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Department of English
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Professor Edward P. J. Corbett
The Ohio State University
Department of English
Columbus, Ohio 43210

Dear Ed,

I was delighted to see you in San Jose and even more pleased by your willingness to consider a trip to Austin this August to speak at our annual TA/Al Orientation.

Our orientation runs for three days, during which time new assistant instructors, teaching assistants, and faculty are introduced to the English Department in general and to our freshman writing course in particular. Speakers include faculty members, graduate students, and specialists in education. The orientation concludes with a cookout at a local park. (To give you a clearer idea what we do, I am enclosing a copy of the orientation program from 1984.) The orientation this year will be held August 21-23. Your fellow speakers will include Jim Kinneavy, Maxine Hairston, John Trimble, and Lester Faigley.

What we like to have from you-- if possible--are two presentations, the first a one-hour workshop specifically for the Assistant Instructors and Teaching Assistants attending the orientation, and the second a more formal lecture that might appeal to all members of the department and university community interested in writing and rhetoric (there will be many).

In the recent past, Hens Guth conducted a seminar on how to read and comment on student writing; in a workshop last year Bill Bridges explained how to use expressive writing to stimulate more formal kinds of prose. You may, of course, have a blank check for your workshop session, but I would suggest a presentation something along the lines of your most recent 4C's paper--describing your own process of writing and allowing time for discussion. You might lead our new teachers to think seriously about what they do when they write and how their own habits of composition might influence their teaching.

For the more general lecture, I would be delighted to hear the talk you described to me in San Jose tracing the history of the Rhetorician's reputation as flimflam man. Such a presentation might have just the right balance of seriousness and good will to salve some wounds down here. Needless to say, we'd love to have a lecture that appeals to as wide an audience as possible.

We have tentatively scheduled both your presentations for Friday, August 23: the workshop for 1:15-2:15 pm; the lecture for 4:30 pm. At this point, however, we can easily accommodate changes in our program. The department has agreed to pick up the full cost of for your airfare and accommodations and I will see to it that you are properly wined, dined and chauffeured.

However, I will need to have a definite commitment from you by July 15 in order to secure the departmental funds for your trip.

As I said in San Jose, you are welcome to set your own agenda for the visit. In checking with the airlines, however, I discovered that the round-trip fare between Austin and Columbus is *much* cheaper (as low as \$218) if you stay over Saturday night. (The regular weekday fare is \$625.) From the department's point of view, the most economical schedule would have you arriving Thursday afternoon (August 22) or Friday morning (August 23), speaking Friday afternoon, touring Austin on Saturday, and departing on Sunday (August 25). However, if you want to arrive earlier, depart earlier, or speak on another day or at another time, just let me know when you reply. I want you to make the trip at *your* convenience.

According to the secretary who handles such matters, you should make your own airline reservations as soon as possible. During your stay here in August you will sign some papers, and a reimbursement will follow in two or three weeks. I hope such an arrangement is acceptable. We can handle your hotel reservations (probably the Hyatt Regency or Sheraton Crest), or if you prefer, you are welcome to stay at my home. I have a three-bedroom house in southwest Austin which I share with a miniature schnauzer.

I apologize for having to dump all these details and requests on you at once. Frankly, I was surprised (and delighted) by the speed with which the department cleared a line of funding for your visit once it knew you were interested. I need to confirm your plans as soon as possible, so I would appreciate hearing from you early as soon as possible in July. You can write me about your plans or call me collect at home [(512) 288-0355]. The English Department does not accept collect calls, but my office number there is (512) 471-6109 just in case.

Needless to say, I am very grateful for the interest you have shown in speaking at our orientation. I will see to it that you enjoy the best in Texas hospitality while you are here.

Best regards,



John Ruskiewicz
Director of Freshman English