Stanford Study of Writing
Year 3 Interview Questions

1. What has changed about writing for you in the past year? Have you noticed any changes in the amount of writing you’ve been doing? Have the types of assignments changed? What about the kinds of research that you are asked to do? And where does multimedia writing fit in?


3. In classes outside your major(s), what kinds of writing did you do in the past year? Which courses had assignments that asked you to use primary sources? Which asked you to use both primary and secondary sources? Which asked you to do outside research? Did any courses ask you to revise? What kind of instruction did you receive?

4. What could your instructors do (in any of your classes) to improve their instruction in terms of writing? What other help or advice was available to you as you prepared your assignments? Did you make use of the Stanford Writing Center? If so, how? Did you have a study group, and if so how did it work?

5. Describe the process you typically go through in responding to a writing assignment, including getting started, researching, composing, revising, and finishing. Does your writing process differ from assignment to assignment or from field to field? When and how does technology (search engines, databases, word processing, film, etc.) enter into your composing process? How has your writing process changed since you started at Stanford?

6. Have you done peer work on writing assignments? If so, was it done inside or outside of the classroom? Have you done any collaborative writing or group projects? How does writing change when it’s done collaboratively? What did you think about the experience?

7. What kinds of writing do you do outside of classes? How do your out-of-class activities affect the way you think about writing?

8. How would you describe the culture of writing at Stanford? How is writing valued, discussed, etc? Have you noticed any changes in the culture of writing over the past three years?

9. Describe your use of the Web and other multimedia technologies such as PowerPoint, email, IM, or PanFora, etc. for completing course assignments and other course-related activities. How do you evaluate web resources? What kinds of multimedia presentations have you done? What kinds of web-based projects have you done? Compare your out of class use of these and other multimedia technologies.

10. How have you used visual elements (photographs, drawings, reproductions of art, images, graphs, charts, maps, clip art, etc.) in your writing?

11. In your college work in general, what is writing most useful for? What is writing most useful for in your major? Both in and out of class, what do you use writing for?
12. How do the reading and writing you are doing in upper-level classes (especially in your major) differ from the reading and writing you were asked to do in first-year, introductory level classes? Do you see any connections between the writing you did in those first-year courses and the writing you do now?

13. What part did writing play in your choice of a major? More specifically, were you attracted to your major because of the role that writing plays in the major?

14. Describe your most important and/or successful writing experience this year. Why was it so successful? Compare it to your least successful writing experience. Why was it unsuccessful or unsatisfying?

15. How do you see yourself as a writer now? In general, how conscious are you of the act of writing. Do you see yourself as a writer in the field you have chosen as a major? How would you describe the range of genres and styles in your field? Is writing changing for you in terms of its difficulty? In what ways?

16. How would you define good writing? How has your definition changed?

17. Have you studied off-campus over the summer or during the academic year (i.e., overseas or the Stanford-Washington program)? If yes: What kinds of writing did you do within your program? What kinds of out-of-class writing did you do? Do you feel your experience changed your writing or how you think about writing?

18. What writing experiences do you wish you had had at Stanford? And what writing experiences do you hope you have before you graduate? Is there any writing or writing-related activity you want to learn, participate in, or accomplish?

19. How aware are you of current debates over intellectual property (in the music industry, for example), and in what ways, if any, do you see issues of intellectual property and copyright in relation to the writing you do in and out of class?

20. How well prepared do you feel for the writing you have been asked to do in your classes? What might have better prepared you?