May 20, 2008

MEMORANDUM

TO:     James F. Harris
        Dean, College of Arts and Humanities

FROM:   Phyllis Peres
        Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to modify the M.A. in English, concentration in Composition and Rhetoric (PCC log no. 07045)

At its meeting on May 16, the Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula and Courses unanimously approved your proposal to modify the curriculum of the M.A. in English, concentration in Composition and Rhetoric. A copy of the approved proposal is attached.

The changes are effective Fall, 2008. The College should ensure that the changes are fully described in the Graduate Catalog and in all relevant descriptive materials, and that all advisors are informed.

CWR/

Enclosure

cc:     Carmen Balthrop, Chair, Senate PCC Committee
        Sarah Bauder, Office of Student Financial Aid
        Mary Giles, University Senate
        Barbara Hope, Data Administration
        Denise Nadasen, Institutional Research & Planning
        Anne Turkos, Archives
        Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar
        Mary Ann Ottinger, Graduate School
        Elizabeth Bergmann Loizeaux, College of Arts and Humanities
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
PROGRAM/CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

DIRECTIONS
- Provide one form with original approval signatures in lines 1-4 for each proposed action. Keep this form to one page in length.
- Early consultation with the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning & Programs is strongly recommended if there are questions or concerns, particularly with new programs.
- Please submit the signed form to Claudia Reese, Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building, Campus.
- Please email the rest of the proposal as an MSWord attachment to pcc-submissions@umd.edu.

DATE SUBMITTED ______________________________

COLLEGE/SCHOOL ARHU

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM ENGLISH

PROPOSED ACTION (A separate form for each) ADD ______ DELETE ______ CHANGE X

DESCRIPTION (Provide a succinct account of the proposed action. Details should be provided in an attachment. Provide old and new sample programs for curriculum changes.)

We propose to change the requirements for the MA in English with a Concentration in Rhetoric and Composition. Proposed changes include the addition of new courses and the redistribution of required credits for the degree. Please see the attached for details.

JUSTIFICATION/REASONS/RESOURCES (Briefly explain the reason for the proposed action. Identify the source of new resources that may be required. Details should be provided in an attachment.)

The proposed changes would enhance both the rigor and the flexibility of the degree program. With the new requirements, students pursuing this specialized track of study would continue to have grounding in literary criticism while also having more options to follow individualized plans of study. This would enable both terminal MA students and students continuing into doctoral studies to take full advantage of our program offerings and thus be best prepared for their respective endeavors. Please see the attached for further explanation.

APPROVAL SIGNATURES - Please print name, sign, and date

1. Department Committee Chair Kandice Chuh 2 April 08

2. Department Chair Kent Cartwright 1/14/07

3. College/School PCC Chair T. Moore 9/11/07

4. Dean Eliza Rutland-Bowdery 4/11/08

5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required) 5/15/08

6. Chair, Senate PCC

7. Chair of Senate

8. Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost 5/20/08

VPAAP 8-05
Proposed Changes to the MA with a Concentration in Rhetoric and Composition

Introduction

The MA with a Concentration in Rhetoric and Composition is a specialized track of study offered by the English Department. It combines the traditional study of literature with coursework in composition and rhetoric. This track within English graduate studies has a twofold purpose. The first is to provide terminal MA students who, for example, are interested in teaching or are already teachers of writing in both academic and non-academic settings, the opportunity to deepen their bases of knowledge and skills. The second is to enable students who will continue their graduate work into doctoral studies to garner a solid foundation in rhetoric and composition, a scholarly grounding that will launch them effectively into more advanced work. The proposed revisions to the degree requirements will better facilitate the achievement of both of these objectives.

Rationale

The new requirements would allow students pursuing this track to continue to have grounding in literary criticism while also having more options to follow individualized plans of study in rhetoric and composition. This would enable both terminal MA students as well as students continuing into doctoral studies to take full advantage of our program offerings and thus be best prepared for their respective endeavors. This enhanced flexibility is crucial to meet the needs of the diverse student body pursuing this track of study and reflects the changing contours of the field of Rhetoric and Composition studies itself.

Terminal MA students who choose to focus their work in Rhetoric and Composition often seek the degree to enhance their knowledge and professional profiles for teaching at the community college and secondary education levels. For this cohort, the increased flexibility of the revised curriculum allows for more coursework specifically targeted for their particular objectives. That the needs of the student bodies of a high school teacher and a community college teacher would differ are immediately apparent. The revised curriculum intends to address that difference by making possible greater depth in specific areas of Rhetoric and Composition.

At the doctoral level, some of our most prominent recent placements in tenure track positions have been of students specializing in Rhetoric and Composition. Already this year, we have one student who has accepted a tenure track position at Ohio State University; others have recently become assistant professors at such schools as Carnegie Mellon University and North Carolina State University at Fayetteville. We will best be able to support the research and teaching efforts of our Rhetoric and Composition students by allowing them to work in close concert with their advisors in planning their coursework. As currently structured, the program’s distribution requirements are both extensive and rigid, so much so that the success of our students may be said to have been in spite of them. The proposed revisions attempt to address that problem.

Proposed Revisions

The proposed changes to the degree program leave in place the requirements associated with the traditional MA in literature: Students
following the new program would continue to take 12 of the 30 credits required in literary theory and/or literary criticism courses. Under the new guidelines, four courses (12 credits) would be selected from an expanded list of offerings in Rhetoric and Composition studies. Two elective courses (6 credits) would make up the remaining coursework credits. These elective courses would be chosen in consultation with the student’s advisor in the Rhetoric and Composition track to best suit his or her programmatic needs.

Among the expanded list of offerings is ENGL 668, Readings in Digital Studies. An increasingly important subfield of Rhetoric and Composition as a field is the overlapping areas of digital rhetoric, electronic rhetoric, media or digital literacy, and multimodal composition. The Readings in Digital Studies course would provide entry for our students into this subfield. As well, because new media technologies are increasingly functioning as a chief platform for delivering rhetoric and for composition, students specializing at both the MA and PhD levels in Rhetoric and Composition will be well served by the inclusion of this option.

For their elective courses, students might draw from such recent offerings as ENGL 748: Literature, Science and Empire Across the 18th Century Americas; ENGL 788: Studies in Poetic Form; ENGL 789: Form and Theory in Fiction; or ENGL 749: Postcolonial Rewritings. Students may also take as electives courses that fall within Rhetoric and Composition studies. The option of the electives is designed to allow students greater choice in the particular direction in which they take their studies of rhetoric and composition.

The addition of electives as well as the expanded list of courses from which students could select their three courses in rhetoric and composition studies are the major points of difference from the current program requirements.

These revisions to the rhetoric and composition track require no investment of resources to effect.
CURRENT REQUIREMENTS

The student takes a core of literature courses and a group of courses involving various aspects of the theory of composition and rhetoric, for a total of 30 credits:

1. English 601, Literary Research and Critical Contexts, or English 602, Critical Theory and Literary Criticism (3 credits)

2. One course in three of the following (9 credits):
   a. Medieval or 16th-century British literatures
   b. 17th- or 18th-century British and Colonial literatures
   c. 19th- or 20th-century British, Commonwealth, and Post-Colonial literatures
   d. American literatures to 1865 or American literatures from 1865 to the present

3. Four courses chosen from the following: (12 credits)
   a. English 605, Readings in Linguistics
   b. English 607, Readings in the History of Rhetoric to 1900
   c. English 611, Approaches to College Composition
   d. English 612, Approaches to Professional and Technical Writing
   e. English 773, Seminar in Composition Theory (e.g. Modern Rhetorical Theory)
   f. English 779, Topics in Language Study (e.g. Discourse Analysis)

4. One seminar in applied rhetoric, rhetorical criticism or rhetoric of the disciplines, e.g. Samuel Johnson and Rhetoric, the Rhetoric of AIDS, Discourse, the Rhetoric of Science. (3 credits)

5. One related course (400 level or above) in another discipline: philosophy, speech, education, computer programming, psychological testing, etc. The course selected must be approved by the DGS or ADGS and by the Composition and Rhetoric advisor. (3 credits)

Among these required courses, students must choose at least three seminars (9 credits).

Students may count one 400-level course and one independent study toward the M.A.

The student pursuing the MA with a Concentration in Composition and Rhetoric who chooses to complete the MA Writing Project option will follow the program of course requirements given above. The student who chooses the thesis option will take a total of eight courses (24 credits), dropping two of the course requirements above at the discretion of the DGS or ADGS and the student's advisor.

PROPOSED REVISED REQUIREMENTS

The student takes a core of literature courses and a group of courses involving various aspects of the theory of composition and rhetoric, for a total of 30 credits:

1. English 601, Literary Research and Critical Contexts, or English 602, Critical Theory and Literary Criticism (3 credits)

2. One course in three of the following (9 credits):
   a. Medieval or 16th-century British literatures
   b. 17th- or 18th-century British and Colonial literatures
   c. 19th- or 20th-century British, Commonwealth, and Post-Colonial literatures
   d. American literatures to 1865 or American literatures from 1865 to the present

3. Four courses chosen from the following: (12 credits)
   a. English 605, Readings in Linguistics
   b. English 607, Readings in the History of Rhetoric to 1900
   c. English 611, Approaches to College Composition
   d. English 612, Approaches to Professional and Technical Writing
   e. English 668, Readings in Digital Studies
   f. English 708, Topics in Rhetoric
   g. English 775, Seminar in Composition Theory (e.g. Modern Rhetorical Theory)
   h. English 779, Topics in Language Study (e.g. Discourse Analysis)
   i. One related course (400 level or above) in another discipline: philosophy, speech, education, computer programming, psychological testing, etc. The course selected must be approved by the DGS or ADGS and by the Composition and Rhetoric advisor.

4. Two electives (6 credits)

Among these required courses, students must choose at least three seminars (9 credits).

Students may count one 400-level course and one independent study toward the M.A.

The student pursuing the MA with a Concentration in Composition and Rhetoric who chooses to complete the MA Writing Project option will follow the program of course requirements given above. The student who chooses the thesis option will take no electives.