

# CURRICULUM PROPOSAL FORM

**DEADLINES:**

REGULAR COURSE PROPOSALS: OCTOBER 23, 1998 FOR FALL, 1999 AND FEBRUARY 19, 1999 FOR SPRING, 2000  
SHORT-TERM COURSE PROPOSALS: DECEMBER 11, 1998 FOR FALL, 1999 AND MARCH 26, 1998 FOR SPRING 2000

**PROPOSAL TITLE:** *Writing, Research & Technology*

**SPONSOR/S:** *Diane Penna*

**DEPARTMENT:** *College Writing* *1501.301*

**CHECK ALL THAT APPLY:**

UNDERGRADUATE       GRADUATE

**COLLEGE:** *Communication*

**If LAS:**       History/Humanities  
 Math/Sciences  
 Social/Behavioral Sciences

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**TYPE OF PROPOSAL (Check ALL that Apply)**

<input type="checkbox"/> General Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Course (NOT Gen. Ed.)
<input type="checkbox"/> New Course in <u>      </u> Bank	<input type="checkbox"/> Name Change (Dept., School, Major)
<input type="checkbox"/> Existing course, Add To <u>      </u> Bank	<input type="checkbox"/> Changes in Degree Requirements
<input type="checkbox"/> Multicultural/Global Designation	<input type="checkbox"/> Changes Involve Gen. Ed. requirements
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing Intensive Designation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Literature Designation	<input type="checkbox"/> Minor Changes to Existing Courses
<input type="checkbox"/> New Minor/Concentration/Specialization	<input type="checkbox"/> Course is NOT General Education
<input type="checkbox"/> New Major/Degree Program	<input type="checkbox"/> Course IS General Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Short Term Course Proposal	

**DEPARTMENT**  
(SIGNATURE INDICATES APPROVAL)

*Monte Spang* 3/14/99      *MBC* 3/17/99

DEPT. CURRICULUM CHAIR / DATE      DEPT. CHAIRPERSON / DATE

**COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE**  
DATE OF OPEN HEARING (if necessary) \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED  
 NOT APPROVED

COMMENTS:

*Monte Spang* 4/23/99

SIGNATURE      DATE

**ACADEMIC DEAN (& GRADUATE DEAN, for New Graduate Programs Only)**

APPROVED  
 NOT APPROVED

COMMENTS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE (Academic Dean)      DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE (Graduate Dean)      DATE

## Course Proposal

### 1. Details:

- a) Course Title: Writing, Research, and Technology *1501, 301*
- b) Sponsor: Dr. Diane Penrod, College Writing Department,  
College of Communication
- c) Credit Hours: 3 credit hours
- d) Course Level: 300-400 level undergraduate
- e) Curricular Effect: Required course for undergraduate coordinate major in  
Communication: Writing Arts. Open to other undergraduates  
across campus.
- f) Prerequisites: College Composition I and II. *1501-III & 1501-112*
- g) Suggested Time/  
Scale of Implementation: Spring 2000  
One section
- h) Resources: Teaching faculty are on staff and computer equipment in  
Bozorth Writing Lab available consistent with the  
College of Communication budget. New software  
and library acquisitions will be required over time.

### 2. Rationale:

The proposed course is part of the planned undergraduate coordinate major in Communication: Writing Arts. However, we recognize students from other fields of study at Rowan may also be interested in an upper-division writing class that focuses on researching skills in a networked writing environment.

As students move into the 21st Century, they face immediate changes in the ways educational institutions and industries communicate through writing. The greatest change in communication has become the development of networked writing environments. Already many of the traditional papertext methods of correspondence have been supplanted by electronic means, such as the creation of web pages, Intranet, E-mail systems, and other online services. Electronic contexts for writing have made a powerful impact on literacy, language, and the practices related to the teaching of writing to students who now have a global audience for their ideas. The proposed course is designed to provide Rowan coordinate majors and other interested students with the intellectual background and the practical tools to become skilled writers -- and teachers of writers -- in a cyberspace environment.

This course differs from a computer skills or computer literacy class in that those courses do not offer students the rhetorical and communication-based issues connected to writing with technology. We will teach students how to use certain computer applications, such as Storyspace or Commonspace, that are applications specifically designed for writers. These computer tools are not presented in the broader-based, "office-type" (word processor, spreadsheet, graphs and chart-style graphics) applications discussed in either a

computer skills or computer literacy course. *Writing, Research, and Technology* also moves beyond the basic "evaluation-research" Internet skills now being presented in College Composition II. This class is very much an advanced writing-rhetoric course in that it explores how writing and the cultural contexts in which the written word is received are being re-imagined by the infusion of technology.

The topics covered in this course span a range of issues related to writing for networked audiences. The class will examine theoretical discussions ranging from the rhetorical and social implications of writing and researching with technology for various audiences to the impact electronic technology has had on the printed word. Students will also learn in-depth how to use specific search engines for various types of research, to produce various genres of writing that will be attached to the class's web page, and to adopt the "netiquette" necessary for effective writing and researching on-line.

The course, while it is designed primarily for future Communication: Writing Arts students, may also be beneficial for other Rowan majors. The sponsor notes that Computer Science or other students in the Colleges of Communication, Education, and Business could find this course useful.

### **3. Essence of the Course:**

#### **a) Objectives:**

This proposed course presents a number of objectives:

- (i) To expose students to the issues and practices of writing in electronic contexts (electronic mailing lists, e-mail postings, web documents, Intranet, etc.)
- (ii) To provide a history of the ways in which writing has evolved through the use of computer technology. For example, students may study topics based on the interactive and non-linear nature of hypertext, the use of collaborative writing and multiple viewpoints for online communication, the informational and social roles of specific electronic document forms, and the disruption of time and space electronic writing creates compared to the "traditional" understanding of time and space in paper text writing formats.
- (iii) To provide students with an expanded framework of writing as a problem solving skill that employs certain software tools to enhance visualization, analysis, and information presented to an audience.
- (iv) To introduce students to changes in argumentation and rhetoric that occur when writing for electronic environments.
- (v) To introduce students to the ethical aspects of cyberwriting, such as copyright debates, compliance with the 1996 Telecommunications Act, plagiarism. This may be established through classroom examination of case studies in these areas.

## b) Topical Outline:

The topical outline and certain content of the course will include:

### Writing, Research, and Technology

Writing as collaboration vs. an individual over-writing others' texts  
Virtual libraries  
Copyright and intellectual property  
Boolean searches and other advanced forms of search engine inquiry  
Gender and class issues related to networked writing  
Web site evaluation

### Practices in Writing in Networked Environments

Hypertextual writing (Storyspace)  
Community writing (E-class, electronic discussion lists outside of class)  
Synchronous ("real time") writing (Talk, Chat functions)  
Asynchronous writing (class listservs, BBSs)  
Web page construction (PageMill, HTML, etc.)  
ENFI (Electronic Networks for Interaction): Commonspace (Mac, PC)

### Project

Can be any of the following (should be semester-long activity):

Webfolio (semester-long electronic portfolio of a student's work)  
Computer literacy self-investigation or ethnographic project  
Interactive research paper attached to class website  
In-depth research on case studies in writing for networked environments  
(seminar presentation)

The project is in addition to other evaluation methods, such as quizzes, tests, or written responses, generated in the "traditional" classroom.

### Weekly Outline of Course (Including Assignments)

#### **Week 1: Introduction to the Course**

- Introduction to basic terms used when writing for electronic contexts
- Working with search engines and Boolean search strings or other advanced query methods.
- Netiquette for on-line writing

**Week 2: Ethics, Law, and Technology**

- Privacy rights
- Intellectual property rights
- Copyright
- Spamming

**Week 3: Writing for Asynchronous Media vs. Real Time Media**

Discussing the rhetorical strategies found in each kind of community Practice:

- Writing to Bulletin Board Systems and listservs
- Writing to Internet Relay Chat (IRC) system
- Writing to a MOO (Multi-User Object Oriented) dungeon

**Week 4-6: Impact of Authoring in Cyberspace**

Discussing the rhetorical and technical strategies for web pages Practice:

- Week 4 Analyzing three different web sites (depending on student's interests)
- Week 5 Designing an interface
- Week 6 Constructing simple web page using Page Mill from Week 5 project

**Week 7: Forming Electronic Writing Groups**

Discussing the differences between e-mail and real time writing groups

- Constructing an effective e-mail writing group
- Using "real time" conversations to improve writing

**Week 8-10: Hypertext writing**

Discussing the creation of non-linear fiction and non-fictional writing Practice:

- Week 7 — Becoming familiar with Storyspace
- Week 8 — Creating a short essay, short story, or set of linked poems
- Week 9 — Presenting work to class for critique

**Week 11: Issues of Gender, Race, Class and Access**

Discussion of these issues on writing in the various media studied

**Weeks 12-13: ENFI and Collaborative Writing**

Discussion of how ENFI can be used to produce small group projects Practice: In small groups, designing a pamphlet for electronic citizenship

**Week 14: Presentation of Semester-long Project to Class**

*Samples of Possible Short Assignments*

**For Gender, Race, Class and Access:** The purpose of this assignment is to test common perceptions about who uses networked writing. Students keep a log of class discussions, a newsgroup, an electronic discussion list, and/or a MOO that investigates how males respond to females, whites respond to minorities (or vice-versa, depending on

lists), and how class issues are discussed on different lists. Students are to study the length of the posts, the kind of language used in the post, whether the gender, race, or class of the writer is evident. Students then are to examine the ratio of male to females who post, whites to minorities (or vice-versa) who post, or the number of times class issues arise. Students' additional comments or findings that are pertinent to the project are also included.

**For Hypertext Writing:** Students are to compose an extended definition (100-200 words) of what hypertextual writing is or isn't for those who are unfamiliar with this type of writing experience. The completed definitions will be linked together in StorySpace to form an on-line reference page for future students or visitors to the Rowan webpages.

**For Synchronous/Asynchronous Writing:** Students are posed with various social problems known to exist on listservs, in chat rooms, and in MOOs (sexual harassment, virtual rape, verbal assault, racial harassment, for example). Students are to do research first to discover what defines actual sexual harassment, rape, assault and so on. Then, they are to expand upon the definitions that explain real actions and argue whether there is a difference between the real action and the symbolic or virtual action that occurs in a networked writing environment. Students are to pose what the consequences are for virtual social problems versus actual social problems. These queries are developed through the class electronic discussion list or BBS and correspond to various readings in class.

#### **c) Evaluation and Grading Procedures:**

Final course grade will be determined based on the quality of the student assignments throughout the duration of the class. The assignments can include projects, portfolios or webfolios, examinations, seminar presentations and/or tests and quizzes.

#### **d) Course Evaluation:**

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

#### **4. Results of Consultations:** See attached.

**a) Consulted Departments:** College Writing, Public Relations, English, Computer Science, Elementary Education, Accounting/Business.

**b) Consultants and Consultant Statements:** Don Bagin (Public Relations), Carl Calliari (Chair, Elementary Education), Antoinette Libro (Interim Dean, College of Communication), George Romeo (Accounting/Business), Janice Rowan (Chair, College Writing), Don Stone (Chair, Computer Science), Timothy Viator (Chair, English).

**c) Written Consultations:** See attached.

## 5. Additional Supporting Information:

Possible texts that could serve as primary or supplemental references for this course:

Condon, Writing the Information Highway. Allyn & Bacon: New York, 1997.

Hawisher & Selfe, Literacy, Technology, and Society: Confronting the Issues. Prentice Hall: New Jersey, 1997.

Landow, Hypertext. Johns Hopkins U P: Baltimore, 1992.

Bolter, Writing Space: Computer, Hypertext, and the History of Writing. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates: Hillsdale, New Jersey, 1991

Forman, New Visions of Collaborative Writing. Boynton/Cook: Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 1992.

Gerrard, Writing at Century's End. Random House: New York, 1987.

Kramarae, Technology and Women's Voices. Routledge & Kegan Paul: New York, 1988.

Reinecke, Electronic Illusions. Penguin: New York, 1984.

Handa, Computers and Community. Boynton/Cook: Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 1991.

Strickland, From Disk to Hard Copy. Boynton/Cook: Portsmouth, New Hampshire, 1997.

Selfe & Hillegas, Literacy and Computers. MLA: New York, 1994.

*Plus, the following journals and listservs could provide articles that may be used in the course:*

Computers and Composition

ACE Newsletter (NCTE Assembly on Computers in Education)

College Composition & Communication

Byte

Wired

ACW-L (Alliance for Computers and Writing listserv)

## 6.) Catalog Description:

### Writing, Research, and Technology (1501.. )

*Prerequisite: College Composition I and II.*

This course presents the rhetorical, social, and practical dimensions of writing and researching in networked contexts. Students focus both on the various roles an individual creates and maintains when writing for different cybermedia formats and the kinds of conventions, concerns, and grammars that exist in discrete electronic systems like the World Wide Web, listservs, distribution lists, the Intranet, e-mail, and hypertext. Seminar presentations and a semester-long research project in a concentrated area of writing for a particular electronic community demonstrate students' ability to communicate on-line.

### Appendix

**Seminar Presentation:** Each student in the course is required to present a 20-minute oral discussion related to a topic being discussed in class. The topics and scheduled dates of presentation will be set on the first night of class, with presentations to begin the third week of class. The student is to formalize his or her presentation in writing and upload it to the class's web page (adjoining my home page on the Rowan web site) for public access.

**Final Course Project:** Each student in the course is required to complete a semester-long project connected to the course. These are individualized projects, designed and agreed upon through a written contract between each student and the instructor. Examples of projects could be a short collection of poems or a short story written in Storyspace that could be moving toward publication; the development of a listserv or distribution list related to a hobby or a course in which a student maintains an interest; the creation of a web page related to the student's discipline; a case study of how computers are used at a particular job site, educational site, or civic organization that could be turned into a full-length publishable text or conference paper.