

NON-GENERAL EDUCATION ~ CURRICULUM PROPOSAL  
LIBRARY RESOURCE FORM REQUIRED

SCC #03-04- 201

Deadlines

October 3, 2003 to be implemented Fall 2004 ~ February 13, 2004 to be implemented Spring 2005

PROPOSAL TITLE: Introduction to Technical Writing

Sponsor(s): Erin HERBERG E-Mail: herberge@rowan.edu Ext: 4341  
Frances JOHNSON E-Mail: JOHNSONF@rowan.edu Ext: 4324

DEPARTMENT: Composition + Rhetoric

COLLEGE: Communication

If Liberal Arts & Sciences CHECK :  History/Humanities  Math/Sciences  Social/Behavioral Sciences  
 UNDERGRADUATE  GRADUATE

THE ATTACHED NON-GEN-ED PROPOSAL IS BEST DESCRIBED BY THE ITEM(S) CHECKED

- New non-gen-ed course
- Short-term non-gen-ed course
- Minor curricular changes (fewer than three) to:
  - Existing non-gen-ed course
  - Non-gen-ed degree requirements
  - Major
  - Minor, specialization, concentration, track, certificate program

THE FOLLOWING SIGNATURES REPRESENT APPROVAL

Department Chair: James Rowan Date: 9/30/03  
Department Curriculum Chair: David R. Hill Date: 10/2/03  
Academic Dean: [Signature] Date: 10/3/2003

COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

OPEN HEARING Date: 12-15-03 Approved  Not Approved   
COLLEGE CURRICULUM CHAIR: Julia Chang  
Senate Curriculum Chair Signature: [Signature] Date: Senate Announcement 4/6/2004  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT/PROVOST Signature: [Signature] Date: 5/10/04

Approved  Not Approved

REGISTRAR

Date: 5/10/04 Course Description Received & Approved ~ Hegis Taxonomy & Course #: 1501302  
Registrar Signature: [Signature]

NOTIFICATION FORWARD

- SCC Chair
- Academic Dean
- Department Chair
- Registrar
- IR
- CAP
- VP Student Affairs
- Others

Lane 5/24/04

SCC#03-04 201  
Rowan University

**CURRICULUM PROPOSAL  
LIBRARY RESOURCE FORM**

The purpose of this form is to provide a channel of communication between the library and faculty changing and designing new courses/programs. The information will be used to assess the resources available in the library, and to identify resources the library should acquire to support the course/program. The information will also provide rationale for institutional support for library acquisitions. This form should be completed in a coordinated effort between the course sponsor(s) and the academic department liaison librarian. **THIS FORM MUST BE COMPLETED FOR ALL CURRICULUM PROPOSALS.**

- The sponsor(s) complete parts A & B. If assistance is required to complete parts A & B, please notify the liaison librarian.
- Forward this form to the librarian who will complete parts C, D & E

***This form must be completed and attached to the original curriculum proposal before being approved by the Senate Curriculum Committee***

A. College of Communication; Department of Composition and Rhetoric  
Proposed by: Drs. Erin Herberg Frances S. Johnson, and Roberta Harvey  
Date: September 30, 2003

Course Title: Introduction to Technical Writing  
Anticipated Date for Course/Program Offering: Fall 2004

B. List specific resources that should be acquired to support this course.

See Attached

C. Describe the resources available in the library to support this course/program, including reference, monographic, electronic databases, audio-visual materials, etc. A summary statement is sufficient.

D. List key periodicals available in the library to support this course/program.

E. Librarian comments and recommendations:

*With the 77 titles held by Campbell Library and the acquisition of the additional titles in the proposal, the library will have sufficient materials to support the course.*

Name: LIBRARIAN LIAISON

Librarian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*Benjamin Fisher*  
Benjamin Fisher

# Keith and Shirley Campbell Library

at Rowan University

Search
Headings
Titles
Patron
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History
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Search Request: Subject Browse = technical writing  
 Search Results: Displaying 1 through 20 of 77 entries.

Find This:  Find Results in:  Quick Limit:

| 21 | 41 | 61 | 
77 total titles in collection

Sort by:

#	OPAC Subject Headings Search	Title Long	Author	Date
☐ [ 1 ]	Technical writing	American national standard for writing abstracts.	American National Standards Institute.	1971
<i>Library Location: Ref. Call Number: Ref. PN171 A9 A5 Status: Not Charged</i>				
☐ [ 2 ]	Technical writing	Art of scientific writing : from student reports to professional publications in chemistry and related fields / Hans F. Ebel, Claus Bliefert, William E. Russey.	Ebel, Hans Friedrich.	1987
<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: QD9.15.E23 1987 Status: Not Charged</i>				
☐ [ 3 ]	Technical writing	Art of technical documentation / Katherine Haramundanis.	Haramundanis, Katherine, 1937-	1998
<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: T11 .H28 1998 Status: Not Charged</i>				
☐ [ 4 ]	Technical writing	Basic technical and business writing / Joanna M. Freeman.	Freeman, Joanna M., 1929-	1979
<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: T11.F68 Status: Not Charged</i>				
☐ [ 5 ]	Technical writing	Basic technical writing [by] Herman M. Weisman.	Weisman, Herman M.	1968
<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: T11.W43 1968 Status: Not Charged</i>				

Γ [ 6 ]	Technical writing	Better scientific and technical writing	Bolsky, Morris I.	
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: T11.B633 1988 Status: Not Charged</i>			
Γ [ 7 ]	Technical writing	CBE style manual.	Council of Biology Editors. Committee on Form and Style.	1972
	<i>Library Location: Ref. Call Number: Ref. Z250.6.B5C6 1972 Status: Not Charged</i>			
Γ [ 8 ]	Technical writing	Chemical engineering reports; how to search the literature and prepare a report.	Kobe, Kenneth Albert, 1905-	1957
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: TP168.K57 1957 Status: Not Charged</i>			
Γ [ 9 ]	Technical writing	Chemist's English / Robert Schoenfeld.	Schoenfeld, Robert.	1989
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: PE1475.S29 1986 Status: Not Charged</i>			
Γ [ 10 ]	Technical writing	Communicating in science : writing a scientific paper and speaking at scientific meetings / Vernon Booth.	Booth, Vernon.	1993
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: Q223 .B664 1993 Status: Not Charged</i>			
Γ [ 11 ]	Technical writing	Communication and the technical man	Wirkus, Tom E.	
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: T11.W57 Status: Multiple item statuses</i>			
Γ [ 12 ]	Technical writing	Composing qualitative research / Karen Golden-Biddle, Karen D. Locke.	Golden-Biddle, Karen.	1997
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: T11 .G63 1997 Status: Multiple item statuses</i>			
Γ [ 13 ]	Technical writing	Effective communication for engineers.		1975
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: T10.5 .E33 1975 Status: Not Charged</i>			
Γ [ 14 ]	Technical writing	Engineers as writers; growth of a literature. Edited with introductions and critical comments by Walter J. Miller and Leo E. A. Saidla. With a foreword by H. S. Rogers.	Miller, Walter James, 1918-	1971
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: T11.M5 1971 Status: Not Charged</i>			
Γ [ 15 ]	Technical writing	English for science and technology : a handbook for nonnative speakers / Thomas N. Huckin, Leslie A. Olsen.	Huckin, Thomas N.	1983
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: T11.H823 1983 Status: Not Charged</i>			
Γ [ 16 ]	Technical writing	Guide to grammar and usage for psychology and related fields / John Eric Bellquist.	Bellquist, John Eric.	1993
	<i>Library Location: Main Call Number: BF76.8 .B44 1993 Status: Not Charged</i>			
	Technical writing	Handbook for technical writers, by R. C.	Tracy, Calvin	1961

<input type="checkbox"/> [ 17 ]	writing	Tracy [and] H. L. Jennings.	Raymond, 1933-	
<i>Library Location: Main      Call Number: T11.T68      Status: Not Charged</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> [ 18 ]	Technical writing	Handbook of writing for the mathematical sciences / Nicholas J. Higham.	Higham, Nicholas J., 1961-	1998
<i>Library Location: Main      Call Number: QA42 .H54 1998      Status: Not Charged</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> [ 19 ]	Technical writing	How to write & present technical information / by Charles H. Sides.	Sides, Charles H., 1952-	1999
<i>Library Location: Main      Call Number: T11 .S528 1999      Status: Not Charged</i>				
<input type="checkbox"/> [ 20 ]	Technical writing	How to write a usable user manual	Weiss, Edmond H.	
<i>Library Location: Main      Call Number: QA76.165W45 1985      Status: Not Charged</i>				

Sort by:

Post Limit

| 21 41 61 |

Record Options	
<b>Records</b>	Select Download Format: <input type="text" value="Full Record"/> <input type="button" value="Format for Print/Save"/>
<input type="radio"/> All on Page <input checked="" type="radio"/> Selected On Page <input type="radio"/> Selected all Pages	Enter your email address: <input type="text"/> <input type="button" value="Email"/>

Find This:       Find Results in:

[Search](#) [Headings](#) [Titles](#) [Patron](#) [Login](#) [History](#) [Help](#)

**B. Resources to be acquired to support the course Introduction to Technical Writing.**

Barker, Thomas T. *Writing Software Documentation: A Task-Oriented Approach*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2003.

Barnum, Carol. *Usability Testing and Research*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2002.

Bosley, Deborah. *Global Contexts: Case Studies in International Technical Communication*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2001.

Bowdon, Melody. *Service Learning in Technical and Professional Communication*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2003.

Coppola, Nancy W. and Bill Karis. *Technical Communication, Deliberative Rhetoric, and Environmental Discourse: Connections and Directions*. Vol. 11. Greenwood, 1998.

Dicks, Stanley R. *Management Principles and Practices for Technical Communicators*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2004.

Dombrowski, Paul M. *Ethics in Technical Communication*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2000.

Gurak, Laura J. *Oral Presentations for Technical Communication*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2000.

Gurak, Laura J. and Mary M. Lay. *Research in Technical Communication*. Greenwood, 2002.

Hackos, Joanne T. *Managing Your Documentation Projects*. Wiley & Sons, 1994.

Harner, Sandra and Tom Zimmerman. *Technical Marketing Communication*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2002.

Jones, Dan. *Technical Writing Style*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 1998.

Kostelnick, Charles and David D. Roberts. *Designing Visual Language: Strategies for Professional Communicators*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 1998.

Lay, Mary M. and William M. Karis. *Collaborative Writing in Industry: Investigations in Theory and Practice*. Baywood Publishing, 1991.

- Martin, J.R. and Robert Veel. *Reading Science: Critical and Functional Perspectives on Discourses of Science*. Routledge, 1998.
- Paradis, James G., Muriel Zimmerman, and Muriel L. Zimmerman. *The MIT Guide to Science and Engineering Communication*. MIT P., 2002.
- Peeples, Tim. *Professional Writing and Rhetoric: Readings from the Field*. Longman, 2003.
- Penrose, Ann M., and Steven B. Katz. *Writing in the Sciences: Exploring Conventions of Scientific Discourse*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2004.
- Peterson, Christine and Marcia Farr. *Technical Writing in a Corporate Culture: A Study of the Nature of Information*. Greenwood, 1990.
- Rude, Carolyn. *Technical Editing*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2003
- Savage, Gerald J. and Dale L. Sullivan. *Writing a Professional Life: Stories of Technical Communicators On and Off the Job*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2001.
- Sheehan-Johnson, Richard. *Writing Proposals*. Allyn & Bacon Series in Technical Communication. Longman, 2002.
- Tufte, Edward R., and Bonnie Scranton. *Visual Explanations: Images and Quantities, Evidence and Narrative* Graphics Press, 1997.

### **Recommended Available Library Databases**

Academic Search Premier – EBSCO	
Academic Universe (Lexis-Nexis)	ERIC (EBSCO)
American Society of Mechanical Engineers	General Science Full Text
Applied Science and Technology Abstracts	IEEE
Books In Print	Jstor
Dissertations, Digital	ProQuest
Education Full Text	Public Health
ERIC (SilverPlatter)	Science Direct (Elsevier)
	Social Sciences Full Text

## **I. Details**

- a. Course Title: Introduction to Technical Writing
- b. Sponsor: Dr. Erin Herberg, Assistant Professor  
Dr. Frances S. Johnson, Associate Professor  
Dr. Roberta Harvey, Assistant Professor  
Department of Composition and Rhetoric  
College of Communication
- c. Credit Hours: 3 credit hours
- d. Course Level: Upper Level Undergraduate
- e. Curriculum Effect: Elective course for students in enrolled in the Writing Arts Specialization with the College of Communication. Open to undergraduates throughout the university.
- f. Prerequisites: None
- g. Suggested Time/  
Scale in Implementation Fall 2004
- h. Resources: Teaching faculty are on staff. New software purchases and new library requisitions will be required over time.

## **II. Rationale and Course Description**

This proposed course is to be an elective course within the Writing Arts undergraduate specialization in the College of Communication. The purpose of this course is to enhance the current offering of writing courses to expand students' knowledge and skills and to improve their career opportunities. Adding this course to the Writing Arts curriculum fills a void in an otherwise comprehensive offering of writing courses, which includes Writing, Research, and Technology; Writing for the Workplace; and Writing with Style. Adding this course to the elective offering will allow Rowan students to more fully prepare themselves as professional communicators and to compete with graduates whose professional writing curriculum includes technical writing courses. As the name of this course implies, it is intended as an introduction to the foundational theories and practices of technical writing.

Technical writing encompasses a wide range of writing skills, but technical writers specifically have training and expertise in presenting complex information (which sometimes is technical and scientific information) to expert and lay audiences in professional environments. Working in the fields of government, education, medicine/health, technology, engineering, media, and business, they produce technical journalism, user manuals, new product documentation,

marketing literature, software documentation, online help guides, feasibility studies, instructions, grant proposals, and formal reports.

Technical writing is a growing and dynamic field and a field where demand for well trained professionals exceeds supply. Technical writers are problem solvers and they often serve as bridges between the technological experts in an organization and lay or “non-technological” audiences. Technical writers are expected to conceptualize and conduct research, manage large and complex writing projects, function in online writing environments, work well in team environments, and use writing and design technologies. Often, they are seen as strategic writers, communicators, researchers, and learners. Technical writers are often very well paid writing professionals, earning some very attractive entry-level salaries, particularly in the technological and scientific fields.

Nationally, technical and professional writing is, and has been, one of the fastest growing programs within English and writing programs for quite a number of years, and technical writing is almost always a component of these programs. What this course will add to the Writing Arts Curriculum is an introductory focus on the theory and application of writing skills associated with technical writing, which exceeds the scope of all currently offered courses with the Writing Arts specialization.

## **II. Curricular Effect**

The addition of this course also benefits the university community as a whole. Since skill as a communicator is applicable to all fields and since Rowan has many students enrolled in technical and scientific fields (such as engineering, accounting, and biology), the existence of a technical writing course becomes an added opportunity to enhance professional preparedness. While a course in the Writing Arts specialization, this course would be open to students across the campus, and it would be a very beneficial course to a number of non-Communication students.

The Department of Composition and Rhetoric with its Writing Arts Specialization provides excellent resources for offering a technical writing course. It possesses the faculty and resources for this course; furthermore, this course builds on and complements other writing courses within the Department and the specialization. Finally, the placement of technical writing within the Department of Composition and Writing Arts specialization reflects the national trend of writing programs, which generally include professional and writing programs.

### Library Resources

See attached form.

## **III. Essence of the Course**

Introduction to Technical Writing has the following objectives:

- To expose students to current and enduring issues in technical communication.

- To assist students to begin placing technical writing within the larger frameworks of rhetoric theory, composition studies, journalism, creative writing, and research.
- To foster students' understanding of the relationship between technical writing theory and practice.
- To provide students with expanded perspectives on technical communication and its applications in the global marketplace.
- To introduce students to the expanding practice of technical writing in various fields and to the professional opportunities within them.
- To familiarize with the types of problems technical writing attempts to solve and to better prepare them to meet these challenges, ethically, professionally, and legally.
- To develop students' knowledge of rhetorical theory and how technical writers specifically rhetoric to solve communication problems.
- To have students incorporate their own field-specific knowledge to the design, creation, and editing of technical documents so that the course maximizes the application of theoretical concepts to practical needs.
- To introduce students to the computer technology and computer software that is commonly encountered in technical writing environments and to foster an understanding of the ways in which that technology is used to communicate, plan, and manage collaborative projects.
- To introduce students to the role that visual design plays in the preparation of technical documents and to expand their knowledge and understanding of the role visual rhetoric plays in professional communication.
- To expand students' information literacy skills to meet the analytical and research demands of technical writing, using print and non-print sources.
- To develop students' concrete understanding of the ethical ramifications of research, writing, and design within technical writing.
- To assist students in developing their own ethical frameworks in corporate settings and technical research.
- To provide students with practical experience in producing technical documents, emphasizing several objectives:
  - Development of a strong, careful, correct professional writing style
  - Ability to apply document design principles
  - Knowledge of the appropriate use of technical writing formats

Ability to accurately document information  
Development of methods for precise editing and mechanical correctness  
Ability to analyze and evaluate completed technical documents

## **b. Topical Outline/Content**

The topical outline and content of the course will include:

1. Introduction and Course Overview. An introduction to technical communication and relevant rhetorical theory, as well as their applications to writers, researchers and the workplace.
2. Discourse Communities. Emphasis on the existence of technical writing discourse communities and a rhetorical exploration several of these communities (to identify audience, purpose, historical and cultural situation, and composing processes).
3. Collaborative Writing. Learning to write in collaborative teams and learning to create time sensitive management plans for projects.
4. Styles Common to Technical Communication. A critical overview of the basic formats and styles, such as analytical reports, trip reports, investigative reports, proposals, feasibility studies, manuals, usability studies and their appropriate and ethical uses.
5. Deep Analysis of Common Formats. A review of relevant rhetorical theory so to enable students to adequately analyze technical writing via specific formats and models.
6. Introduction to Document Design. Introduction to the basic principles of document design, fonts, color, and integration of text and graphic material, including practical application of techniques. The creation of informational charts and the presentation of quantitative data will also be addressed. Students will work in the computer labs using appropriate software. Students will also perform a rhetorical analysis of specific document designs.
7. The Role of Ethics. An introduction to the role of ethics and social and human responsibility in technical communication.
8. Editing Issues. A discussion and analysis of the role of mechanical correctness, sharp control of language, and assorted readability guidelines, including the Fog Index, Dragma and Gong's Verbal and Visual Hierarchy, and Janice Redish's audience studies from the Institute of Document Design.
9. Writing for the Global Marketplace. The effect of technology on technical communications. An examination of issues central to the global marketplace and international audiences,

including cross-cultural communication.

The assignments for this course are rooted in a pedagogy that

Reflects a desire to create a course informed by the theory and practice of the discipline, the learning goals of the students, the expectations of future employers, and social and human responsibility and ethics.

Creates contexts for writing that are real and sophisticated.

Acknowledges that it is as important to understand the theory behind the creation of technical documents as it is to be able to produce such a document.

Recognizes that the field of technical writing requires its practitioners to be self-motivated learners, both as content and communication specialists.

Optimizes contexts for the use of technology in document preparation and in collaborative writing.

The following assignments are example of the type of projects for this course. Individual instructors may use these (and the course goals) as guidelines for developing their own assignments for the course.

User Instructions - Collaborative Project

Students produce a set of user instructions, which includes step-by-step instructions, visual documentation, and a rhetorical analysis of the completed document. Possible topics include: instructions for an advanced feature of a software program used by writers or instructions for performing a scientific or technical process.

Analysis of a Professional Context or Research Area - Individual Project

Students select a professional field or an individual research area relevant to technical writing for analysis. Students are asked to demonstrate the ability to conduct primary research. They may, for instance, research a communication failure, perform an analysis of crisis communication, identify what technical writing is in a specific field, analyze what issues and problems technical writers face, or discuss how best to prepare for a technical writing position in that field.

Promotional Brochure - Collaborative Project

Writing for a specialized audience, students will choose a (or create a fictional) product that needs both visual and verbal communication for clear understanding. They will then produce a brochure that incorporates both visual and verbal language. For example,

students may include a technical description, a notated mechanical image, and necessary technical support information, including a disclaimer.

#### Long Report - Individual Project

For this assignment students will produce a formal report in a particular style (feasibility study, recommendation report, proposal, client report) that must be based on research. Students will be encouraged to select an issue that is local and/or associated with their professional field, school, or community.

#### Assorted Shorter Writing Tasks

A number of shorter assignments will also be included. These may include illustrations, charts, graphs, letters, and analysis, revision, and critique of technical writing (print and non-print).

### **c. Evaluation of Students and Grading Procedure**

The final course grade will be based on the quality of student assignments throughout the duration of the class. Group project assignments may reflect peer grading from group members on each student's performance and contributions to group projects. Assignments can include projects, portfolios, or web-base projects, and presentations.

### **d. Course Evaluation**

The proposed course will be evaluated using the College of Communication student evaluation forms and critical review by the Master of Arts in Writing faculty. Student evaluation forms will assess effectiveness of content and content delivery, assignments, and texts. The critical review by faculty will determine whether or not the course meets the goal(s) outlined or whether additional courses are needed. Critical departmental review can be met in several ways: classroom observation, syllabus review, and faculty meetings at regular intervals to assess progress.

## **IV. Results of Consultations**

Consulted Departments and Colleges

Department of Journalism and Creative Writing, College of Communication  
Department of Communication Studies, College of Communication  
Department of Biological Sciences, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences  
College of Business

Consultant Written Statements will be forthcoming included.

## **V. Catalog Description**

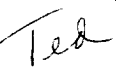
This course introduces students to both the field of technical writing and the uses of technical writing within a variety of professions. Students will learn how technical writers use document design strategies based on rhetorical principles to respond to communication challenges. Through practice with a variety of genres, students will gain experience with audience analysis, communication ethics, research, collaboration, professional style, and editing. The course culminates in a writing project based on a professional, academic, or community issue of the student's choosing. Students are encouraged, and will be assisted, in designing projects that reflect their professional interests.



*College of Business  
Office of the Dean*

October 13, 2003

To: Erin V. Herberg, Ph.D.  
Assistant Professor of Composition and Rhetoric

From: Edward J. Schoen   
Dean, College of Business

Subject: Letter of Support – Introduction to Technical Writing

I have reviewed the syllabus you forwarded to me describing proposed course entitled “Introduction Technical Writing (“the proposed course”).

I believe the proposed course will enhance the current array of writing courses available to Rowan University students, and will improve their career opportunities as professional communicators. The proposed course appears to combine both the theoretical foundation for technical writing and practical application of technical writing principles permitting the student to learn how to present complex information in a clear and understandable manner. The proposed course will also prepare students for the growing field of technical writing, and will be particularly helpful to business students.

Consequently I strongly support the approval and implementation of the proposed course.



*Department of Journalism and Creative Writing*

Date: October 15, 2003

To: Erin Herberg, Assistant Professor, Composition and Rhetoric

From: Carl Hausman, Professor and Chair, Journalism and Creative Writing

Re: Introduction to Technical Writing proposal

I support your proposal for the course Introduction to Technical Writing. In particular, I applaud your emphasis on the ethical implications of the craft. The application of rhetorical theory to the course content also should prove illuminating.

In addition, I note that the emphasis on writing for the global marketplace is a strategic necessity.

The course seems well-situated within your course and departmental framework.



*Biological Sciences*

October 14, 2003

Dr. Erin Herberg  
Department of Composition and Rhetoric  
Rowan University

Dear Erin:

Members of my department and I have reviewed your course proposal: Introduction to Technical Writing, and we strongly endorse the proposals. The course content is unique, and it would enhance the current offerings of writing courses.

This course would be an interesting elective for Biology students, one that will help them in the technical writing needed in our profession. The department also sees an opportunity for contributing to this course through guest lectures. The Biology Department strongly supports any effort that Composition and Rhetoric is trying to do to bring technical writing into their curriculum.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "P. Mosto".

Dr. Patricia Mosto  
Chair and Professor  
Biology Department  
Rowan University  
856-256-4834  
mosto@rowan.edu



*Department of Communication Studies*

October 15, 2003

Dr. Erin Herberg  
Department of Composition and Rhetoric  
College of Communication Rowan University

Dear Erin,

I have shown your proposal to members of the Department of Communication Studies and overall, we support this proposal. What follows are the areas we find particularly interesting and useful as well as a few minor concerns.

As for the strengths of the proposal, we certainly think that an introductory course in technical writing will fill the void in your otherwise comprehensive curriculum. We believe this course would be of particular interest to our students taking the Interpersonal/Organizational track of our curriculum. In this track we investigate communication patterns, discourses of hierarchy and power, and social construction of knowledge through the examination of organizational frameworks. Certainly these ideas coincide nicely with the described goals of the technical writing course. For the same reasons, it may be helpful to students interested in working in health communication either in Communication Studies or Public Relations as it will fortify skills used in health construction and promotion.

We do have some concerns with what appears to be a liberal (casual?) use of the term /concept of rhetoric. The fields of visual rhetoric, rhetorical theory, rhetorical criticism, and rhetorical analysis are huge in nature. To reference them as if they were tertiary components of an introductory course in technical writing seems to do a disservice to Rhetoric as a significant area of study in its own right. Possibly the use of “methods of rhetorical evaluation” might work better. Lastly, your proposal states that “as communication specialists, technical writers are trained to investigate and solve institutional problems” (p. 2). This seems to be an overstatement. Certainly technical writing is used to solve concerns about the dissemination of information throughout organizational systems, and as such, would fortify the work of communication consultants. Yet we believe that those who engage in investigation and problem solving are communication consultants rather than technical writers.

These final comments are, overall, minor concerns—and, having voiced these concerns, we wholeheartedly support your proposal. If I (or any member of my department) can be of help, please do not hesitate to contact us. I wish you the best in having your proposal approved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cindy".

Dr. Cindy Corison, Chair  
Department of Communication Studies  
College of Communication  
Rowan University



*Office of the Executive Vice President / Provost*

April 26, 2004

To: Drs. Frances Johnson and Erin Herberg  
Dept. of Composition and Rhetoric

From: Helen Giles-Gee, Provost

Re: Introduction to Technical Writing Proposal

I have approved Introduction to Technical Writing curriculum proposal. However, on the Library Resource Form accompanying the proposal it mentions "the acquisition of additional titles". I would like to know the cost of the additional acquisitions.

Thank you.

rw

cc: Dr. C. Monroe  
Dr. J. Rowan