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Foreword

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Foreword

We are pleased to present the first volume of *ESSAI, The College of DuPage Anthology of Academic Writing Across the Curriculum*. *ESSAI* celebrates and honors the skill, scholarship, and sophistication in learning articulated in writing by COD students in the courses of six disciplines during the 2002-2003 academic year: Literature, Composition, Biology, History, Criminal Justice, and Psychology. Selections include personal essays, expository writing, literary criticism, research projects, formal reports, a newsletter, and a focused response to course work. We believe that writing to stimulate the process of analytical and creative thinking is as important and worthy of inclusion as writing to record information, demonstrate learning, or communicate flawlessly, eloquently, and gracefully.

We believe readers will find much to admire in the writing that follows. If you are a student, you will find models for your own writing. The selections will help to demystify the kind of writing assignments that other students are engaged in other courses because preceding each selection is the instructor's description of the assignment. If you are a professor, you may find *ESSAI* useful as a teaching resource. It may supply exemplars of understanding what we teach at the college and how we do it. Equally important, *ESSAI* may enrich and enliven our ongoing conversation about writing as a vital part of the academic experience at the College of DuPage, a unified dialogue that is always apt to inspire our own pedagogic innovations, which in turn will surely inspire our students.

Brief words on the anthology name and the selection rubric: first, the name *ESSAI* derives from Michel de Montaigne who is credited to have created a new literary genre called essays in the sixteenth century and to whom we owe our tradition of college essay writing. However, reflecting our philosophy of the writing across the curriculum at all levels of learning, we resonated back to Montaigne's seminal design in which "essais" meant trials and attempts, "a weighing" of issues at hand (from the Latin *exagium*), and all that accrued from its synonymous mental exercises. Thus, *ESSAI* was chosen to signify students' minds hard at work in various academic interests, tasks, and settings, while witnessing the laudable results of their writerly efforts and integrity.

The following is the rubric we have applied in making the selections. Papers are deemed exemplary if they:

- ❖ Are completed according to assignments' purposes.
- ❖ Have mechanics, grammar, and other technical points in place.
- ❖ Are imaginative, creative, logical, and risk-taking with respect to assignments' purposes.
- ❖ Exhibit clarity of writing with respect to purposes.
- ❖ Follow the disciplinary format.
- ❖ Include relevant literature reviews where required.
- ❖ Demonstrate analytical abilities.
- ❖ Generate interest.

Join with us in congratulating these student writers. And look forward to the second volume of *ESSAI* in 2005.

The *ESSAI* Committee:

- Chikako D. Kumamoto, English
- Jim Allen, English
- Bob Georgalas, English
- Holly Hubert, Teacher Preparation
- Keith Krasemann, Philosophy
- Chris Petersen, Biology
- Ben Whisenhunt, History