Application Packet

Fir Acres Workshop in Writing and Thinking

Campus Box 37
Lewis & Clark College
Portland, OR 92719-7899
503-768-7200
FAX: 503-768-7205

Sunday, June 29 – Friday, July 11, 2014

The Fir Acres Workshop in Writing and Thinking, a two-week residency summer program on the campus of Lewis & Clark College, is designed especially for high school students who want to strengthen their learning and communication skills by experimenting with and changing their approach to writing. Participants in small workshop groups, led by associates of the Bard Institute who serve as faculty at Fir Acres, will meet three times daily in order to collaborate on creative as well as critical writing and thinking.

From informal, private work to more formal, public exposition, writing at Fir Acres is approached as a complex, imaginative activity best explored within a supportive writing community. In addition to day-time workshop activities, the campus library, computer, and recreational facilities will be open to participants, as will be an evening and weekend activities program coordinated by a resident advisor and resident assistants who themselves are writers in the workshop groups.

To apply for participation in the workshop, you need to:

a) complete the enclosed National Writing and Thinking Network Application;
b) enclose some reflective writing (described in the Application);
c) mail the application and writing sample(s) to the address below;
d) ask a teacher, familiar with your school work, to fill out the Teacher's Letter of Support;
e) give this teacher the Letter of Support form and an envelope addressed to Fir Acres.
(Your teacher should send the letter separately to us.)

All forms necessary to complete this application process are enclosed. Review of and invitations to the workshop will occur on a continuous basis beginning in February, so early application is advised.

All application materials should be sent to:

Fir Acres Workshop in Writing and Thinking
Lewis & Clark College
Campus Box 37
0615 SW Palatine Hill Road
Portland, Oregon 97219-7899

Cost: Full fees for the 2014 Fir Acres Workshop, including tuition, room and board, are $1,750.

Fir Acres Workshop in Writing and Thinking
Lewis & Clark College
Office of the Provost (MSC 37)
0615 SW Palatine Hill Road
Portland, Oregon 97219-7899

Application Date_____

Applicant name_____
last first middle

Home address _____
number and street / P.O. box number city state zip code

Home phone (_____)_____ Date of birth _____ ( )Male ( )Female
area code mo day year

School name and address: _____

Your e-mail address:_____

Current year in school ( ) Eighth Grade ( ) Freshman ( ) Sophomore ( ) Junior ( ) Senior
Academic interests:
_____
_____
_

Extracurricular interests: _____
_____
_

Name and phone number of the teacher from whom you have requested a letter of support:

_____ (_____)_____
Name area code

How did you first hear of this Writing and Thinking Workshop (check as many as apply to you)?

( ) National Writing and Thinking Network brochure
( ) This workshop's brochure
( ) School guidance counselor
( ) From a friend
( ) Teacher (specialty:_____)
( ) Google or internet
( ) Parent or guardian
( ) From a previous participant (Name & year attended:_____)
( ) Other (please specify) _____

Guardian's consent: As the parent or guardian of the applicant, I hereby give him or her my permission to participate in this writing workshop of the National Writing and Thinking Network. I understand that upon registering for this workshop, my child will become subject to the regulations of the college at which this workshop is located for the duration of the summer residency.

_____ _____
Signature of parent or guardian date

Financial / Scholarship Support

The National Writing and Thinking Network expects most participants will pay the full tuition of the workshop they attend. Some programs, however, may be able to provide modest financial support. Since these awards will be made at the same time as workshop admission, we need to know whether you will require financial assistance in order to attend. (This will not affect your acceptance into the program.)

_____ No, I will not require financial aid or scholarship support.

_____ Yes, if available, I would like to seek financial aid or scholarship support in order to attend.

If you wish to be considered for financial aid or scholarship support, please provide the following:

1. Family adjusted gross income as reported on last year's Federal Income Tax form(s): _____

2. Family total taxable income after deductions: _____

3. Combined savings and investments (Of both parents, if living apart): _____

4. List colleges or private schools in which family members are currently or will be enrolled next year:

   _____
   _____

5. Family financial commitments for education anticipated in the coming year: _____

6. Estimate of the minimum financial aid or scholarship support needed to attend: _____

7. List other sources of financial aid available to you, including relatives, school district funds and awards, service organization support, religious congregation assistance, etc.: _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

8. Mother's occupation: _____ Father's occupation: _____

9. We affirm that the financial information above provides a complete and accurate picture of our family's financial resources as well as our needs for aid or scholarship assistance.

   _____ _____
   Signature of parent or guardian date

   _____ _____
   Signature of applicant date

Please feel free to make any additional comments which you think would be helpful:

Reflective Writing

We have designed the National Writing and Thinking Network workshops for students with a range of academic backgrounds but a common interest in the link between language and thinking. In order to help us know more about you, on this sheet (and additional pages if you need), **tell the story of a time when words, whether written or spoken, sung or performed, have had power for you.** (Word process your thoughts. Please do not provide writing that you have previously done, unless you find such additional thinking useful in illustrating what is your response to this invitation).

Fir Acres Workshop in Writing and Thinking
Lewis & Clark College
Office of the Provost (MSC 37)
0615 SW Palatine Hill Road
Portland, Oregon 97219-7899

Teacher's Letter of Support

****

This portion to be ***completed by the applicant*** *and the applicant's parent or guardian.*

Applicant name_____Phone (___)_____
last first middle

Under the provisions of the Family Education and Privacy Act of 1974, the parents or guardians of applicants under the age of eighteen may decide whether letters of reference written at the request of the applicant are to be held confidential or whether they are to be available for personal inspection. If the applicant is eighteen years of age or older, then the decision is the applicant's.

Check one of the following statements and have both signatures in the spaces provided so that the teacher supporting your application will be advised of your choice:

_____ Confidential file. I grant permission for this letter of support to be held confidential by the specific Workshop to which I am applying.

_____ Open file. I retain the choice of having this letter of support available to me.

_____ _____
signature of parent or guardian signature of applicant

****

This portion to be ***completed by the teacher****.*

Teacher's name _____ Date _____

Position _____ Phone _____

e-mail _____

School address _____
number and street / P.O. box number city state zip code

Signature _____

You may use a separate piece of paper for your comments.
Please return your comments, in response to the queries on the next page, to the Fir Acres Writing Workshop by mail (see address above) or fax 503-768-7205. Thank you.

Teacher's Letter of Support

We would appreciate your detailed and candid profile of this applicant. With your help, we are looking for students with a range of academic backgrounds and writing experience, but particularly with sound verbal skills and a demonstrated interest in the link between writing and thinking. In building a successful summer program, we rely heavily on your thoughts about this applicant. Thank you for your help, and we look forward to the chance to work with your student, based on your insights.

Please comment on the applicant's academic abilities and attitudes, including the potential to benefit from participating in a peer writing community.

While the National Writing and Thinking Network welcomes a variety of talents and personalities, the residential workshop format of the program requires participants to work well with each other both in and out of the classroom. With respect to maturity and social skills, how does the applicant work with peers and how is he or she perceived by them? Will the applicant adapt to the social dynamics of dormitory life? How will the applicant respond to those in positions of authority? Are there any other reflections which you think might be of help to us?

FIR ACRES WORKSHOP IN WRITING AND THINKING

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Who attends the Fir Acres Workshop in Writing and Thinking?
A: Intellectually curious and motivated high school students from across the country who like to write and want to develop greater fluency and confidence in their writing.

Q: Are these creative writing workshops?
A: Yes and no. Unlike "creative writing" programs that concentrate on poetry or fiction, the Fir Acres Workshop offers participants an opportunity to work in a range of fiction and nonfiction forms, including poems, narratives, and essays, for the purpose of strengthening their writing and thinking skills. Writing is a complex imaginative activity in which the mind creates meaning and constructs form through language. Thus, participation at Fir Acres is an exploration of the relationship between writing and thinking as much as it is about written forms.

Q: What kinds of writing can students expect to do?
A: Daily writing ranges from reflective writing to stories, poems, and persuasive essays. The initial focus is on informal, exploratory writing in order to generate drafts, define topics for discussion, and make connections between what one already knows and new ways of thinking. Participants present portfolios of writing each week to their workshop leaders, who respond both in conferences and in writing. The portfolios contain informal writing, works in progress, or finished pieces in various genres.

Q: What is the Women's Writing Workshop?
A: This optional workshop group runs concurrently with the other writing groups and has the same format. Workshop members, in considering what women writers have had to say about themselves, their lives, and their world, explore what all Fir Acres participants do: a range of writing forms that reflect and foster the habits of mind of an engaged imagination.

Q: What about reading?
A: Although the major text for the workshops is students' own writing, the workshop encourages students to be active readers, using their own writing to respond to texts from many disciplines. Reading poems, narratives, and essays not only exposes students to different forms that they may emulate in their writing, but also prepares them to get the most out of the reading they will do in college.

Q: What is the daily schedule like?
A: Groups of twelve to fourteen students gather for three ninety-minute writing sessions each weekday, punctuated by brief breaks. The focus of each session varies, but every day includes generative writing and collaborative learning that is initiated by writing and sustained by discussion. A variety of activities are planned for evenings and the weekend, giving participants the opportunity to experience the Lewis & Clark campus and the Portland community and its surrounding area. There is ample time, too, for students to continue writing projects started in the writing sessions.

Q: Will I get to know other students in the workshop?
A: At Fir Acres, participants from across the country and abroad build a supportive writing community in which writing, reading, and responding to the writing of others provide a model for peer collaboration. At the end of each week, participants and workshop leaders meet to celebrate and read publicly from their work. While there are continuous opportunities outside class for socializing, participants get to know each other foremost as writers, readers, and thinkers.

Q: What is the National Writing and Thinking Network?

A: The Network was established by the Bard Institute for Writing and Thinking to provide the country's most imaginative, stimulating, and enjoyable summer writing programs for high school students. As part of this Network, the Fir Acres Writing and Thinking Workshop joins other sites whose teachers and directors collaborate in planning the summer programs, each enriched by the distinctive talent and interests of its own staff.

Q: Will this workshop help me get into college?
A: National Network summer workshops are modeled after the Workshop in Language and Thinking required of all students entering Bard College. As such, Network sites prepare students for the kind of writing they will be asked to do in college. Workshops develop students' fluency and confidence as writers, expand their experience of writing in many genres, and develop enthusiasm for writing. These skills will be important no matter which college a student decides to attend. Network workshops are not remedial but participants find their writing skills improve during the workshop.

Q: Who are the Fir Acres faculty?
A: Workshops are led by college faculty and high school teachers from across the country —dedicated writers and inspired teachers who seek to develop in their own teaching community the collaborative practices that are so important to the summer workshops. All teachers in the summer workshops contribute to developing and leading the diverse Teaching and Writing to Learn programs offered to educators at Bard's Institute for Writing and Thinking.

Q: Where do I live and eat during my stay at Fir Acres?
A: Participants are housed in the residence halls on the Lewis & Clark College campus and eat together in the central cafeteria. Vegetarian fare is available at all meals. A staff, including a Residential Director and Residential Assistants, oversees the residential life of the community. The facilities of the Lewis & Clark campus (e.g. library, swimming pool, tennis courts, track, computer labs) are available to Fir Acres students.

Q: What expenses are covered by the tuition fee?
A: The $1,750 fee covers all workshop expenses, room and board.

Q: How are financial aid awards determined?
A: Fir Acres is able to provide a few need-based scholarships each year. Since these awards do not cover full tuition, applicants are encouraged to look within their home communities for financial assistance. We recommend that interested participants contact their school administrators as early as possible in order to be eligible for funds that may be available to them for summer academic programs.

Q: What travel arrangements should I make?
A: To ensure full participation in the workshop, participants using public transportation should arrange to arrive no later than 4 p.m. on Sunday, June 29, and to leave no sooner than 5 p.m. on Friday, July 11. If travel plans dictate, it is possible to arrive on the Saturday before, or leave on the Saturday following workshop dates; a small extra fee will be charged for the additional overnight stay. Fir Acres staff will provide transportation to and from the Portland airport, train or bus stations.