

ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY



University Curriculum Committee

*Telephone: 309/438-3183
Campus Box 2202
101C Moulton Hall*

December 7, 2016

TO: Susan Kalter, Chairperson, Academic Senate
FROM: Claire Lieberman, Chairperson, University Curriculum Committee
RE: Executive Summary – ENG Proposal for New Technical Writing and Rhetorics Sequence

The University Curriculum Committee approved, and is forwarding for Academic Senate consideration, the attached proposal from the Department of English to add a new Technical Writing and Rhetorics Sequence.

The Department of English provided a lengthy rationale (see proposal) for proposing this new sequence – the main points are as follows:

- The new sequence will prepare English majors for careers in technical and professional writing in the private and public sector including corporate, nonprofit, and governmental organizations;
- The world needs ethical, smart, and rhetorically informed technical communicators, and we have the means and the motivation to bring them into being here in our Department;
- The demand for technical communicators in the workplace will make students want to major in English, which will increase our undergraduate enrollment numbers and enable us to produce highly employable graduates who are more likely to speak positively about their undergraduate experiences and to offer support as alumni to the Department and the University;
- The fact that ours will be the only such undergraduate program in Illinois will enable us to attract students to ISU and to our Department specifically, thereby increasing our undergraduate enrollment numbers at the department, college, and university levels;
- The demand for scholars with expertise in technical communication means that our Ph.D. students who specialize in it will be more likely to get tenure-track jobs, which will help sustain our impressive placement rate, recruit the best students, and increase our enrollment numbers at the graduate level.

The University Curriculum Committee supports the proposal for the new Technical Writing and Rhetorics Sequence in the Major in English.

Attachments

jdr

**New Undergraduate Program (Majors, Minors, Sequences) Proposal
Illinois State University - University Curriculum Committee**

Program Department English

Initiator Julie Jung

Phone 438-7590

Initiator Department English

Coauthor(s) Christopher De Santis (ccdesan@ilstu.edu), Angela Haas (ahaas@ilstu.edu)

Title of New Program Technical Writing and Rhetorics Sequence

Proposed Starting Catalog Year 2018-2019

Submission Date Thursday, September 29, 2016

Email jmjung@ilstu.edu

Campus Address 4240 English

Version 2

1. Proposed Action

New Major

New Minor

✓ New Sequence

More than 50% of courses in this program are Distance Education

No Is this program an Integrated Bachelors/Masters degree program?

Sequence Major English

2. Provide Undergraduate Catalog copy for new program.

Technical Writing and Rhetorics Sequence:

This sequence is designed to prepare graduates for careers in technical and professional writing in the private and public sector, including corporate, nonprofit, and governmental organizations.

- 2.0 major GPA in English courses taken at Illinois State University.
- 40 hours in English required, exclusive of ENG 101.
- 16 hours of major requirements: ENG 100 with a grade of C or better; ENG 102; ENG 300; 3 hours from ENG 244; and 6 hours selected from British Literatures and Cultures, American Literatures and Cultures, Global Literatures and Cultures, Children's Literature, or Women's Literature from the following courses.
British Literatures and Cultures: ENG 110, 213, 214, 216, 217, 218, 219, 222, 320, 324, 327, 328, 329, 378, 386
American Literatures and Cultures: ENG 130, 165, 231, 232, 233, 234, 236, 265, 266, 267, 332, 336, 365
Global Literatures and Cultures: ENG 150, 206, 250, 251, 252, 255, 261, 266, 352
Children's Literature: ENG 170, 271, 272, 370, 372, 373, 374, 375
Women's Literature: ENG 160, 206, 260, 261, 360
- 24 hours of sequence requirements: 6 hours from ENG 249 and ENG 283; 6 hours from ENG 239, 350, or 351; 6 hours from ENG 349 and 353; 3 hours from ENG 391 or 392; and 3 hours from ENG 398.

3. Provide a description for the proposed program.

The sequence in Technical Writing and Rhetorics prepares English majors for careers in technical and professional writing in the public sector, including corporate, nonprofit, and governmental organizations. Students take 24 hours of requirements in the sequence. In these courses, students learn how to produce texts that effectively communicate technical information to a range of audiences. They learn key principles in rhetorical theory, which enables them to analyze and critique texts and apply that critical perspective as they draft and revise their own. Students' production skills are enhanced as they study the relationship between written, visual, and digital texts. They learn web design skills, which rank as one of the top five knowledge sets valued by employers for all undergraduate majors. They engage in hands-on learning, producing multimodal, web-based texts in computer-assisted classrooms equipped with applications used in the workplace. This hands-on learning culminates in a professional internship, where students working in a real-world setting apply and reflect on their developing understanding of technical writing and workplace communication. All of students'

hands-on learning is situated in and informed by scholarly research in the fields of technical communication and rhetoric studies, which examines best practices associated with information architecture, usability, project management, web-based collaboration, and international and intercultural technical communication. Ultimately, the sequence in Technical Writing and Rhetorics offers English majors who are interested in careers in technical and professional writing the opportunity to acquire the knowledges and skills they need to succeed as informed, effective, and ethical communicators in a variety of workplace environments.

4. Provide a rationale of proposed program.

The proposed undergraduate sequence in Technical Writing and Rhetorics (TWR)—which if approved would be the only such sequence in Illinois—offers English majors who are interested in careers in technical and professional writing the opportunity to acquire the knowledges and skills they need to succeed as technical communicators in a variety of workplace environments.

The primary distinguishing feature of the proposed sequence is that all of its required courses are based on current theoretical and pedagogical research in the fields of technical communication and rhetoric studies. This focus ensures that students who successfully complete the sequence understand how to [1] rhetorically analyze, critique, and produce public texts—in local, national, and transnational contexts—such as those circulating in corporate, institutional, medical, and legislative discourses; and [2] assess the usability of the texts they produce, thereby enabling them to understand the situational complexities involved in analyzing and appealing to diverse audiences in various cultural contexts. Furthermore, because the sequence requires students to take courses in technical writing, digital and visual rhetorics, and rhetorical theory, students learn how to apply rhetorical principles throughout the various stages involved in the production of complex, multimodal technical documents (invention, editing, delivery, usability testing, and revision).

Faculty who will teach the required courses in the TWR sequence are committed to exposing students to research in technical communication and rhetoric studies not only to help them accomplish the above goals, but also to help students forge intellectual connections across and beyond English studies. This critical connection-making is enabled by our conscious decision to limit the major and sequence requirements to 40 hours, which affords students the opportunity to specialize or minor in a scholarly field that complements their interests. Our experiences as writers in industry and as internship advisors indicate that technical writers are well served by such an approach, which offers students a broad education that includes specialized work in a cognate area. TWR majors who are interested in issues pertaining to environmental sustainability, for example, might enroll in major electives that examine ecocritical theories and environmental literatures. They might also consider minoring in environmental health science, thereby building a content expertise that enables them to be more critically aware as they write and edit technical documents in the workplace.

As scholars we are primarily motivated to propose this sequence because we believe the world desperately needs rhetorically aware technical writers who can use their highly marketable practical skills to do good in the world. At many universities, technical and professional writing programs are situated in business and engineering schools. At others, faculty who teach technical communication do not also study and teach rhetoric. Because our technical writing expertise is informed by rhetorical theory and grounded in the liberal arts, we have the opportunity to create at ISU a unique program, one that recognizes how the material realities of people's lives are continuously and differentially impacted by technical writing that takes form in a wide range of public rhetorics, including local, state, federal, and transnational legislation; corporate policies and practices (e.g., mission statements, family leave policies, etc.); and scientific and medical communication (e.g., patient intake forms, informed consent forms, Medicaid applications, health insurance billing documentation, etc.). Furthermore, our faculty's expertise in rhetorics of social justice and community literacy affords students the unique opportunity to study how technical writing understood as the practice of civic engagement generates effects within and beyond institutional and national boundaries. As such, the TWR sequence will contribute to our Department's and the University's shared mission to promote global citizenship. In short, students who graduate from the TWR sequence will go into their workplaces with a deep understanding of how technical writing does things in the world and that as technical and professional communicators they have both the power and the obligation to identify and intervene in discourses that authorize injustice.

While these may be our goals, we also understand that undergraduate students and their parents need assurances that a degree in English–Technical Writing and Rhetorics is a marketable one. To provide these assurances, we offer the following evidence:

- The 27th edition of Jobs Rated Almanac (2015) ranks the top 200 jobs based upon quality of work environment, salary, outlook (job growth, income growth potential, employment potential), and stress levels. “Technical Writer” is listed as #24 in the top 200 jobs. It is the highest ranking job in the Humanities (see <http://www.careercast.com/content/2015-jobs-rated-report-21-40>).
- According to the 2014-2015 U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Outlook Handbook, technical writers with a bachelor’s degree are enjoying an employment growth rate that is 15% above the national average and a median pay of \$65,500/year (see <http://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/technical-writers.htm>).
- Because technical writers typically work with scientific, medical, and environmental industries/agencies to manage and communicate information (and conduct usability testing for them), it is important to note that our majors will surely be positively impacted by reports from Forbes, CNN Money, and Business Insider, which identify these aforementioned industries/agencies as being among the top ten fastest growing job sectors in the U.S. until at least 2020.
- The Chronicle of Higher Education, Money Magazine, and the Association of American Colleges and Universities all report that acquiring web design skills ranks among the top five knowledge sets valued by employers for all undergraduate majors.
- Undergraduate TWR majors interested in pursuing a PhD in technical communication can be encouraged by data from rhetmap.org, which has been tracking jobs in rhetoric, composition, and technical communication since 2010. Rhetmap.org’s data evidence that at least 50 tenure-track positions in technical communication are advertised annually.

By making these persuasive data widely available to students who want to major in English but don’t because they worry it won’t land them a job, we can grow our enrollments at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. To sum up, our major arguments for the TWR sequence are:

- The world needs ethical, smart, and rhetorically informed technical communicators, and we have the means and the motivation to bring them into being here in our Department;
- The demand for technical communicators in the workplace will make students want to major in English, which will increase our undergraduate enrollment numbers and enable us to produce highly employable graduates who are more likely to speak positively about their undergraduate experiences and to offer support as alumni to the Department and the University;
- The fact that ours will be the only such undergraduate program in Illinois will enable us to attract students to ISU and to our Department specifically, thereby increasing our undergraduate enrollment numbers at the department, college, and university levels;
- The demand for scholars with expertise in technical communication means that our PhD students who specialize in it will be more likely to get tenure-track jobs, which will help sustain our impressive placement rate, recruit the best students, and increase our enrollment numbers at the graduate level.

5. Describe the expected effects of the proposed program on existing campus programs (if applicable).

One effect of this new sequence will be to make discrete the technical writing and rhetorics sequence from two other sequences in the major: creative writing and publishing studies. The sequence gives students the opportunity to focus on the production, usability-testing, revision, and delivery of a specific kind of public writing. Furthermore, offering a highly marketable (and the only one of its kind in Illinois) technical writing and rhetorics sequence that will be noted on transcripts, etc. may have a positive impact on departmental enrollment numbers, possibly offsetting the necessary restrictions we have put on the English Education program.

6. Provide a sample four year plan of study demonstrating that a student could realistically complete the program requirements in a specific number of semesters.

First Year

First Semester

English 101/101A10 (3)

English 100 (3)

English 102 (1) Foreign Language* (4)

GE Natural Science (3)

(14)

Second Semester

Communication 110 (3)

Literature & Cultural Studies course+ (3)

Foreign Language* (4)

GE Natural Science (3)

GE Math** (4)

(17)

Second Year

First Semester

English 249 or 283 (3)

Literature & Cultural Studies course+ (3)

GE (H, FA, SMT, or SS)*** (3)

Foreign Language* (4)

GE (ICL or UST) (3)

(16)

Second Semester

English 249 or 283 (3)

English 244 (3)

GE (ICL or UST) (3)

GE (H, FA, SMT, or SS)*** (3)

Minor or general elective (3)

(15)

Third Year

First Semester

English 239, 350 or 351+ (3)

English 391 or 392 (3)

GE (H, FA, SMT, or SS)*** (3)

Minor or general elective (3)

Minor or general elective (3)

(15)

Second Semester

English 239, 350 or 351+ (3)

English 349 or 353+ (3)

GE (H, FA, SMT, or SS) *** (3)

Minor or general elective (3)

Minor or general elective (3)

(15)

Fourth Year

First Semester

English 349 or 353+ (3)

Minor or general elective (3)

Minor or general elective (3)

Minor or general elective (3)

200/300 level Minor or general elective (3)

(15)

Second Semester

English 300 (3)

English 398++ (3)
200/300 level Minor or general elective (3)
200/300 level Minor or general elective (3)
200/300 level Minor or general elective (3)
(15)

A minor is strongly encouraged and may be used in place of general electives.

*Foreign Language is determined by placement, students need to complete LAN 115 to meet the BA requirement.

**Math placement is determined by placement, students may take more than one math course.

***One group 2 course must be a Global Studies, students need one course from each group 2 category: H-Humanities; FA-Fine Arts; SMT-Science, Math, Technology; SS-Social Science.

+6 hours must be taken from this group (two classes).

++ English 398, Professional Practice, may be taken anytime junior or senior year or during the summer.

7. Describe the expected curricular changes required, including new courses. If proposals for new courses have also been submitted, please reference those related proposals here:

None.

8. Anticipated funding needs and source of funds.

None. Please see attached financial implications form.

9. Does this program count for teacher education? No

10. Is this an Interdisciplinary Studies program? No

10. The following questions must be answered.

Have you confirmed that Milner Library has sufficient resources for the proposed program? Yes

Are more than 124 hours required to complete a degree with this major? No

Beyond General Education, does the major require more than 66 semester hours? No

Does this sequence (if in a major) require more than 55 semester hours of major courses? No

Does this program stipulate specific general education courses offered in the major department/school as a part of the major requirements only if such courses serve as prerequisites for other courses required by the major?

No

Is the proposed program intended to be longer than four years (as indicated by the plan of study)? No

Have letter(s) of concurrence from affected departments/schools been obtained? N.A.

A departments/school is affected if it has a program with significant overlap or if it teaches a required or elective course in the program.

12.

Routing and action summary for New Program: [Proposal Routing](#)

1. English Department Curriculum Committee Chair

Christopher De Santis (website)

Christopher De Santis

4/5/2016 1:38:13 PM

Signature	Print	Date
2. English Department Chair/School Director		
<i>Christopher De Santis (website)</i>	Christopher De Santis	4/5/2016 1:38:22 PM
Signature	Print	Date
3. College of Arts & Science College Curriculum Committee Chair		
<i>Todd Stewart (website)</i>	Todd Stewart	10/19/2016 3:57:07 PM
Signature	Print	Date
4. College of Arts & Science College Dean		
<i>Sally Parry (website)</i>	Sally Parry	10/19/2016 4:00:13 PM
Signature	Print	Date
5. University Curriculum Committee Chair		
<i>Claire Lieberman (website)</i>	Claire Lieberman	11/16/2016 9:58:47 PM
Signature	Print	Date

All new programs (majors, minors, sequences) are routed by the U.C.C. to the Academic Senate

**ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY REQUEST
FOR NEW PROGRAM APPROVAL
*Financial Implication Form***

Purpose: Proposed new undergraduate and graduate programs (degrees, sequences, minors, and certificates) must include information concerning how the program will be financially supported to proceed through the curricular process.

Procedure: This completed form is to be approved by the Department/School Curriculum Committee chair, department chair/school director, college dean, and Provost prior to submission of the proposal to the College Curriculum Committee.

Definition: A "program" can be a degree, a sequence within a degree, a minor, or a certificate. This form is to be used for both undergraduate and graduate programs.

Complete the following information:

Department: English

Contact person: Julie Jung (jmjung@ilstu.edu)

Date: 23 Mar. 2016

Proposed new program: Technical Writing and Rhetorics (Department of English)

(Note: if the proposed program is a sequence, please indicate the full degree it is housed within)

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM

The sequence in Technical Writing and Rhetorics prepares English majors for careers in technical and professional writing in the public sector, including corporate, nonprofit, and governmental organizations. Students take 24 hours of requirements in the sequence. In these courses, students learn how to produce texts that effectively communicate technical information to a range of audiences. They learn key principles in rhetorical theory, which enables them to analyze and critique texts and apply that critical perspective as they draft and revise their own. Students' production skills are enhanced as they study the relationship between written, visual, and digital texts. They learn web design skills, which rank as one of the top five knowledge sets valued by employers for all undergraduate majors. They engage in hands-on learning, producing multimodal, web-based texts in computer-assisted classrooms equipped with applications used in the workplace. This hands-on learning culminates in a professional internship, where students working in a real-world setting apply and reflect on their developing understanding of technical writing and workplace communication. Ultimately, the sequence in Technical Writing and Rhetorics offers English majors who are interested in careers in technical and professional writing the opportunity to acquire the knowledges and skills they need to succeed as informed, effective, and ethical communicators in a variety of workplace environments.

ENROLLMENTS

In the table below, summarize enrollment and degrees conferred projections for the program for the first- and fifth-years of operation. If possible, indicate the number of full-time and part-time students to be enrolled each fall term in the notes section. If it is not possible to provide fall enrollments or fall enrollments are not applicable to this program, please indicate so and give a short explanation.

**TABLE
1**

STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND DEGREE PROJECTIONS FOR THE PROPOSED PROGRAM		
Category	Year One	5th Year (or when fully implemented)
Number of Program Majors/Minors (Fall Headcount)	10	30
Annual Full-time-Equivalent Majors/Minors (Fiscal Year)	10	30
Annual Number of Degrees Awarded	3	25

Add any relevant notes for the enrollment table 1 (Students are to be enrolled in a cohort; all students will be enrolled part-time; etc.) as an attachment

Budget Rationale (as an attachment; include corresponding data in Table 2)

Provide financial data that document the department or school's capacity to implement and sustain the proposed program and describe the program's sources of funding.

- a. Is the unit's (College, Department, School) current operating budget (contractual, commodities, equipment, etc.) adequate to support the program when fully implemented? If "yes", please explain. If new resources are to be provided to the unit to support the program, what will be the source(s) of these funds? **[Table 2 – Section 1] Yes. No additional faculty, staff, or non-personnel resources are necessary to fully implement this sequence.**
- b. What impact will the new program have on faculty assignments in the department? Will current faculty be adequate to provide instruction for the new program? **The new sequence will have no impact on faculty assignments, and current faculty will be adequate to fully implement the new sequence.**

Will additional faculty need to be hired, either for the proposed program or for courses faculty of the new program would otherwise have taught? If yes, please indicate whether new faculty members will be full-time or part-time faculty, tenure track or non-tenure track faculty. **[Table 2 – Section 2] No additional faculty will be necessary to fully implement the new sequence.**

- c. Will current staff be adequate to implement and maintain the new program? If "yes", please explain. Will additional staff be hired? Will current advising staff be adequate to provide student support and advisement, including job placement and or admission to advanced studies? If additional hires will be made, please elaborate. **[Table 2 – Section 2] Current staff, both secretarial and advising, is**

Table 2: RESOURCES REQUIREMENTS

TABLE 2

ESTIMATED COSTS OF THE PROPOSED PROGRAM- Only new resources not currently available to the program			
Category	Unit of Measurement	Year One	5th Year (or when fully implemented)
Section 1: Operating Expenses			
Including but not limited to: Contractual, Commodities, Equipment, etc.	\$	\$0	\$0
Section 2: Personnel			
Faculty	FTE	#0	#0
Faculty	\$	\$0	\$0
Other Personnel Costs – All Staff excluding Faculty	\$	\$0	\$0
Section 3: Facilities			
Including but not limited to rental, maintenance, etc.	\$	\$0	\$0
Section 4: Other Costs (itemized)			
•	\$	\$	\$
•	\$	\$	\$
•	\$	\$	\$
•	\$	\$	\$
•	\$	\$	\$
Total	\$	\$0	\$0

Routing and action summary – in sequential order:

1. Mary Justice 3/22/16
Department/School Curriculum Committee Chair Date Approved
2. John P. De Santis 3/22/16
Department Chairperson/School Director Date Approved
3. Bob 3/22/16
College Dean Date Approved
4. John W. H. 3/30/16
Provost Date Approved
5. _____
College Curriculum Committee Chairperson Date Approved
6. _____
Teacher Education Council Chair Date Approved
7. _____
University Curriculum Committee Chairperson Date Approved

Once approved, include this form with the curricular proposal for the new program.