

About the Duke Reader Project: *An initiative of the Thompson Writing Program in collaboration with Alumni Affairs*

The Reader Project offers Duke students the opportunity to get feedback on a class writing project from someone outside the classroom setting who has professional experience relevant to their project. This feedback can help students learn to anticipate the needs and expectations of readers, and to revise their writing to make it more effective for the intended audience. Students in participating undergraduate courses have the opportunity to be paired with a Duke alumnus or employee who has a professional interest in their writing project. By participating in the Reader Project, members of the broader Duke community can play a direct role in helping our students develop the communication and reasoning skills that are so important for their success in both professional and civic life.

dukereaderproject.org

PUBLICATIONS

"The Duke Reader Project: Engaging the University Community in Undergraduate Writing Instruction." *Liberal Education*, 97(3/4), 2011.

"Reader Experts Help Students Bring the Write Stuff." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, March 27, 2011.

## NSF study objectives

1. For students to develop a more positive outlook on value of writing in STEM, recognize the importance of written communication in STEM, and be more engaged in the writing aspects of STEM course projects.
2. To help students, understand the importance of getting serious feedback on drafts of their writing, learn how to give and receive useful feedback on scientific and technical writing projects in a professional manner, and learn how to revise their writing in response to such feedback.
3. To improve the approach, making it work better for students, readers and instructors.
4. To identify types of STEM courses for further investigation of this approach.

## STEM courses in the NSF grant for 2011/2012

Dept/School	COURSE	Year of Students	Genre of Student Writing
Biology	Genomic Perspectives on Human Evolution	3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup>	research proposal
Chemistry	Physical Chemistry Lab	3 <sup>rd</sup>	journal-style research report
Chemistry	Independent research/honors thesis	4 <sup>th</sup>	senior thesis/journal style report
Comp Science	Apps: From Concept to Client	4 <sup>th</sup>	project plan, design documentation
Engineering	Engineering Innovation	1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup>	problem description, design proposal
Environ science	Integrated Environ Science & Policy	2 <sup>nd</sup>	policy memo
Environ science	Environment and Conflict	3 <sup>rd</sup> /4 <sup>th</sup>	policy memo or white paper

## Examples of volunteer readers

*ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE Integrated Environmental Science and Policy*

**ALUM:** Director of natural resource and environmental programs; promotes funding and strategic marketing of non-profits.

**ALUM:** Congressional Affairs Liaison to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Office of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs; manages NOAA's relationship with Congress, covering climate change and variability, oceanic and atmospheric research, and related policy issues.

*COMPUTER SCIENCE Apps: From Concept to Client*

**EMPLOYEE:** Assistant Dean for Academic Technologies for Duke Law School

**EMPLOYEE:** Director of Digital Information Strategy for Duke University; strategist and consultant for development of new scholarly information technology programs.

*BIOLOGY Genomic Perspectives on Human Evolution*

**ALUM:** Clinical Scientist; assists with the development of drugs, biologics, and medical devices, and evaluates new medical products and technologies for potential venture capital investment or licensing.

**ALUM:** Medical Writer, PhD Physiology and Pharmacology. Plans and implements strategic communications solutions supporting pharmaceutical products; often writes peer-reviewed publications reporting the results of clinical trials.