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## Rhetoric associates in natural resources : Influences on undergraduate education at Utah State University. Part I : Fundamentals of the program and influences on mentors

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**RHETORIC ASSOCIATES IN NATURAL RESOURCES: INFLUENCES  
ON UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION AT UTAH STATE  
UNIVERSITY. PART I: FUNDAMENTALS OF THE  
PROGRAM AND INFLUENCES ON MENTORS**

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**ABSTRACT:** Started in 1990 in the College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at Utah State University, the Rhetoric Associates (RA) Program provides an opportunity for undergraduate mentors to assist their fellow students in developing their communication (mostly writing) skills by working with them on assignments designed by faculty in specific courses. RAs read first drafts of assignments, make suggestions for revisions, and meet with students one-on-one to discuss the revisions. Faculty then read the revised drafts for a final evaluation of student performance. RAs were first assigned to courses in the College of Natural Resources in 1994, and in most cases were majors in the college and had taken the course to which they were assigned as an RA. Surveys of current and past RAs indicated a number of benefits derived from this experience, including: (1) enhanced skills in the areas of organization, interpersonal communication, mentoring and teaching, editing, adaptability, and self-analysis; (2) satisfaction from helping fellow students and faculty; (3) enhanced résumé and, in turn, employability; and (4) recognition by others.