To be awarded in memory of Gertrude Spencer.

This prize will be awarded jointly to a graduate student First-Year Writing Seminar instructor and his/her student in recognition of excellence in the development of a portfolio of the student’s essays. Publication of an essay in Discoveries is also possible; essays without accurate documentation might not be so considered.

A portfolio is a collection of work characterized by selection and reflection. Each essay should be presented in its final polished form. (No drafts and no notes should be included.) A student’s portfolio (including a minimum of four essays) might display the growth in the student’s writing ability over the course of the semester; it might show the excellence of the student’s work in a variety of modes of writing; or it might display the excellence and development of a student’s work with a particular topic.

To enter this contest, the student and instructor should submit, in portfolio form, the following material, each of which is a significant part of the application:

a) The essays, including (where appropriate) complete and accurate documentation in an accepted format.

b) The instructor's prompt (i.e. essay assignments) for each of the essays.

c) Two statements, one from the instructor, one from the student, each explaining the significance of the portfolio. The student's reflective essay of 2–4 pages should include critique of the portfolio as a whole and of each essay, making clear the student’s insights into herself or himself as a writer.

Only one entry can be submitted from each class.

The amount of the prize will be $350 to the graduate student instructor and $350 to his/her student (honorable mentions, if any, will receive $125 each).

Submissions are due in 101 McGraw Hall by Tuesday, May 23. No exceptions can be made. Undergraduate writers may not submit the same essay for more than one prize.