December 22, 2014

MEMORANDUM

TO: Bonnie Thornton Dill  
   Dean, College of Arts and Humanities

FROM: Elizabeth Beise  
   Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to Establish a Minor in Professional Writing (PCC log no. 14011)

At its meeting on December 8, 2014, the Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula and Courses approved the proposal to establish the Minor in Professional Writing. A copy of the approved proposal is attached.

The new minor is effective Spring 2015. Please ensure that this change is fully described in the Undergraduate Catalog and in all relevant descriptive materials, and that all advisors are informed.

MDC/  
Enclosure

cc: Gregory Miller, Chair, Senate PCC Committee  
    Barbara Gill, Office of Student Financial Aid  
    Reka Montfort, University Senate  
    Erin Taylor, Division of Information Technology  
    Pam Phillips, Institutional Research, Planning & Assessment  
    Anne Turkos, University Archives  
    Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar  
    Cynthia Stevens, Office of Undergraduate Studies  
    Alene Moyer, College of Arts and Humanities  
    William Cohen, Department of English
The University of Maryland, College Park
Program/Curriculum/Unit Proposal

- Please email the rest of the proposal as an MSWord attachment to pcc-submissions@umd.edu.
- Please submit the signed form to the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs, 1119 Main Administration Building, Campus.

College/School:
Please also add College/School Unit Code-First 8 digits:
Unit Codes can be found at: https://hypprod.umd.edu/Html_Reports/units.htm

Department/Program:
Please also add Department/Program Unit Code-Last 7 digits:

Type of Action (choose one):
☐ Curriculum change (including informal specializations) ☐ New academic degree/award program
☐ Curriculum change for an LEP Program ☐ New Professional Studies award iteration
☐ Renaming of program or formal Area of Concentration ☐ New Minor
☐ Addition/deletion of formal Area of Concentration ☐ Request to create an online version of an existing program
☐ Suspend/delete program

Italics indicate that the proposed program action must be presented to the full University Senate for consideration.

Summary of Proposed Action:
Establish a new minor in Professional Writing.

Departmental/Unit Contact Person for Proposal: Professor Scott Wible

APPROVAL SIGNATURES - Please print name, sign, and date. Use additional lines for multi-unit programs.
1. Department Committee Chair Thomas C. Moser, Ph. D. 8/13/14
2. Department Chair William A. Cohen 8/13/14
3. College/School PCC Chair Thomas C. Moser, Ph. D. 9/29/14
4. Dean Alene Meyer 9/29/14
5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required) 9/29/14
6. Chair, Senate PCC Gregory Miller 12/18/14
7. University Senate Chair (if required) Elizabeth Beise 12/18/14
8. Senior Vice President and Provost
PROPOSAL FOR
NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND AT COLLEGE PARK
MINOR IN PROFESSIONAL WRITING

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
DEAN BONNIE THORNTON DILL

MINOR IN PROFESSIONAL WRITING
FALL 2014

SUBMITTED 13 AUGUST 2014
I. OVERVIEW AND RATIONALE

A. Briefly describe the nature of the proposed program and explain why the institution should offer it.

We propose to create a new minor in Professional Writing at UMCP that will be administered by the Department of English.

This minor will provide English students who have an interest in pursuing a career in writing with a clear path for their coursework. This minor will also attract students from within the College of Arts and Humanities and across the entire campus who wish to enhance their marketable skills and broaden their post-graduate employment opportunities. In particular, the Professional Writing minor will be promoted to students in the STEM disciplines and public health as a means for these students to complement their major course of study with theoretically grounded, project-based coursework that helps them learn how to communicate their disciplines through writing.

The state of Maryland and the greater Washington metro region are particularly fertile ground for professional writing-related internships and careers. The Professional Writing minor will expose students to a wide variety of these opportunities through an introductory course that surveys the field in terms of its international, national, regional, and local scope; through networking opportunities with alumni; through cultivating and facilitating students’ placement in professional writing internships in Washington, D.C. and throughout Maryland; and through support in developing professional writing portfolios that showcase students’ writing, research, design, and technological skills.

B. How big is the program expected to be? From what other programs serving current students, or from what new populations of potential students, onsite or offsite, are you expecting to draw?

Initially we would propose a Professional Writing minor capped at 50 students. Students will initiate the process of signing up for the minor by visiting the ARHU minor page: https://www.arhu.umd.edu/undergraduate/academics/minors. We anticipate many participants coming from among our English majors as well as majors in the College of Arts and Humanities, but one of our chief goals is to attract students from across the campus, from the natural and applied sciences, public health, and engineering to business, pre-law, and the social sciences.

The potential exists for the Professional Writing minor to draw some students from the Rhetoric minor. Indeed, there is even limited overlap in terms of English department courses that would now serve both minors, such as ENGL291: Intermediate Writing, ENGL293: Writing in the Wireless World, ENGL487: Foundations of Rhetoric, and ENGL488: Topics in Advanced Writing. Nevertheless, the distinction between the Professional Writing and Rhetoric minors should be understood in terms of the distinction...
between theoretical and applied disciplines. The Rhetoric minor has an applied dimension in terms of public writing and speaking, but it also requires students to spend significant time gaining a foundation in rhetorical theory and the traditional humanistic study of primary and secondary texts. The Professional Writing minor, on the other hand, introduces students to professional writing and rhetorical theories yet ultimately focuses more of students' energies and attention on applying this theory in the practice of writing within public and professional organizations. The electronic portfolio required of all students earning the Professional Writing minor further accentuates this emphasis on application. The portfolio requirement presents students with a space to showcase their repertoire of professional writing skills and to articulate, in a coherent way, how they have learned to apply professional writing theory in their writing practice.

II. CURRICULUM

A. Provide a full catalog description of the proposed program, including educational objectives and any areas of concentration.

For students who wish to specialize in public and professional writing as an area of expertise and for students who wish to communicate their discipline through writing, the Professional Writing minor offers opportunities to engage deeply with the theory and practice of writing, editing, and designing both print and digital documents for professional workplaces, civic organizations, and community deliberations. Students will develop electronic portfolios throughout their minor coursework as a means to showcase their professional writing knowledge and skills. Writing-focused internships will be encouraged, although not required, in the later stages of coursework.

Successful completion of the Professional Writing minor requires the following:

1. Fifteen credit hours of coursework. Course options listed in Section II.B.
2. Submission of an electronic professional writing portfolio. Minimum requirements for the portfolio are listed in Section III.B.

All courses presented for the minor must be passed with a grade of C— or better. Students who fulfill Professional Writing minor requirements will receive a minor on the official transcript. Contact the Professional Writing minor advisor for more information.

B. List the courses (number, title, semester credit hours) that would constitute the requirements and other components of the proposed program. Provide a catalog description for any courses that will be newly developed or substantially modified for the program.

The fifteen credit hours of the Professional Writing minor consist of the following:

- Three credits in ENGL 297: Introduction to Professional Writing
- Twelve credits from the following courses, including at least nine credits at the 300 or 400 level and three credits at the 400 level:
200-level courses:
   ENGL 281: Standard English Grammar, Usage, and Diction (3 credits). See Note 1 below.
   ENGL282: Introduction to Rhetorical Theory (3 credits)
   ENGL291: Intermediate Writing (3 credits)
   ENGL292: Writing for Change (3 credits)
   ENGL293: Writing in the Wireless World (3 credits)
300-level courses:
   ENGL381: MGA Legislative Seminar (3 credits)
   ENGL384: Concepts of Grammar (3 credits) See Note 1 below.
   ENGL388M: Writing Internship: Maryland General Assembly Pre-Professional Writing Internship (3 credits) See Note 2 below.
   ENGL 388P: Writing Internship: Pre-Professional Writing Skills Internship
   ENGL 388W: Writing Internship: Writing Center Internship
   Professional Writing Program Courses (3 credits) See Note 3 below.
      ENGL390: Science Writing
      ENGL391: Advanced Composition: Argumentation
      ENGL392: Legal Writing
      ENGL393: Technical Writing
      ENGL394: Business Writing
      ENGL395: Writing for the Health Professions
      ENGL398A: Writing for the Arts
      ENGL398B: Writing for Social Entrepreneurship
      ENGL398C: Writing Case Studies and Investigative Reports
      ENGL398E: Writing for Economics
      ENGL398L: Scholarly Writing in the Humanities
      ENGL398N: Writing for Non-Profit Organizations
      ENGL398R: Writing Non-Fiction Narratives
      ENGL398V: Writing for the Environment
400-level courses:
   ENGL487: Foundations of Rhetoric (3 credits)
   ENGL488: Topics in Advanced Writing (3 credits). Three recent versions of this course include Web Authoring, Blogosphere, and Visual Rhetoric.
   ENGL493: Advanced Writing Theory and Practice (3 credits)
   ENGL494: Editing and Document Design (3 credits)

Notes
1. Credit toward the minor will be granted for only one of these two courses: ENGL281 or ENGL384.
2. ENGL381 is a prerequisite for ENGL388M.
3. A student cannot count toward the Professional Writing minor the PWP course that he or she takes to fulfill the Fundamental Studies Professional Writing requirement for the University of Maryland General Education Program. Only a second PWP course can be used to fulfill the Professional Writing minor requirement. Advisors will encourage students to select a second PWP course only if it complements the students' academic or professional goals.
4. Students may satisfy up to three credits of the nine-credit 300- or 400-level coursework requirement through documented writing-intensive professional or internship experience. Students must submit an acceptable portfolio of workplace writing to the Professional Writing minor advisor in order to have these three credits count toward their minor.

5. Following university policy, English majors may count two Professional Writing minor courses toward both the requirements for the English major and the Professional Writing Minor.

The following is a catalog description of a course that has been newly developed for the Professional Writing minor.

ENGL 297: Introduction to Professional Writing (3 credits). Surveys rhetorical principles and professional practices at the heart of professional writing, particularly the research, writing, communication, analytical, and technological skills deployed across a range of professional and technical communication careers. Considers how various organizations and industries define professional writing as well as what kinds of roles and what types of activities professional writers perform within these organizations and industries. Examines how core concepts such as culture and technology relate to the work of professional writing. Presents opportunities to practice composing the kinds of documents and deploying the design principles, rhetorical moves, digital tools, research skills, and writing strategies that define ethical, effective professional writing practice in the twenty-first century. Presents opportunities for the cultivation of self-reflection, visual design, and digital composing skills needed to publish a writing portfolio that showcases one's professional writing competencies and projects one's professional writer identities.

Successful completion of the Professional Writing minor also requires the submission of a writing portfolio during a student's final semester. This portfolio must be submitted to the minor advisor by November 1 for fall semester graduation or April 1 for spring semester graduation. The electronic portfolio must contain, at a minimum, the following material:

1. A welcome page;
2. Six finished, polished texts written by the student in Professional Writing minor courses; and
3. A reflective essay that analyzes how these documents demonstrate the students' achievement of the minor's learning outcomes.

The minor advisor will confirm that each portfolio meets these minimum requirements.

C. Describe any selective admissions policy or special criteria for students selecting this field of study.

Students can officially declare the Professional Writing minor only after they have earned a grade of C—or better in ENGL 297. Students must be accepted into the minor no later than the start of the semester before the semester in which they graduate.
III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

A. List the program’s learning outcomes and explain how they will be measured.

The Professional Writing Minor leads students toward achieving these learning outcomes:

1. Understand and discuss the varied roles for writers and the varied purposes for writing in professional contexts;
2. Apply ancient and contemporary rhetoric, composition, and professional writing theories in producing print, digital, and multimodal texts;
3. Identify, analyze, and strategically apply and modify the rhetorical conventions of different professional genres;
4. Compose, design, and edit texts that are rhetorically purposeful as well as usable and accessible for different audiences;
5. Identify, analyze, apply, and modify strategies for communicating complex, specialized information for both technical audiences and lay audiences;
6. Understand what different types of digital technologies and different modes for communication allow writers to do, and apply this knowledge to select and compose effective media appropriate for particular contexts;
7. Demonstrate visual design skills, including the use of graphics and page design.

These seven learning outcomes will be measured using a rubric to assess portfolios of student writing produced in their Professional Writing minor courses (see Section III.B).

B. Include a general assessment plan for the learning outcomes.

In the required Introduction to Professional Writing course, ENGL297, students will study the learning outcomes for the Professional Writing minor and design a writing portfolio that demonstrates their various research, writing, editing, and design competencies. Students will then add to their portfolios through their remaining coursework in the minor, adding both final, polished texts created in their minor courses and reflective statements that explain how these texts demonstrate the students’ achievement of the minor’s learning outcomes.

During a Professional Writing minor student’s final semester, he or she will submit this portfolio to the minor advisor by the deadline specified in Section II.B. Once the portfolios of the graduating minor students have been gathered, the tenure-track faculty on the English Department Writing Committee will use a rubric (see below) to assess students’ achievement of the minor’s learning outcomes, compile the rubric scores into a single document, and file a Learning Outcomes Assessment report with the English Department Undergraduate Studies Committee.
Learning Outcomes Assessment Rubric for Professional Writing Minor Portfolios

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Developing</th>
<th>Failing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rhetorical Awareness:</strong> The parts individually and the portfolio as a whole demonstrate an awareness of and response to the particular, rhetorical needs of audience and purpose.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Development and Adaptation of Content:</strong> The parts individually and the portfolio as a whole demonstrate a contextual awareness of argument, including appropriate information and persuasive techniques. In addition, the portfolio demonstrates a critical engagement with the process of writing and with the student's learning process.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adaptation of Genre Conventions and Media Form:</strong> The parts individually and the portfolio as a whole demonstrate an awareness of and ability to use conventions of a genre, such as content (e.g., general or discipline-specific types of evidence and reasoning), arrangement (e.g., format, structure, document design), and style (e.g., voice, tone, sentence complexity) to meet the demands of the rhetorical situation. The parts individually and the portfolio as a whole also demonstrate an awareness of the advantages and limitations of media forms and the ability to make effective decisions about which media form to use in order to meet the demands of the rhetorical situation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Style and Syntax:</strong> The parts individually and the portfolio as a whole demonstrate an awareness of and an ability to create professional tone, style, and syntactic structure.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Document Design and Visual Rhetoric:</strong> The parts individually and the portfolio as a whole demonstrate an understanding and application of layout, visual design, audience cues, information structure, communication modes, and media form.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. FACULTY AND ORGANIZATION

A. Who will provide academic direction and oversight for the program?

Oversight will be provided by members of the English Department Writing Committee. Advising of Professional Writing minor students and maintenance of relevant student records (e.g., minor registration, coursework, final portfolio submission) will be conducted by an Assistant Director of the Professional Writing Program.

B. If the program is not to be housed and administered within a single academic unit, provide details of its administrative structure.

Not applicable.

V. OFF CAMPUS PROGRAMS

A. If the program is to be offered to students at an off-campus location, with instructors in classrooms and/or via distance education modalities, indicate how student access to the full range of services (including advising, financial aid, and career services) and facilities (including library and information facilities, and computer and laboratory facilities if needed) will be assured.

Not applicable.

B. If the program is to be offered mostly or completely via distance education, you must describe in detail how the concerns in Principles and Guidelines for Online Programs are to be addressed.

Not applicable.

VI. OTHER ISSUES

A. Describe any cooperative arrangements with other institutions or organizations that will be important for the success of this program.

While it will not be a formal cooperative arrangement, the English Department Writing Committee, with assistance from the College of Arts and Humanities and the English Department Undergraduate Studies Office, will seek to cultivate productive relationships with alumni who currently work in writing-related or writing-intensive careers. This activity will support efforts to market the Professional Writing minor and showcase potential career pathways for students, create networking opportunities for students, and expand the pool of potential writing-related experiential learning opportunities.
B. Will the program require or seek accreditation? Is it intended to provide certification or licensure for its graduates? Are there academic or administrative constraints as a consequence?

The Society for Technical Communication (STC) is developing certification programs in Technical Writing and Technical Communication. As the STC certification programs begin to take shape, the English Department Writing Committee will consider whether changes to the Professional Writing minor are warranted.

VII. COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

Identify specific actions and strategies that will be utilized to recruit and retain a diverse student body.

Every effort will be made to recruit a highly diverse body of students from across campus to participate in the Professional Writing minor. Every semester the Professional Writing minor advisor will send an email that advertises and explains the minor to advisors across campus as well as to support services and academic enrichment programs for students from underrepresented groups.

Also, each fall, spring, and summer semester, the Professional Writing Program Director delivers science writing workshops to undergraduates in the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (LSAMP) Program, which is run through the A. James Clark School of Engineering's Center for Minorities in Science and Engineering. The PWP Director will use these workshops as a means of actively recruiting minority students from the STEM disciplines into the Professional Writing minor.

Additionally, within the next 2-3 years, the PWP Director will work with the Office of International Affairs to develop a 400-level “Writing in International and Intercultural Environments” course that will be integrated into the minor. When developed and taught, this course will present a significant opportunity to advertise the minor to international and English as a Second Language students.

VIII. REQUIRED PHYSICAL RESOURCES

A. Additional library and other information resources required to support the proposed program. You must include a formal evaluation by Library staff.

None. The Professional Writing Minor can be operated without any additional library or information resources beyond those already available at the university.

B. Additional facilities, facility modifications, and equipment that will be required. This is to include faculty and staff office space, laboratories, special classrooms, computers, etc.
None. Classroom space in Tawes Hall should be adequate to house any additional sections of Professional Writing minor-related courses.

C. Impact, if any, on the use of existing facilities and equipment. Examples are laboratories, computer labs, specially equipped classrooms, and access to computer servers.

Several of the Professional Writing minor courses will require scheduling for computer classrooms. As many of these courses are already scheduled in computer classrooms in Tawes Hall, however, the current computer classrooms on campus should be adequate both in terms of the number of computer stations for students in those classrooms and the software available on those stations (i.e., the Adobe Creative Suite).

IX. RESOURCE NEEDS AND SOURCES

Describe the resources that are required to offer this program, and the source of these resources. Project this for five years. In particular:

A. List new courses to be taught, and needed additional sections of existing courses. Describe the anticipated advising and administrative loads. Indicate the personnel resources (faculty, staff, and teaching assistants) that will be needed to cover all these responsibilities.

The English Department already offers a range of courses that will support this minor, and we have room in these courses for at least 50 additional students each semester. We do not anticipate the Professional Writing minor’s inclusion of Professional Writing Program courses to cause significant enrollment increases in those PWP courses. Attached please find a letter of endorsement from the English Department Chair that explains these issues in greater depth.

B. List new faculty, staff, and teaching assistants needed for the responsibilities in A, and indicate the source of the resources for hiring them.

Current faculty and staff will be adequate for the Professional Writing minor. As needed, we will hire qualified adjuncts to teach Professional Writing minor courses, targeting in particular those adjuncts already teaching in the English Department’s Professional Writing Program. Again, please see the English Department Chair’s endorsement letter for a full description of the minor’s resource needs and funding sources.

C. Some of these teaching, advising, and administrative duties may be covered by existing faculty and staff. Describe your expectations for this, and indicate how the current duties of these individuals will be covered, and the source of any needed resources.

Teaching duties will be covered by existing faculty and T.A.s. Indeed, the English Department already offers a range of courses that will support this minor, and these courses are taught regularly by tenure-track rhetoric and composition faculty and Ph.D.- and M.A.-level graduate students in rhetoric and composition. The department’s
Professional Writing Program will be able to supply sufficient qualified adjunct faculty to cover additional courses in the minor; the PWP Director will assume responsibility for identifying current PWP lecturers and adjunct faculty to staff these courses when needed.

Moreover, English Department Chair Bill Cohen has approved the creation of a third Assistant Director position for the Professional Writing Program; this Assistant Director's responsibilities will include advising and administrative duties for the minor.

D. Identify the source to pay for the required physical resources identified in Section VIII above.

Not applicable.

E. List any other required resources and the anticipated source for them.

Not applicable.