

Guidelines to Writing a Curriculum Unit

The Institute attaches great importance to the process for writing curriculum units, which includes a prospectus and two drafts before submission of a completed unit. These steps for writing a unit provide you the opportunity to develop your ideas in collaboration with your seminar leader and your fellow teachers, who are the main audience for whom you are writing. Because of the importance of the writing process and the care with which the Institute schedule has been designed, it is imperative Fellows meet all deadlines. *Units which have not been prepared in accordance with this process cannot be accepted.*

The prospectus, each draft and completed unit should be submitted to your seminar leader by the dates indicated below. Individual assistance with questions about these Guidelines is available by making an appointment with your Seminar Coordinator.

Curriculum Unit Process and Schedule

Unit Topic, Prospectus & Reading List: due via email to Seminar Leader – Friday, June 14.

Each Fellow, in consultation with the seminar leader and other seminar members, refines his or her topic and chooses basic readings for research. An essay of two-to-four pages describes what the Fellow intends the final unit to contain. This provides each seminar member with an overview of his or her colleagues' work. Your seminar leader will provide feedback on each prospectus along with a recommended reading list for each Fellow by July 11.

First Draft: due in 6th Seminar Meeting – Thursday, September 26.

This is your first draft of the prose statement of the unit's content objectives and teaching strategies. Whether developed as a unified essay or as separate sections, this draft should consist of paragraphs of sustained narrative, exposition or argument. It should be at least 7-8 single-spaced pages in length (even though your seminar leader may suggest that the draft be double-spaced for convenience in revising and editing). The seminar leader will provide written comments on this draft by October 10.

Second Draft and Synopsis: due on Thursday, October 31 (no seminar meeting).

This draft includes a rewriting of the content objectives and teaching strategies of your unit, based on comments from your seminar leader and colleagues, and a first writing of the examples of classroom activities and annotated lists of resources. At this point you should prepare the entire unit in a form as close as possible to the completed unit: 15-25 single-spaced pages, with full citation of bibliographical data for items in notes or bibliographies, and full annotations for the bibliographies. The draft and synopsis will be returned with your seminar leader's comments by November 14.

Completed Unit: due via email to Seminar Leader Monday, November 25.

This is the third rewriting and refinement of the prose section of the unit and the final version of the entire unit. Fellows should consult the Mechanical Specifications (Fellows Handbook pp. 26-28) for the appearance of the completed unit, including any illustrations, images, graphs and tables; special characters or formulas; and use of any copyrighted material.

The Elements of a Curriculum Unit

After reading widely about your chosen topic and participating regularly in your seminar, you should complete a curriculum unit consisting of:

- 1) Content objectives - a clear statement of what the unit seeks to achieve;
- 2) Teaching strategies - a unified, coherent teaching plan for those objectives;
- 3) Classroom activities - three or more detailed examples of actual teaching methods or lesson plans;
- 4) Resources - three annotated lists of materials you have reviewed: (1) a bibliography for teachers, (2) a reading list for students, and (3) a list of materials for classroom use. You should explain in the prose section of the unit how these resources relate to your objectives.
- 5) Appendix -- no more than one page in which you briefly annotate - and not merely list - those school district or Common Core academic standards your unit will implement in a significant way. Please title this appendix *Implementing District Standards*.

You may present the first three elements in a unified essay or in separate sections. Whatever organization you devise, the discussion of objectives and strategies must consist of paragraphs of sustained narrative, exposition, or argument. This discussion must constitute at least two thirds of your completed unit – that is, at least 10 single-spaced pages, not including worksheets and images. Outlines, lists and worksheets, when included, belong in the section devoted to classroom activities. In selecting examples of classroom activities, you should present methods you have developed, rather than those gleaned from other sources. Considered together, the units prepared in your seminar should reflect a variety of methods.

Remember that the main audience for your unit is other teachers. The presentation of work-in-progress in Institute seminars will provide you with responses from one group of teachers - ideas you can use in revising your unit to make it as widely useful as possible.

Use of Copyrighted Materials

If you want to include in your curriculum unit excerpts (i.e. passages exceeding a few lines) from copyrighted material, you should first obtain permission from the copyright owner. If use of such material is not granted free of charge, you must also obtain advance approval from the Institute for paying any fees. Copyrighted material must be properly credited in an endnote, as described in the discussion of "Notes" in the Mechanical Specifications. *The Institute cannot accept units that contain copyrighted material for which you have not obtained prior authorization.* Because of the delays you may encounter in obtaining permission from copyright owners, you should seek such permission well in advance of completing your unit. We suggest you request such

permissions while preparing your first draft. For further information, please consult the detailed instructions and forms provided for obtaining copyright permissions.

Submitting the Completed Unit

Final units must be formatted as described in the *Mechanical Specifications of Writing a Curriculum Unit* section of this handbook and submitted by **Monday, November 25** in electronic form to your seminar leader. Please be sure to include “CU” and your name in the subject line of your email and copy the CTI Director and Program Associate on your emailed submission. After a final review, your seminar leader will forward your final approved unit to the CTI Director and Program Associate by **Thursday, December 5**.

Your final unit must be accompanied by the cover sheet (including unit synopsis), indexing form and appendix titled "Implementing District Standards." Each document should be saved as a separate file. Name the files with your first initial and surname and the submission date in a manner that will make it easy to distinguish them, i.e. "jjoyce_unit_11-25-13," "jjoyce_coversheet_11-25-13," "jjoyce_index_11-25-13" and "jjoyce_appendix_11-25-13."

Your cover sheet must include a synopsis of the unit to inform other teachers who may wish to use the material you develop. The cover sheet also includes your recommendation of subject(s) and grade level(s) for teaching your unit.

Also by December 5, the seminar leader will review and indicate to the CTI Director whether each Fellow has participated fully in the seminar and the writing process.

Upon successful completion of the seminar and the unit, as well as completion of CTI's online Fellows' Questionnaire, Fellows who are in good standing will be issued a stipend of \$1500 from the CMS payroll department. (Individuals who do not fulfill all Institute requirements for full participation cease being Fellows and do not receive the stipend). Fellows also receive 3 continuing education credits for their full participation.

To increase availability and use of the curricular resources developed by Fellows, the Institute places each Fellow's synopsis (abstract) and curriculum unit on its website (www.charlotteteachers.org) and on the Yale National Initiative website; both are searchable for content using a guide and keywords provided by Fellows on their Indexing Forms. CMS public school teachers, other teachers around the world, and the general public may consult these curriculum units and other Institute resources online.