TLEF Small Project – Proposal Form

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All proposals must be submitted by 3:00 pm on November 13, 2015
*• Before proceeding, please read all TLEF criteria and application instructions at: **http://tlef.ubc.ca***
• Applications should be written in language understandable to a non-specialist.
• Note: the TLEF online application system is plain text. You will <u>not</u> be able to add tables, graphs, or charts in your proposal.
*• Click "**Save & Continue Editing**" to save your work before logging out.*
*• Click "**Save & Exit**" only when all questions are completed (you will submit at a later step).*
• Important: Your Department Head, School Director, or equivalent must indicate support for the proposal through the TLEF online application system before you can submit your proposal.

Project Title (200 characters max.)

Do not use all-caps.

Writing in the Faculty of Arts: Understanding student learning and knowledge transfer in Arts Studies in Research and Writing (ASRW)

Principal Applicant

For administrative purposes, there must be <u>one</u> Principal Applicant only and she/he should be a full-time UBC faculty or staff member. Students may also apply if at least one full-time faculty member is on the project team and listed as a co-applicant on the project.

Principal Applicant's name	Katherine Power
Principal Applicant's title(s) (e.g. Assistant Professor, Instructor, Professor of Teaching, etc.):	Instructor
Principal Applicant's primary (UBC) email address:	katpower@mail.ubc.ca
Principal Applicant's role:	Faculty
Principal Applicant's Faculty, College, or administrative unit:	Faculty of Arts
If you selected Other above, please specify:	(No response)
Principal Applicant's Department, School, or unit:	Arts Studies in Research and Writing

Other Applicants

Please indicate all other applicants' name as well as corresponding title(s), affiliation(s), and email, separated by commas (e.g. Jane Doe, Associate Professor, History, Faculty of Arts, jane.doe@ubc.ca).

Jaclyn Rea, Senior Instructor, Vantage College, jaclyn.rea@vantagecollege.ubc.ca

Department Head & Email Address

The Principal Applicant's Department Head, School Director, or equivalent must indicate support for the TLEF proposal using the online application system before the applicant can submit the proposal. If the TLEF proposal involves multiple departments, the Department Heads of all departments where there are funding commitments made by the department must also indicate their support for the project.

Please provide the name, department/school/unit, and primary email address of the Department Head or Heads that will need to indicate their support for this project.The emails provided will be used to invite each Head to review and approve the proposal in the TLEF online application system.

Applicants are responsible for contacting their respective Department Head and ensuring that she/he is prepared to review and support the proposal through the TLEF online application system. To ensure that Department Heads have reasonable time to review your proposal, you should seek their support well in advance of the deadline for submission.

*Once the Principal Applicant's Department Head has indicated support for the proposal through the TLEF online application system, the Principal Applicant will be able to complete the final submission (**no later than 3:00 pm on November 13, 2015).***

	Name	Department/School/Unit	Primary (UBC) Email
Person 1	Laurie McNeill	First Year Programs	Laurie.McNeill@ubc.ca
Person 2			
Person 3			
Person 4			
Person 5			
Person 6			
Person 7			
Person 8			

Project Budget

Please Note: The Central funding cap for the entire duration of the project is $50,000.
This project is (please select one of the options):

New Small TLEF Project

Funding being requested from TLEF in 2016/2017:	7975
Indicate any funding from other sources being applied to this project:	0

If this is a request for a NEW TLEF project, please provide the following information:

Future TLEF requests are anticipated for this project

Future TLEF requests anticipated for this project:

	Fiscal Year (i.e. 2017/2018; 2018/2019)	Dollar Amount
	2017/2018	8000
	2018/2019	8000

If this is a request for <u>CONTINUED</u> funding, please provide the following information:

Title of previous funded project:

(No response)

Historical TLEF funding for the project:

	Fiscal Year (i.e. 2014/2015; 2015/2016)	Dollar Amount

Future TLEF requests anticipated for this project:

	Fiscal Year (i.e. 2017/2018; 2018/2019)	Dollar Amount

If applicable, please list any other existing TLEF-funded projects currently held by the Principal Applicant:

(No response)

Project Summary (150 words max.)

Describe your project in a manner that is accessible to wide readership. If your proposal is successful, this summary may be publicized on the UBC website.

ASRW teaches nearly 2,000 students each year, introducing them to scholarly contexts and genres using an innovative approach to academic writing. Our flagship course, WRDS 150, represents the "road most travelled" by students fulfilling the Faculty of Arts writing requirement. Our 2014 External Reviewers praised it highly, but recommended systematically assessing what students learn and take with them into their other courses.

In this study, we will work with students and faculty partners to identify academic writing expectations in social sciences (psychology, economics) and humanities (history, philosophy), as well as the ways in which WRDS 150 prepares students to meet these expectations.

This evidence will enhance teaching and learning within WRDS 150, allowing us to refocus curricula more fully to support students' acquisition and transfer of genre knowledge and writing practices, and tailor professional development to equip ASRW faculty to prepare students more thoroughly for writing in the disciplines.

Students Impacted by the Project

How many students do you estimate will be impacted by this project annually? (Please provide a number)

2200

Project Objectives (500 words max.)

Clearly state the project's rationale and overall objectives, with particular reference to how it meets TLEF criteria.

As noted above, ASRW teaches academic writing using a widely-respected pedagogical approach that introduces students to both the situations in which scholarly work takes place and the different genres and discursive features used in those situations. Our main course, WRDS 150, is required for the majority of first year students in Arts because it is expected to have value beyond merely introducing them to our field, the field of discourse studies.

WRDS 150 incorporates several factors that facilitate student learning, including "[a]cademic rigor, extensive writing assignments, plentiful opportunities for interaction with faculty, and participation in research" (Harrison & Risler, 2015, pp. 67-68). However, its actual learning outcomes and the extent to which it prepares students for writing in other disciplines have yet to be formally evaluated (Paré, Johns, & Chapman, 2014). Moreover, a gap exists in the scholarly literature concerning how best to evaluate genre-based approaches to teaching academic writing (as noted, for example, by Cheng, 2006).

Like ASRW, Vantage One (formerly Vantage College) is an innovative first year program, designed both to foster learning that reaches beyond its own context and to develop UBC's understanding of how to support students with English as an additional language. Given that approximately 20% of ASRW's student population is international, it is opportune to evaluate Faculty of Arts and Vantage One offerings of WRDS 150 in tandem with a view to improving students' transition from first year into subsequent stages of their degrees.

The overall objectives of this study meet the TLEF criteria in the following ways:

First, this study is designed to enhance the learning of scholarly writing practices within WRDS 150 by objectively measuring student learning outcomes and the extent to which students carry new knowledge gained in WRDS 150 with them to other courses. Using this evidence, we will identify potential areas for curriculum revision within ASRW's and Vantage One's WRDS 150 offerings, with a view to improving students' knowledge and practice of scholarly writing across the disciplines. These curriculum revisions are also expected to enhance student learning in other UBC courses, by more fully equipping first-year students with knowledge of the research and writing conventions in various humanities and social science disciplines.

Second, this study is designed to enhance teaching within ASRW and Vantage One by identifying areas for more targeted professional development. For example, by consulting with faculty partners in other departments, we hope to increase WRDS 150 faculty members' awareness of research and writing conventions in social science (psychology, economics) and humanities (history, philosophy) disciplines, in order to equip them better to prepare WRDS 150 students to write in those disciplines.

Third, because this study is oriented towards evidence-based curriculum revision and professional development, it is expected to give rise to both long term and sustainable benefits to students in ASRW and Vantage One. Owing to ASRW's close working relationship with the Coordinated Arts Program and Arts One, this study also has the potential to contribute to similar revisions and development within these Faculty of Arts programs.

Project Work Plan, Timeline & Milestones (1000 words max.)

Provide a clear work plan for how you will achieve the stated objectives of the project. Please include major milestones to indicate when you will initiate project development, when you will implement the project with students, and when you will conduct evaluation.

This study builds on a 2015-2016 SoTL Leadership project which invites current ASRW students to reflect on what they are learning in WRDS 150 and the extent to which they are using that knowledge in other courses.

Leading genre theorist, Anis Bawarshi, observes that, "[q]uestions regarding the transfer of writing knowledge [...] get to the heart of fundamental debates about the place and purpose of first-year writing (FYW) courses; about the extent to which (and what kinds of) knowledge and skills developed in FYW and in writing in the disciplines (WID) courses connect to other contexts within and beyond the academy" (personal communication, September 8, 2015).

The present study takes up those questions, extending the study mentioned above by working with students at least one year after they have completed WRDS 150 – that is, after they have had more opportunity to use any knowledge and practices gained in WRDS 150 in their other courses.

This study is designed to run over three years, with stand-alone findings available at the end of each year.

The two principal investigators (PIs) are both discourse analysts, who teach WRDS 150 respectively in ASRW and Vantage One. The project will also involve
• 12 faculty partners – one from each of the disciplines addressed in this study (listed below), with whom the PIs will identify the academic writing expectations of each discipline;
• up to 60 second-year student participants (i.e., between three and five students from each discipline), who will provide evidence of what students learn and transfer from WRDS 150;
• approximately 16 WRDS 150 students, during Years Two and Three, to participate in focus groups designed to evaluate any curriculum revisions informed by this study; and
• two graduate research assistants for each year of the study, who will assist the PIs in gathering and coding information from faculty partners and student participants.

Our work plan and milestones are outlined here below.

A first set of faculty partners has already been secured in four disciplines, for the first year of this study:
• Economics – Ashok Kotwal
• History – Joy Dixon
• Philosophy - Christina Hendricks
• Psychology – Catherine Rawn

Additional faculty partners will be recruited in subsequent years from other social science and humanities disciplines, for example,
• Year 2: Geography; Political Science; Art History, Visual Art and Theory; Theatre and Film.
• Year 3: Sociology; Anthropology; English; Religious Studies.

The PIs will meet with each faculty partner once in both Fall and Winter semesters of their respective study years, for an interview session lasting approximately 1 – 1½ hours on each occasion. We will observe these faculty partners doing "think aloud" (Graff, 2009) on both professional and student writing, which involves reading aloud and commenting on particular structural and/or stylistic features of the text in question. Our goal in this process is to begin identifying the often tacit expectations instructors have about writing in their disciplines, including any differences in how faculty read professional and student writing.

The findings from these interviews will be combined with those of the Faculty of Arts Dean's Office "Arts Outcomes Project," which has begun documenting the specificities of UBC's social science and humanities disciplines, using the language of those same disciplines. Together, these sources of information will enable the PIs to develop a profile of language use in each of the disciplines studied, which will contribute to the development of faculty resources to be posted to ASRW's website.

The second main strand of this study involves working with student participants.

In the Winter semester of each year of this project, we will invite students who took WRDS 150 in the previous academic year and who are now registered in a second year course in one of the disciplines to be studied that year, to provide us with copies of a final paper they wrote in that second year course during the Fall semester of the same academic year. Our goal here is to analyze students' use of writing practices taught in WRDS 150, in papers they produce for other courses one year after completing WRDS 150.

These same second year student participants will also meet with our graduate research assistants for a "think aloud" session, in which they describe the discursive character of their own final paper, reflect on choices they made during the writing process, and evaluate their work in relation to their understanding of writing conventions within their discipline. Our goal here is to analyze students' display of meta-awareness about the writing practices taught in WRDS 150, and to compare that knowledge with their actual writing practices.

This pattern of interviews will be repeated in each year of the study, with additional faculty partners and second year student participants from each of the disciplines listed above.

Third, the overarching objective of this project is to use the evidence gained in its first two strands to identify curriculum revision and professional development priorities for WRDS 150. Our goal here is to contribute to ASRW and Vantage One's planning processes (such as by formulating shared goals, policies and practices) and to provide writing resources for faculty within and outside ASRW (such as via workshops and the ASRW website).

Our annual timeline is as follows:

• September: PIs recruit four faculty partners and hire two RAs.
Years 2 and 3: PIs conduct at least one ASRW faculty professional development workshop, responding to emerging priorities.

• October–November: PIs interview faculty partners about professional writing in their respective disciplines.

• January: PIs train RAs in the "think aloud" protocol, transcription, and coding.

• February–March: PIs interview faculty partners about student writing. RAs conduct "think aloud" sessions with second-year students in each discipline. RAs transcribe faculty and student interviews.

• April-May: RAs code interviews. PIs conduct analysis and report on findings. Based on these findings, PIs propose WRDS 150 curriculum revision and professional development priorities for the upcoming academic year. PIs work with CTLT to develop resources for faculty (within and outside ASRW), to be posted on the ASRW website, regarding practices such as the "think aloud" protocol.

• June: PIs evaluate the study.

Expected Project Outcomes (500 words max.)

List or describe the project's intended tangible outcomes or deliverables. What will the project do or create as a result of implementation of its work plan?

The results of this study will provide ASRW faculty working in both the Faculty of Arts and Vantage One with valuable evidence about student learning outcomes in WRDS 150, and the extent to which students carry new knowledge and practices with them from WRDS 150 to their other UBC courses. This information will be integral to future decisions about curriculum planning and revision.

This study's findings will also be used to produce a series of workshops for ASRW faculty who teach WRDS 150 in the Faculty of Arts and/or Vantage One. These workshops will focus on the revision of student learning outcomes, the development of assessments related to those outcomes, and new teaching materials and classroom activities informed by our understandings of the knowledges and practices that transfer from WRDS 150.

In addition, we will produce workshops for other UBC faculty, who teach in first year programs (i.e. the Coordinated Arts Program and Arts One) and/or elsewhere, who wish to understand what knowledges and practices about research and writing students take with them from first year into their subsequent courses. These workshops will also highlight new methods (e.g. think-aloud protocols) for assessing this knowledge acquisition, transfer and application.

To share the results of our research more broadly, and to put these results into a form that is usable as a teaching tool, we will also post short videos and other teaching materials to the ASRW website that showcase
• how faculty members from the disciplines listed above respond to professional and student writing in their disciplines, and
• what students carry with them from WRDS 150 as they move into their second year of studies at UBC.

These videos will be helpful for teaching students not only about writing expectations across the Faculty of Arts, but also how to do peer review using the "think aloud" protocol.

The other teaching materials will also serve as supports for students wishing to revise key concepts and writing practices taught in WRDS 150, including both those who are currently enrolled in the course and those who wish in later years to revisit the knowledge and practices they learned in the course.

Lastly, this study will make a contribution to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning literature, by piloting an innovative approach to assessing the transfer of knowledge and practices gained in first year writing programs to other courses and contexts.

Project Benefits (500 words max.)

Referring to the project's objectives and expected outcomes, what are the direct and short-term as well as sustainable benefits to students? Explain how these will contribute toward the enhancement of teaching and learning.

This project's benefits for students, both in the short and long terms, are tied to the ways it aims to enhance teaching and learning in WRDS 150, as well as – potentially – in other courses that fulfill the Faculty of Arts' research and writing requirements, and in courses designated as writing-intensive.

First, evidence-based decisions about revisions to pedagogical goals and practices will more fully support WRDS 150 students' acquisition and transfer of writing knowledge and practices, thus more thoroughly preparing them to write in a variety of social science and humanities disciplines.

Second, the teaching resources posted to ASRW's website as a result of this study will provide both direct and longer-term supports to Arts students as they progress through their studies at UBC. For example, one of the students we consulted when preparing this proposal observed:
not all the elements of academic writing (from literature reviews and book reviews, to research papers) I learned in the class were put to use immediately, but rather the course material became a toolbox that I could draw on or recall when required of me in a given course.

By informing the production of teaching materials to be posted on the ASRW website, this study has the potential to re-open the WRDS 150

"toolbox" for students long after they have completed the course.

In addition, as one of our student consultants observed, this study "may even be informative beyond the acquisition of writing skills, in the sense that first years would be given a glance into a variety of disciplines that may spark interest in them to study further."

Finally, throughout the three years of the project, the PIs will report the results of the study to interested faculty members in the Faculty of Arts and Vantage College, which, we hope, will encourage reflection on and revisions to current course outcomes, assessments, teaching activities and materials. Moreover, through regular reports on this study to stakeholders in the Faculty of Arts at UBC, and in wider professional circles, we will contribute to the scholarly understanding of knowledge transfer from first year writing programs to other courses and contexts.

Evaluation Plan (500 words max.)

Describe your evaluation strategy or process and outline any key indicators that will be used to determine the project's success/performance. What outcome-based criteria will be used to measure success? What data will you collect to evaluate the project's impact, and how will you collect this data?

This project is, in large part, an evaluation strategy in its own right – gathering and analyzing data about the nature, extent and duration of student learning in ASRW's flagship course, WRDS 150. However, it will also, itself, be evaluated in relation to each of its intended outcomes.

First, the success of this study as an evaluation strategy will be judged according to our ability to secure student and faculty participation in the study, and to collect from them useful commentary on their understandings, expectations and practices around academic writing. Increasing faculty interest, as tracked by participation in workshops and visitors to our online resources page, will be relevant data in this respect.

Second, this study's contribution to curriculum revision will be determined by documenting any changes made to WRDS 150 in response to this study's findings, over the course of this project. WRDS 150 syllabi will provide information in relation to this outcome-based criterion.

Third, as noted above, to test the success of any such curriculum revisions, we will bring together approximately five WRDS 150 students in each year of this study, to participate in focus groups designed to evaluate any curriculum revisions made on the basis of this study's findings; WRDS 150 students in each of the three years of this study. We will ask them a set of questions designed to understand how curriculum revisions linked to this study may have contributed to both their understanding of research and writing in the disciplines, and their ability to apply that understanding to the writing they do in other courses. These findings will be compared against the 2015-16 project mentioned above, which is documenting student (and faculty) perceptions of student learning outcomes in WRDS 150.

Fourth, in order to evaluate the success of this study in enhancing teaching, we will solicit information from faculty, via workshop evaluation forms, about the usefulness of the professional development workshops we offer them. We will also survey faculty members (both in ASRW and beyond) about any pedagogical changes they make based on our study, such as introducing teaching activities geared to facilitate the transfer of genre knowledge and writing practices from WRDS 150 to other courses.

Lastly, we will seek feedback from our faculty partners on any changes they detect in writing produced by former WRDS 150 students across the duration of this study.

Student Involvement (250 words max.)

Describe how students were consulted and involved in preparing/reviewing this proposal and how they will be involved in the

implementation of the project.

Students have been and will be involved in this study in several capacities.

First, this study was inspired by anecdotal evidence gleaned from conversations with former students suggesting that WRDS 150 helps students not only in their other UBC courses, but also in situations beyond the undergraduate experience, such as in job interviews and graduate program applications.

Second, five former ASRW students were consulted in preparing this proposal. These students unanimously supported the objectives of this project, but offered critical commentary on some aspects of the initial project description, which are reflected in this application. Further consultation with Vantage One students is planned for Winter semester 2016.

Third, as noted above, this study builds on a 2015-2016 SoTL Leadership project which invites current ASRW students to reflect on their learning in WRDS 150. These students' perceptions will provide a backdrop against which to consider the more objective evidence of student learning outcomes gathered in the present study.

Fourth, again as noted above, up to 60 second year students (who took WRDS 150 at least one year prior) and 16 first-year students (currently enrolled in WRDS 150) are expected to participate in the data-generation and evaluation phases of this study.

Finally, two graduate research assistants (one each for social sciences and humanities) will be employed between January and June of each project year, to conduct and transcribe think aloud sessions with our second-year student participants, and to assist the PIs with coding interview data.

Special Classroom or Facilities Requirements (150 words max.)

Does the implementation of your project require any special classroom/facilities or scheduling support (i.e. video-conferencing, lecture capture, flexible classroom space, etc.)?

N/A