Information about *Thinking Matters* Fellowship

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1. Selection Process

Confirmation that the Ph.D. degree is completed after 2012 and by June 2018 is the first step in the selection process. Candidates’ files will then be reviewed for evidence of teaching excellence and a strong record of scholarship, the two most important criteria for selection. Reviewers include both the leadership of the *Thinking Matters* program and the faculty members who design the *Thinking Matters* courses.

The next step is identifying multiple courses – typically within a cluster -- that each promising candidate is qualified to teach. The goal is to put together a course sequence over autumn, winter and spring quarters for each of the best qualified applicants. This complex matching process results in a preliminary teaching team of fellows and faculty for every course.

At any point during this process, candidates might be contacted to set up phone or Skype interviews. Should candidates be invited for a campus interview, a formal job talk will not be required. Decisions will be finalized by mid-May.

2. Teaching Duties and Responsibilities

As a member of a *Thinking Matters* teaching team, fellows attend two 50-minute lectures and at least one faculty/fellow team meeting per week. Examples of collaborative activities in team meetings include exchange of teaching strategies related to the topics for the week and development of assignments that align with the learning goals for the course. Fellows plan and lead two discussion sections averaging 10 to 15 first-year students per section; each section meets twice per week for 50 minutes. Fellows also provide personalized attention to student learning through tutorials. Beginning with orientation sessions in August and continuing throughout the year, *Thinking Matters* fellows are expected to participate in pedagogy workshops, research colloquia and other activities that contribute to the collegiality of the fellowship community.
3. Teaching Teams

Teams range in size from three to six members including from one to three faculty members and from two to four fellows, with three or four being the most common total. Course size also varies, from a minimum of 40 freshmen to a maximum of 100.

Faculty are responsible for the design of Thinking Matters courses and for delivery of course lectures. Their course proposals are reviewed for approval by a formal Governance Board to ensure that courses meet the mandated learning goals for the first-year requirement established by the Faculty Senate. Fellows are responsible for student learning; they organize discussion sections and tutorials that provide their students with the support needed to develop the complex critical thinking skills at the heart of the Thinking Matters program. Each fellow is expected to draw upon his/her particular expertise and teaching experience in shaping sections and tutorials for the benefit of the each of the freshmen they instruct.

Fellows collaborate with Stanford faculty in the common effort to help first-year students achieve a successful transition from high-school to college-level study. Faculty and fellows together sustain overall intellectual coherence for the course and work together to explore a variety of pedagogical approaches and ways to assess student learning.

4. Professional Development

The main area of professional development for Thinking Matters fellows is teaching, with a focus on liberal education as exemplified by the Stanford first-year requirement. The fellowship formulates clearly structured pedagogical emphases for each of the three years. In the first year, fellows focus on expanding their pedagogical strategies through formal workshops and informal exchanges among members of the teaching teams. Student-centered learning guides the educational philosophy of the program. In the second and third years, fellows have the opportunity to take positions of team leadership. Each teaching team has a designated Course Coordinator and Tech Coordinator; these jobs build skills of negotiation, communication and use of technology in the classroom.

The Thinking Matters fellowship recognizes the importance of helping fellows prepare for whatever future careers they are considering. To those ends, the program provides various kinds of research and career support, including preparation for the academic job market but also alternative career trajectories in higher education administrative support, advising, and research.

The program provides $2,000 of professional development support each year for fellows to make conference presentations, purchase materials and to reimburse other relevant expenses. Fellows receive a one-quarter release from teaching during the three-year fellowship, typically during the second year, contingent upon continued availability of funding.