

# WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM



West Point  
**READY** 

READY TO SERVE. READY TO LEAD.





# WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM

In a shifting, uncertain world, the Army's most senior leaders continue to insist that writing and communication are critical. This rigorous, nationally-recognized effort answers their call. Established in 2012, the Academy's Writing Fellows Program develops clear, thoughtful, and effective communicators across every domain and discipline at West Point, ensuring that our Army and country have the leaders they need to meet any



## CADET WRITING FELLOWS

At the core of the Program are the Cadet Fellows themselves. All Fellows demonstrate exceptional promise as writers and communicators; each year up to forty-eight cadets are newly selected to join the Program's ranks. They represent nearly every department at West Point, with majors across the humanities, social sciences, and STEM fields; often they also hold key leadership positions in the Corps.

With the dedicated support of faculty leaders, more than fifty Fellows have presented original scholarship at juried academic conferences since 2012. In recent years, many have also earned prestigious postgraduate recognition, including Rhodes, Barry, Fulbright, Marshall, and Schwarzman Scholarships as well as Draper, Lincoln Labs, and Anna Sobol Levy Fellowships. Cadet Writing Fellows have gone on to renowned law and medical schools as well as graduate study in the sciences and engineering at Harvard and MIT. Most importantly, they move on to serve their country across the full range of Army branches: ultimately, the extraordinary skills all Fellows gain in writing and

communication enhance their critical thinking and prepare them to excel in their chosen fields.

Historically, more than 96% of graduating Fellows rate their experience in the Program as "the most worthwhile" or "one of the most worthwhile" of their entire time at the Academy.

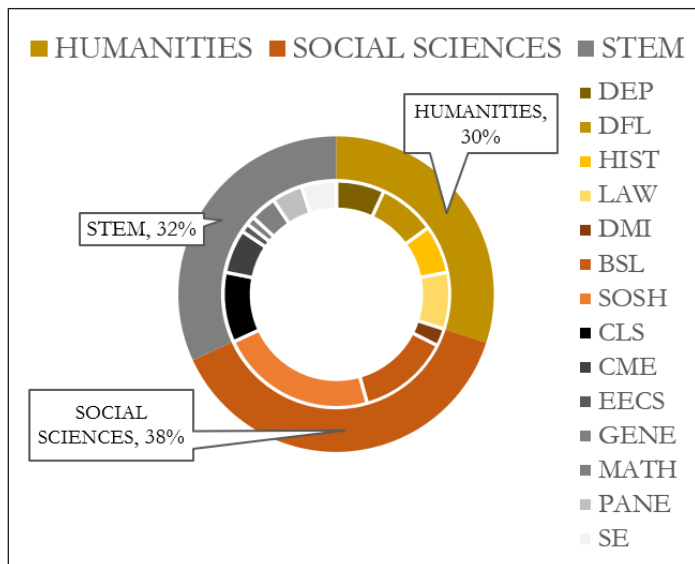
## COMMUNICATION IN PRACTICE

As part of the Program's coursework, Cadet Fellows put theory into action in our Peer-to-Peer Education Initiative, systematically reaching thousands of other cadets each year through one-on-one consultations, small group workshops, and class presentations. In doing so they grow as writers, teachers, and mentors, sharpening the incisive, thoughtful leadership style that close attention to others' work requires.

At the end of every academic year, a number of Fellows travel to Washington, D.C. for the Program's flagship summer enrichment experience, Writing Today. Partnering with accomplished scholars and professionals at a wide range of institutions, they engage in sustained residential study of the vital roles that writing and its teaching play in universities, varied professions, public policy, and the lives of veterans.

## BUILDING EXPERTISE

Writing is always difficult work. Even in the best of circumstances, communication generally is fraught with challenges—the constant calibrations that ever-changing audiences, contexts, and purposes require. Ours is an era, though, where these tests





*“You have to lead and learn and adapt or die. At the heart of this is effective communication.”*

*— GEN (R) Stanley McChrystal,  
Class of 1976*

grow harder by the day: attention runs short, patience thin, thinking shallow; many struggle to explain insights, find meaning, and bridge differences.

The Program carefully, methodically prepares cadets to meet this moment. Its innovative course sequence immerses Cadet Fellows in foundational as well as cutting-edge ideas about writing and communication, which they process through reports, scaffolded essays, and various mixed-media independent projects. Often, they pool their knowledge in Program publications, most recently *Pandemic Reflections: A Compendium of Cadet Responses to Extraordinary Times*.

Along the way, Cadet Fellows are matched with select faculty from around the Academy in our Faculty Fellows Mentorship Initiative. Through these structured mentorships, cadets and faculty conduct discipline-specific communications research while working shoulder to shoulder to elevate skills across West Point. Eventually, the Program’s Speaker Series will reinforce our core efforts by bringing expert practitioners and accomplished professionals to post for lectures and colloquia. Much of this action unfolds in two of the most highly-regarded learning and collaborative spaces anywhere at the Academy, our Fellows Parlor and Special Projects & Seminar Room.

## LEADERS IN COMMUNICATION

The U.S. Army has always stressed effective communication. But new initiatives at its highest levels testify even more emphatically to the importance of sound writing, reading, thinking, and speaking across its operations.

Writing Fellows Program faculty leaders are at the forefront of these initiatives. Since 2019, Dr. Jason Hoppe (Founding Director) and Dr. Colleen Eils (Deputy Director) have used their expertise to lead the design and development of argumentative and strategic communications exercises for the Army Senior Leader (ASL) priority Command Assessment Program, informing selection for battalion and brigade command, among other advanced leadership positions across the Army. Back at West Point, this same expertise will guide Contemporary Communication in the Military Profession, a new initiative to facilitate an array of bootcamps, workshops, and other opportunities focused on modern military communication for cadets and faculty alike.

*“I only knew what was in my mind, and I wished to express it clearly, so that there could be no mistaking it.”*

*— General Ulysses S. Grant, Class of 1843*

The bottom line: the Academy’s Writing Fellows Program is among the most robust and innovative programs of its kind, leading—and powerfully linking—advances in higher education and the uppermost echelons of our Army.

When permanently resourced, the professional expertise, sustained mentorship, and varied enrichment opportunities this Program offers will ensure that all Cadet Fellows commission into the Army and serve our nation as future-oriented leaders equipped to meet the full spectrum of today’s—and tomorrow’s—communications challenges.



In the fall of 2020, Dr. Eils and Dr. Hoppe (l-r) often led WR303 in Honor Plaza, directly across from the Program’s offices and conferencing spaces in Jefferson Hall. WR303: Writing Process & Pedagogy is the first of two intensive seminar courses that Cadet Fellows complete.





The Fellows Parlor is a grand, uniquely cadet-centered space with no parallel at the Academy. Cadets frequently gather here for conversation and community with each other and distinguished guests as well as quiet study of their own.

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

<i>Total Writing Fellows Program Endowment</i> . . . . .	<i>\$3.5 million</i>	Faculty Fellows Mentorship Initiative	
<i>Annual Funding</i> . . . . .	<i>\$160,000</i>	Endowment . . . . .	\$500,000
Fellows Parlor (reserved) . . . . .	\$500,000	Annual Funding . . . . .	\$20,000
Special Projects & Seminar Room . . . . .	\$100,000	Peer-to-Peer Education Initiative	
(reserved)		Endowment . . . . .	\$750,000
Academic Enrichment Program (AEP)		Annual Funding . . . . .	\$30,000
Endowment . . . . .	\$100,000	Speaker Series	
Annual Funding . . . . .	\$4,000	Endowment . . . . .	\$750,000
Contemporary Communication in the Military Profession		Annual Funding . . . . .	\$30,000
Endowment . . . . .	\$750,000	Writing Today & Academy Scholars Program	
Annual Funding . . . . .	\$30,000	Endowment . . . . .	\$550,000
		Annual Funding . . . . .	\$22,000



West Point has graduated no stronger proponent for the value of thoughtful, clear, and effective communication on the battlefield and beyond than Ulysses S. Grant (Class of 1843). Grant's uncompromising prose style—simple, purposeful, direct—remains our gold standard and continues to ground the core mission of the Writing Fellows Program: to prepare cadets to answer the varied demands of their professional communications environments and succeed as Army officers.

In recognition of Grant's unwavering commitment to the value of writing and communication, original charcoal portraits by the artist Daniel Pacella greet all visitors to the Program's suite and parlor.

MARGIN OF EXCELLENCE



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