group marking session) has been an extremely successful aspect of the WIT program in units throughout the Faculty of Arts and Science. In most cases, your department’s proposal for WIT hours allocates to TAs a certain number of hours to each course TA to be used for the purpose of benchmarking writing assignments.

A typical benchmarking session is 1.5 hrs long, and consists of selecting several sample papers/essays/assignments, of varying quality, and reading and marking the selections as a group in order to “calibrate” TAs’ marking and agree on what constitutes an “A” assignment, a “B” assignment, etc. The selection of example assignments can be done by TAs, the LWTA, or the course instructor. To prepare for a benchmarking session, the selected assignments are usually copied so that everyone present at the benchmarking session has a copy of the assignments to be marked.

Benchmarking sessions most effective and efficient when they involve the use of rubrics—descriptive marking criteria or grading schemes, which can be either holistic or quantitative, depending on what is appropriate for the particular course and discipline. If the rubrics haven’t been made available to students beforehand, discussions among the TAs, instructor, and LWTA during the benchmarking might result in changes to the rubric or clarifications about how to use the rubric. The benchmarking session is also a great opportunity for TAs and instructors to discuss issues with the particular assignment or the grading of the assignments, or other issues related to writing instruction in the course (e.g. TAs might note, for example, that students do not understand how to use citations properly, and discuss how to instruct students better in this area.) The benchmarking session is usually led by the LWTA and the Writing Coordinator may also participate.

The LWTA, Writing Coordinator, and course instructor should discuss which assignments will be benchmarked at their first meeting.

TA WIT Training Session:
The LWTA runs WIT TA training sessions, which are separate from the regular TA training that new TAs get at the beginning of the year. TAs participate in this training workshop regardless of whether they have been a TA for WIT course in the past. TAs for Fall semester courses participate in this session, which is usually in early September, before tutorials/labs start and assignments have come in, and TAs for Winter semester courses usually participate in training in January. Training workshops are usually two hours, and this time should be included and itemized as WIT training, in the hours allocation form.