



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

To: Academic Program Review Committee

From: Roxanne Cullen, Head, Department of Languages and Literature

Subject: Technical and Professional Communication program

The Technical and Professional Communication program (TPC) is central to the Ferris mission in that it provides students with academic training in professional writing along with opportunity to apply those skills in an internship setting. One of the distinct features of the program is the "content specialty" area which asks students to become proficient in some technical area, for example, automotive technology, and then apply professional writing skills in an automotive-related work setting. The design of the program is interdisciplinary: several required courses are from disciplines other than English and the content specialty area is outside departmental offerings. This feature replicates the real-life work of a technical writer, the person who must be able to communicate among various parties in a company---managers, designers, marketers, etc. This cross-disciplinary feature gives students the experience of learning the language of multiple disciplines rather than learning "about" the differences in an English class.

The program is unique in its interdisciplinary nature and as an undergraduate degree. Most TPC programs are at the masters level. Our graduates have been successful in attaining jobs and in moving within the profession after graduation. Ironically, most of our graduates are working in areas outside of the "content specialty area" of the degree program. Though the first job may have been with Ford as a technical writer with an automotive content specialty, today they may work in multimedia or free lance in a variety of areas. This fact, I believe, points to the well grounded academic foundation they receive in the program. We are not "training" students to take an entry level job in an area of their content specialty and stay in the position for the rest of their life. Our graduates have the skills to move upward within an organization or laterally to a new "content" area.

The TPC program is not large; the number of students in the program hovers around twenty at any given time. It would be unusual to find a large number of undergraduates interested in or qualified for this type of program, particularly in light of the kind of recruiting Ferris has focused on historically. Because of the few number of courses that are program- dedicated, the numbers in the program can fluctuate without impacting faculty load. This feature is actually a luxury because the program can afford to maintain high standards and not affect program quality in the quest for student numbers.

We are fortunate to have a high quality of instruction within our program. Our faculty have industry experience and continue to work closely with working professionals. We also have an active advisory board who takes interest in the success of the program. One

February 16, 2004

to: Jack Buss, Chair
Academic Program Review Committee
Academic Senate

from: Sandy Balkema, Coordinator
Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) Program
Department of Languages and Literature

cc: Roxanne Cullen, Chair, Department of Languages and Literature
TPC Program Review Panel

re: Academic Program Review, 2004-05

According to the program review schedule established by the Academic Senate, the Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) B.S. Program of the Department of Languages and Literature is responsible for conducting a self-study for review in the fall of 2004.

Therefore, I am attaching, for your review and approval, the TPC Program's evaluation plan, our program review panel, and our tentative budget. If you have questions, or need any additional information, please contact me at x-5631.

Technical & Professional Communication Program
 Academic Program Review — Evaluation Plan

Degree: B.S. in Technical and Professional Communication

Purpose: To conduct an evaluation of the Technical and Professional Communication Program in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses and, in doing so, to improve the program and its service to Ferris State University.

Program Review Panel:

Committee Chair: Sandy Balkema, program coordinator
Program Faculty: Roxanne Cullen, chair, Dept. of Lang. and Lit,
 Tom Brownell, professor of English
 Doug Haneline, professor of English
 John Jablonski, professor of English
 Dan Ding, associate professor of English
 Erin Weber, assistant professor of English
 Jon Taylor, assistant professor of English
Outside Faculty: Sid Sytsma, professor of Business

Data Collection Instruments:

- graduate surveys — sent to all identifiable alumni of the program
- employer surveys — sent to all identifiable employers of alumni and program interns; and other employers of technical writers
- student survey — sent to all current students of the program
- faculty survey, part 1 — sent to all department faculty
- faculty survey, part 2 — sent to outside faculty and advisors with direct contact with the TPC program
- advisory committee survey — sent to all members of the program advisory committee
- labor market analysis — determined from data collected by related professional organizations, companies, and websites
- evaluation of facilities and equipment — conducted by program coordinator
- curriculum evaluation — conducted by TPC program committee

Evaluation Schedule :

Activity	Co-Leaders	Activity	Co-Leaders
Graduate survey	S. Balkema J. Taylor	Curriculum evaluation	R. Cullen S. Balkema
Employer survey	T. Brownell D. Ding	Facility / equipment evaluation	S. Balkema D. Haneline
Student survey	D. Ding J. Jablonski	Labor market analysis	J. Taylor E. Weber
Faculty survey, part 1	J. Jablonski D. Haneline	Advisory Committee Survey	S. Balkema E. Weber
Faculty survey, part 2	T. Brownell S. Sytsma		

Target date for completion of all data collection activities
 Target date for completion of report draft
 Target date for completion of final report copy
 Submission date for final report

April 1st
 June 1st
 Sept. 1st
 Sept. 10th

Technical & Professional Communication Program
 Academic Program Review — Tentative Budget

Printing and mailing of approximately 20-50% of the data collection surveys*			
	printing	200 @ 10¢	\$ 20.00
	mailing	200 @ 37¢	74.00
	return envelopes	200 @ 37¢	74.00
*Although we plan to email a majority of the surveys, some will most likely require printing and mailing.			
Printing of final report			
	Binders, copying expenses, etc.		250.00
Compiling email addresses, mailing lists, mailing labels, and survey data			
	100 hrs. secretarial /student support	\$ 6.50 / hr.	65.00
Telephone expenses			
	fax and long-distance		50.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED BUDGET			\$ 533.00

Questions for BS in Technical and Professional Communication Program Panel

The following questions or requests for information are the result of our discussion concerning specific statements or material within the BS in Technical and Professional Communication Program Review Panel document. In most cases, the page number containing the material upon which the question is based is cited prior to the question.

Who are your competitors and how are their programs similar and different from your program?

response It may sound cliché, but Ferris State's TPC Program is unusual for a bachelor's degree program in technical communication. It is unusual for two main reasons:

1. It is housed within an English department yet has a multi-disciplinary focus that requires students to gain technical knowledge and skills from outside a traditional English / liberal arts area.
2. As a B.S. degree program, it prepares its students with hands-on, practical, and applied technical communication skills, including a required internship.

Within the state of Michigan, the number of undergraduate programs in technical and/or professional communication remains low, depending on how one counts the programs, between 4-9 programs. Although most universities offer courses in technical writing, only a few offer degree programs specifically in *technical* writing (Ferris, MTU, U of M, Lawrence Institute).

Many of the universities that offer a similar / related degree program offer an *English* major with a specialty/concentration in professional writing or the schools offer a "professional" writing degree program. These differ from Ferris' program in their emphasis; they are primarily English degrees and offer all course work from within the English department (NMU, MSU, EMU, Wayne State, Madonna)

While bachelor's degree programs across the state and country are similar in many regards—they all have similar general education requirements, and a strong emphasis in writing and editing—many programs provide all of their program courses, including the concentration/specialty courses that provide students with the "technical" aspect of the technical communication degree. That is, all of the program requirements beyond the general education courses are taught by technical communication faculty (such as the program at MSU) rather than by technical specialists.

The programs that are most like Ferris' in terms of the technical focus are also typically housed within engineering schools (such as U of M) or have a very theoretical focus (such as MTU). Clearly, the overall differences among these universities make a comparison of degrees and degree programs difficult.

Ferris' program has a combination of features that most of the other programs do not: our program is a BS degree program that relies heavily on courses from across the university for its "technical" focus; we require extensive writing courses, require students to complete significant course work in a "technical" area, and require an internship. Our cross-curricular focus means that our graduates are capable of writing clearly and effectively about technical and/or specialized content because they've been trained in both areas.

Questions for BS in Technical and Professional Communication Program Panel

14 **In view of the relatively small numbers of upper division students in your program, how do you efficiently schedule classes?**

response

Scheduling classes efficiently actually involves several different issues:

1. From the advising standpoint, the small size of our program makes scheduling a relatively easy task for the program advisor.
2. Two of our program courses have lab components and a relatively heavy time requirement because of their real-world client projects and activities. These lab-component classes are essential in a skill-based program such as the TPC Program. The relatively small number of upper-division students actually makes scheduling easier for the courses with lab components. Efficient scheduling of courses with lab requirements and in-class projects is always a bit difficult for students as well as professors; however, we've developed a successful 2+2 block schedule that works well for both ENGL 411 and 499 (we work outside of the matrix for this scheduling, but schedule the courses late in the day when they don't negatively affect our students' schedules). Students also have access to the program computer lab and seminar room facilities to work on their projects outside of class times.
3. Our department works closely with our faculty, too, to ensure that any single-section courses that our students need do not have schedule conflicts. For example, English 323-Proposal Writing, is a single-section course, as is English 380-History of Rhetoric. These are scheduled so students do not encounter conflicts.
4. The TPC Program sequence courses, ENGL 380, ENGL 411, and ENGL 499, as well as the one-credit course, ENGL 280, could potentially be difficult to "float" because of our small program enrollment. However, only the capstone course, ENGL 499, is offered for TPC students only (and, thus, is the only one that has a consistently low enrollment). Additional majors or degree programs include ENGL 380 and 411 as electives, thereby adding to those class enrollments. Also, we have occasionally offered ENGL 380 on alternate years to help with low enrollment numbers. Both ENGL 411 and 499, as project-based skills courses, are clearly more effective when taught with a small enrollment, and, since the program is low cost in all other areas, is our one high(er) cost item.
[Note: because both 411 and 499 are pedagogically most effective if completed during the senior year, and because many of our students enter the program during their junior year, it is not feasible for us to alternate years in order to "beef up" enrollment numbers for these classes.]

15 **Please describe the plans for the MS degree and any implications that introduction of that degree may have for the BS program.**

response

The proposed MS/Certificate Program in Technical and Professional Communication will be offered through the FSU-GR campus as an (primarily) online degree/certificate program intended for working adults. Our admissions criteria include an undergraduate BS/BA degree and 1-2 years of experience as a technical writer (or in a related professional position). Students in the MS/Certificate program will also have the ability to select "tracks" of study (if they wish to "specialize").

Based on the 20-year presence of our BS degree program in this region of the state and based on a growing need for a graduate program on this side of the state, developing the MS/Certificate program was a logical development for our BS degree program. Changes in

Questions for BS in Technical and Professional Communication Program Panel

the technical communication profession, lack of graduate degrees on the west side of the state, and a lack of programs with a "Ferris flavor" (the applied, practical focus our BS degree is known for) were all driving forces for this degree/certificate.

The TPC Program faculty foresee a few significant implications for the BS degree:

1. Faculty teaching the MS/Certificate courses will have additional materials and experiences to bring into the BS course classrooms.
2. The MS/certificate programs will also be expanding the recognition of the Ferris programs (undergraduate and graduate) across the state and nation among technical communication professionals.
3. The Advisory Board, which will most likely serve both degree programs, will offer additional levels of advice, recommendations, and service to the BS program.
4. Students in the MS / Certificate program may become additional sources of internship and job opportunities for the BS degree students, as well as offer BS degree students an additional source of information about professional topics.

23 **There is the mention of tracks on page 23. Would you please describe the tracks in more detail and indicate how having multiple tracks is a benefit to a relatively low enrollment program.**

response The TPC Program materials list 6 "tracks" or content-area specialties, which students may select for their content specialty. We developed these 6 tracks primarily for recruitment reasons. Until very recently, the field of Technical Communication was not a widely-recognized career option among high school students. The Admissions Office, in fact, recommended that we publicize some of the most visible professional areas where technical communicators work. That is what these 6 tracks do – they allow us to attract students who are interested in writing for the medical field, or for the automotive or computer industries, or other specific technical and professional areas.

However, we continue to advise students individually to design a content specialty that will serve their career plans and needs most effectively. For example, a student interested in writing and designing corporate training materials or in producing global materials for online delivery will need different skills than a student who plans to work in broadcast journalism.

We also feel that this individual approach and contact is one of the major strengths of our program. Not only does this approach support and reinforce the Ferris mission for innovative teaching and learning in career-oriented, technological, and professional education, but it allows each student a measure of control over his/her career choices and future career decisions. Intensive, one-on-one advising is also our program's hallmark, as we educate students about career options and help them choose the courses that will best prepare them to succeed.

In terms of course enrollment, because the content specialty courses are all non-program courses, the number of students in each track does not impact course enrollment significantly. For example, in one year, we may have one of our TPC students in the Automotive Writing track and two students in the Publication Management track; these students will not affect the enrollment in the automotive courses or the printing management courses significantly.

Questions for BS in Technical and Professional Communication Program Panel

65 Please elaborate on the pros and cons of internal internships vs. external internships.

response The TPC Program requires a 200-400 hour internship. We prefer that our students serve their internship in a company or organization (outside of Ferris) that employs technical writers and that the interns are in a position where they can complete "significant" technical communication tasks. For most of our students, their internship experiences have been professional, challenging, and extremely valuable experiences. And, over the years, most of them have been in off-campus settings.

Occasionally, however, our students complete internships at Ferris for campus departments or offices. Many of these campus offices have provided "significant" technical writing projects and activities for our students and have been excellent internship settings. Over the past few years, however, the percentage of on-campus internships has increased for a couple of reasons:

1. We had several foreign students who could not (because of work restrictions) work off campus
2. The weak job market made internships more difficult to find
3. More campus office/departments had significant and valuable technical communication projects requiring our students' skills

Even when the on-campus projects are worthwhile and valuable, we discourage on-campus internships for these reasons:

1. Student workers are often treated as students, not as employees, especially in terms of accountability and professionalism.
2. Student interns see themselves as students, not as employees, especially in terms of accountability and professionalism.
3. Our students need to gain experience within non-academic organizations, learning their processes and procedures, and being held to the same standards of accountability, responsibility, and professionalism as the other employees.
4. On-campus internships are not valued as highly by future employers because of the reasons listed above.

81 You list conclusions in this section based on the criteria categories. Do you have summary recommendations that you would like to bring to our attention.

response The TPC Program seems, to those of us in it, to be healthy and steady. Our primary recommendation, then, would be for the APRC to recognize the value of our small program with its special niche, a unique group of students, and a dedicated and hard-working faculty.

Because we do not have a separate program budget, we cannot technically recommend an increase in budget. Nor do we need to. As it is, our program needs are met through effective and efficient communication between our program coordinator and department head (and dean). For example, our requests for additional program space and equipment were met, after appropriate discussion, proposals, investigation, and negotiation. We could recommend, then, continued administrative control and leadership and continued funding (at the same or increased levels).

We might also recommend an increase in recruitment efforts and funding. The TPC Program would love to have additional higher-ability students who want to excel in the technical communication field and who are motivated to work hard. Based on market projections, the technical communication field will continue to grow and need qualified graduates. As program faculty we're doing what we can do increase awareness of the program and would welcome additional efforts from the University.

The following questions or requests for information are the result of our discussion concerning specific statements or material within the BS in Television and Digital Media Production Program Review Panel document. The page number containing the material upon which the question is based is cited prior to the question.

**1-5 The number of graduates listed consistently appears to be lower than the
1-6 number of seniors. What happens to the seniors that don't graduate from
your program?**

response The numbers in this section are somewhat misleading because the University considers anyone with 86 or more credits as a senior. This number would include those who started in the program as Freshmen and are in their fourth year at Ferris, it also includes students who are on internship (sometimes after spending four years on campus), additionally it includes students who might be new to the program having transferred in from other programs on campus but may be only taking Freshman and Sophomore level courses in our program. The point is students may be classified as Seniors for several semesters. For example, during Fall 2003, there were 36 students listed as Seniors – 11 were enrolled in our capstone class TVPR 499 during 03F, another 10 enrolled in TVPR 499 during the next semester 04W, and 9 were on Internship accounting for 30 of the 36 students. The remaining 6 were classified as Seniors but had not completed all the necessary courses in the program to enroll in TVPR 499. In the last 16 years there have only been a handful of students who don't finish once they are Seniors.

**1-6 The starting salary listed seems low for a technical field such as yours. Can
12-2 people enter the field with on the job training? What advantage do your
13-2 graduates have in obtaining jobs?**

Response Just the fact that the program has some technical requirements is not sufficient to assume that it is a technical program and to justify a higher starting salary. This field requires a curious mix of both technical and creative skills. It is exciting, fun, and perceived as glamorous to work in. It is in the workplace that the skills of our graduates are proven. Why should employers pay high starting salaries when they can get many applicants for the wages that they are currently offering? Entry level positions are salaried below what we would like to see but it is the market that makes that decision not us. Salaries do increase once graduates have proven themselves in the workplace (see Section 7-4, 7-5, and 7-6).

On the job training is no longer the option that it was 30 years ago. This field has expanded dramatically in the range of skills that are expected of entry level workers and the degree of competence within those skill sets. Very few if any employees in this field do just one thing.

Our graduates have the significant advantage of having had a substantial number of hands-on classes where they learn and perfect skills in a progression of

classes that build to the internship experience. The six month internship is unique. No other program to our knowledge in the country has such an extensive internship. Many times that internship or contacts made while interning have lead to employment.

1-7 The administrative program review indicates that the possibility of requiring students to purchase of laptop computers. What is the status of that recommendation? If this recommendation was implemented, would the computers be PC or Macintosh?

response This recommendation is still being considered for some future year. The cost of a laptop in a configuration that would be most appropriate for our program, whether PC or Mac, would be approximately \$2,800. Students on Financial Aid would have to take out a loan to be able to afford the laptop since the annual supply portion of the Financial Aid package is only \$1,000 and would include the cost of their books. Certainly the laptop would be useful in many classes and would shift some of the cost of equipment replacement to the student. Unfortunately, this could be seen as a hidden fee and put the University in jeopardy of increasing costs above the amount that would trigger a reduction in state support. Therefore, even though the recommendation is still under consideration, no action is anticipated at this time.

2-2 Please indicate the results of this survey in tabular form

response

The number of **responses** to each question is listed in parentheses next to the letter designator.

How important do you perceive this to be as a requirement in the TVP program?				Course	If you took the course, please rate the quality of the course				
Very Important	Somewhat	Not Important			Very High	High Quality	Good	Low Quality	Did not take or don't remember
A(32)	B(25)	C(4)	1	Introduction to Video Communications	A(13)	B(17)	C(16)	D(0)	E(18)
A(42)	B(19)	C(1)	2	Computer Systems for Video	A(6)	B(5)	C(4)	D(2)	E(47)
A(56)	B(4)	C(0)	3	Video Production	A(33)	B(22)	C(9)	D(0)	E(0)
A(44)	B(16)	C(1)	4	TV Studio Production	A(32)	B(25)	C(7)	D(0)	E(0)
A(49)	B(10)	C(1)	5	Remote Television Production	A(32)	B(17)	C(8)	D(1)	E(6)
A(27)	B(33)	C(1)	6	Television Operations	A(18)	B(27)	C(8)	D(0)	E(11)
A(46)	B(15)	C(0)	7	Video Production 2	A(29)	B(20)	C(7)	D(0)	E(8)
A(34)	B(26)	C(1)	8	Television Production Writing	A(19)	B(21)	C(16)	D(2)	E(6)
A(56)	B(3)	C(2)	9	Television Production Internship	A(34)	B(17)	C(6)	D(7)	E(0)
A(42)	B(19)	C(0)	10	Advanced Producing/Directing	A(27)	B(20)	C(2)	D(1)	E(13)
A(38)	B(23)	C(0)	11	Digital Imaging for Video	A(4)	B(3)	C(0)	D(0)	E(55)
A(11)	B(33)	C(16)	12	Distance Learning Production	A(1)	B(1)	C(2)	D(0)	E(58)
A(41)	B(18)	C(2)	13	Audio Production	A(19)	B(21)	C(16)	D(2)	E(5)
A(24)	B(34)	C(3)	14	Compositing Video	A(5)	B(3)	C(3)	D(0)	E(52)
A(15)	B(29)	C(17)	15	Film Production	A(23)	B(20)	C(13)	D(4)	E(4)
A(22)	B(36)	C(2)	16	Television and Digital Media Practicum	A(0)	B(3)	C(1)	D(0)	E(58)
A(31)	B(23)	C(6)	17	Computer Animation for Video	A(3)	B(2)	C(4)	D(0)	E(53)
A(29)	B(27)	C(4)	18	Streaming Media Production	A(2)	B(2)	C(0)	D(0)	E(58)
A(35)	B(20)	C(5)	19(3)	DVD Production	A(2)	B(0)	C(0)	D(3)	E(57)
A(17)	B(41)	C(3)	20	Instructional Design	A(15)	B(25)	C(11)	D(1)	E(12)

A(0)	B(17)	C(4)	21	Lighting Design	A(9)	B(14)	C(11)	D(3)	E(25)
A(38)	B(22)	C(0)	22	Computer Graphics	A(5)	B(8)	C(12)	D(4)	E(34)
A(32)	B(25)	C(3)	23	Broadcast Writing	A(10)	B(14)	C(15)	D(5)	E(20)

How important do you perceive this to be as a requirement in the TDMP program?				As you reflect back upon your coursework, do you think we should increase, decrease or keep the same emphasis on the topic?				
Very Important	Somewhat	Not Important		Course Requirements	Increase	Decrease	Stay the same	No opinion or don't
A(19)	B(25)	C(19)	24	Using the library and looking up information	A(16)	B(8)	C(28)	D(11)
A(33)	B(24)	C(5)	25	Using recent textbooks	A(21)	B(6)	C(30)	D(6)
A(33)	B(28)	C(1)	26	Using professor-developed handouts and materials	A(23)	B(2)	C(29)	D(9)
A(47)	B(14)	C(1)	27	Writing scripts and other writing assignments	A(40)	B(1)	C(21)	D(1)
A(18)	B(28)	C(16)	28	Linear editing	A(12)	B(25)	C(19)	D(7)
A(54)	B(8)	C(0)	29	Non-linear editing	A(44)	B(2)	C(7)	D(10)
A(40)	B(21)	C(0)	30	Digital Imaging	A(26)	B(0)	C(6)	D(31)
A(36)	B(22)	C(3)	31	DVD Authoring	A(25)	B(1)	C(6)	D(33)
A(33)	B(26)	C(2)	32	Streaming Video	A(22)	B(2)	C(8)	D(32)
A(34)	B(25)	C(2)	33	Computer-based animation	A(31)	B(0)	C(8)	D(25)
A(55)	B(7)	C(0)	34	Field, video camera operation	A(34)	B(0)	C(30)	D(1)
A(42)	B(19)	C(1)	35	Studio, video camera operation	A(24)	B(2)	C(39)	D(0)
A(16)	B(32)	C(14)	36	Film camera operation	A(18)	B(18)	C(28)	D(1)
A(37)	B(24)	C(1)	37	Audio editing	A(34)	B(2)	C(27)	D(1)
A(42)	B(20)	C(0)	38	Audio Recording	A(35)	B(1)	C(28)	D(3)
A(55)	B(7)	C(0)	39	Working with clients	A(56)	B(0)	C(7)	D(2)
A(38)	B(15)	C(9)	40	Completing assignments as a team rather than an individual during class time	A(35)	B(6)	C(22)	D(2)
A(22)	B(31)	C(9)	41	Participating in field trips	A(22)	B(5)	C(29)	D(9)
A(57)	B(4)	C(1)	42	Participating in an internship prior to graduation	A(32)	B(1)	C(30)	D(2)
A	B	C	43	Other:	A	B	C	D

SECTION II: VALUE OF DEGREE

	As a result of your degree coursework, to what extent do you feel you gained:	Very Much	Quite a bit	Some	Very little
44	A general preparedness professionally	A(33)	B(20)	C(13)	D(2)
45	The understanding of producing	A(24)	B(33)	(11)	D(0)
46	The use and understanding of video editing	A(40)	B(20)	C(7)	D(1)
47	The use and understanding of camera operation	A(36)	B(23)	C(9)	D(0)
48	The use and understanding of lighting equipment	A(18)	B(19)	C(27)	D(4)
49	The use and understanding of audio techniques	A(15)	B(30)	C(16)	D(7)
50	Skills in computer graphics	A(6)	B(7)	C(20)	D(35)
51	Writing or scripting skills	A(11)	B(32)	C(21)	D(4)
52	General computer skills	A(11)	B(7)	C(25)	D(25)
53	Creative advancement	A(17)	B(23)	C(21)	D(7)

	Please circle the response that best reflects the way you feel:	Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion or not relevant	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
54	Most of my classes in the TDMP program at Ferris were stimulating.	A(22)	B(42)	C(4)	D(0)	E(0)
55	My program of study was appropriate in terms of meeting my professional goals.	A(29)	B(27)	C(7)	D(5)	E(0)
56	Most of my professors at FSU in the TDMP program were good teachers.	A(31)	B(31)	C(2)	D(3)	E(1)
57	Most of my professors were available outside of class to help students.	A(28)	B(26)	C(10)	D(3)	E(1)
58	Courses taught by adjunct faculty were very good.	A(7)	B(29)	C(30)	D(1)	E(0)
59	The office staff at Ferris was friendly and helpful.	A(19)	B(32)	C(13)	D(3)	E(1)
60	The learning environment in most of the courses was relaxed and supportive.	A(23)	B(30)	C(6)	D(8)	E(1)
61	The learning experiences in most of the courses related to my job.	A(28)	B(22)	C(8)	D(9)	E(1)

MEMORANDUM

DATE: November 17, 2004

TO: Academic Senate

FROM: Academic Program Review Council

RE: Recommendations for:

Bachelor of Science Degree in Technical and Professional Communication

CC: Sandra J Balkema, Matthew Klein Thomas Oldfield, Michael Harris

IDENTITY OF PROGRAM:

BS Degree in Technical and Professional Communication

RECOMMENDATION OF ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW COUNCIL:

We recommend that this program be Continued

CATALOG ENTRY:

Why Choose Technical & Professional Communication?

Technical and Professional Communication students learn the history and future of writing, edit technical manuals, understand the elements of writing technical documents and develop project planning skills. In addition, they analyze technical journals, books, magazines and speeches.

All TPC students identify a content specialty concentration, a 21-credit grouping of courses that builds on their interest in a specific career area. While many TPC students enter the program with an associate degree in a technical area—for example, electronics or plastics technology—many develop their technical specialty based on an established area of expertise in the field of technical communication.

A wide variety of content specialty concentrations are possible, including electronics, automotive technology, computer information systems, plastics technology, medical writing, applied mathematics, visual communication, technical training and applied biology. These concentrations are not, however, the only areas of specialty allowed by the program; students are encouraged to work with their advisors to select the best grouping of courses for their professional interests. The content specialty gives students a specialized background and typically opens the door to their first professional job.

Get a Great Job

Technical and professional communication is a combination of writing, organizing and communicating information. Students gain an understanding of communication media, technical and expository writing, desktop publishing, verbal communication and a chosen technical or professional specialty.

Job opportunities continue to grow for graduates of this program. Nearly every industry needs employees who can communicate technical and professional information effectively to its customers and clients. Jobs also are expanding into marketing, advertising and public relations fields.

Admission Requirements

First year student admission is open to high school graduates (or equivalent) who demonstrate academic preparedness, maturity and seriousness of purpose with educational backgrounds appropriate to their chosen program of study. High school courses and grade point average, ACT composite score, and ACT Reading and Mathematics sub-scores will be considered in the admission and placement process. Transfer students must have at least 12 credits at the time of application with a minimum 2.0 overall GPA including an English and mathematics course, or they must provide their high school records and ACT scores for admission review.

Graduation Requirements

The Technical and Professional Communication program leads to a Bachelor of Science degree. Graduation requires a minimum 2.0 GPA overall and at least 121 credits including completion of all general education requirements as outlined on the General Education website. Students also must present a satisfactory portfolio for graduation.

CRITERIA SUMMARY BASED ON CONCLUSIONS OF THE PROGRAM PANEL:

- **CENTRALITY TO FSU MISSION:**
 - Ferris State University will be a national leader in providing opportunities for innovative teaching and learning in career-oriented, technological and professional education.
 - The Technical and Professional Communication Program has its focus on effective communication within technical and professional settings ranging from business and industry to education and government. Program faculty members are innovative in the classroom, they are involved in web-based (and distance) education, and they mentor students in numerous settings.
- **UNIQUENESS AND VISIBILITY OF PROGRAM:**
 - The TPC Program provides its students with a valuable combination of practical, entry-level job skills with the theoretical background necessary for career advancement. Ferris State's solid career focus makes the TPC Program—with the content specialty at its core—a strong, well-designed, well-respected preparation for the technical communication field. The strength of the TPC program is its practical focus, with hands-on experiences in courses, a strong internship program, and its emphasis on regular contact between students and working technical communication professionals.
- **SERVICE TO STATE, NATION, WORLD:**
 - The TPC Program serves the state and the nation in several ways: its graduates have successfully entered the job market for the past 20 years, enhancing communication in business and industry; several graduates have continued their educations with graduate degrees, moving into managerial positions, teaching positions, and company ownership. TPC Program faculty have represented the Program and the University by professional activities, publications, and presentations. TPC Program faculty are active members and leaders in significant technical and professional communication organizations, including the Society for Technical Communication and the American Medical Writers Association.
- **DEMAND BY STUDENTS:**
 - Students with the rather unusual combination of interests—writing/communication skills and a technical aptitude—find their niche in the TPC Program. Students who love to write, organize information, and transmit it to others in a clear, direct manner are the students the program attracts. The program panel believes that there is a consistent, healthy demand. There are currently 25 students enrolled in the program.

	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003
Tenure Track FTE	.25	.25	.25	.25	.25
Enrollment on-campus total*	24	38	33	29	18
Freshman	9	24	10	8	4
Sophomore	3	3	9	4	4
Junior	5	5	4	8	4
Senior	7	6	10	9	6

APRC Recommendations concerning:
BS in Technical and Professional Communication

- **DEMAND FOR, PLACEMENT OF, AND AVERAGE SALARY OF GRADUATES:**
 - According to the panel, while the job market in west Michigan has been weak in all areas in recent years, the long-term outlook for technical communicators at the state, national, and international levels, is strong and is expected to continue to grow.
 - Technical writers in private industry had average annual salaries ranging between \$30,000 and \$62,700 in 2000. In Michigan, technical writers in the computer and data processing industries earned annual median salaries of \$45,200 (Detroit area) (+36%) and \$42,700 (Grand Rapids) (+25%), in early 2001.
 - TPC Program graduates have always met, or exceeded, salary and placement rates as reported by the Society for Technical Communication for our geographic region.
- **SERVICE TO NON MAJORS**
 - All program requirements have the "ENGL" prefix, thus they are considered Department of Languages and Literature courses, not specifically TPC courses. Therefore service to non-majors is through the Department of Languages and Literature rather than the TPC program
- **QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION:**
 - TPC faculty are all full-time, tenure-track faculty from the Department of Languages and Literature. They are active teachers, scholars, and technical writing professionals.
- **FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT:**
 - With its relocation to the Prakken Building in the fall semester 2003, the status of the TPC Program's facilities and equipment increased dramatically. The program has spacious classroom, seminar, and computer lab facilities with room to grow.
- **LIBRARY INFORMATION RESOURCES:**
 - Not only does the TPC Program have its own growing Program library, it also is supported by a broad collection of library materials and resources in FLITE, as well as by superb FLITE staff who have assisted TPC faculty in assignment and course development.
 - A bibliography of FLITE materials in the areas of technical and professional communication is more than 30 pages long.
 - The faculty in this program continues to work with the FLITE liaison, Paul Kammerdiner, to update this bibliography and FLITE holdings.
- **FACULTY:**
 - The panel believes that it is important to note that no faculty members are assigned to the TPC Program. In addition, all members of the TPC Program committee serve the program voluntarily, as a committee assignment. One member, Dr. Sandra J. Balkema, serves as the Program Coordinator and receives .25 release time/semester (fall and winter only); 5 other faculty members (T. Brownell, D. Haneline, D. Ding, J. Jablonski, and E. Weber) from the Department of Languages and Literature are members of the TPC Program Committee. S. Balkema, T. Brownell, and E. Weber are the primary members and are responsible for teaching the 3 program sequence courses (English 380, 411, and 499).
- **PROFESSIONAL AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES:**
 - TPC Program faculty, as described in the Curriculum Evaluation chapter and the Faculty Evaluation chapter, are active in numerous professional areas. Each of the TPC Program committee faculty members has his/her areas of interest and specialty, enriching the Program with this variety and breadth. The table below summarizes some of these activities and interests.

APRC Recommendations concerning:
BS in Technical and Professional Communication

TPC Program Committee member	Areas of expertise and interest w/in the technical communication field	Related professional memberships
S. Balkema	technical editing, instructional design, web-based training, rhetorical theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society for Technical Communication (STC) • Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) • e-Learning Guild • Council of Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC) • National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) • Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts, & Letters
T. Brownell	technical journalism, automotive writing, web-based teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society of Automotive Historians (SAH) • American Planning Association (APA)
E. Weber	project management, technical training, web-based writing and editing, document design, usability, ethics, business communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society for Technical Communication (STC) • Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) • National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
D. Haneline	medical writing, medical and scientific language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) • National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) • Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW)
D. Ding	global communication, history and rhetoric of scientific and technical writing, engineering writing, multiculturalism in composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society for Technical Communication (STC) • National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
J. Jablonski	International communication, business writing, rhetorical theory, history and structure of English, lexicography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) • Michigan College English Association • Dictionary Society of North America

• **ADMINISTRATIVE EFFECTIVENESS:**

- The committee structure of the TPC Program makes it efficient and “lean.” As a sub-component of the Department of Languages and Literature, the TPC Program is represented on both the department’s curriculum committee and planning committee. Administration of the program follows from the TPC Program Committee and the Program Coordinator to the Head of the Department of Languages and Literature through the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.
- Over the 20 years of the TPC Program’s existence, communication among all levels of program administration has been excellent, owing to the efficiency of the committee structure in the Department of Languages and Literature, the strong relationships between CAS departments and the Dean’s office, and the excellent leadership at both department and Dean’s levels.

COST INFORMATION:

According to the 2001-2002 report from institutional research:

Total cost per SCH

BS Degree in Technical and Professional Communication \$156.40

Total program cost

BS Degree in Technical and Professional Communication \$18,984.74

The panel comments in their report that because the TPC Program faculty and courses are “shared” by the Department of Languages and Literature, program costs are extremely low. The indirect costs of the Program facilities, the —administrative release time, and the 3 courses that comprise the TPC course sequence—comprise the major Program expenses. The Program does not have its own budget but is operated from within the Department of Languages and Literature.

ASSESSMENT OF THE PROGRAM BY THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW COUNCIL:

OBSERVATIONS:

- The Degree Program Cost Document for 2001-2002 published by Institutional Research and Testing lists all programs; 2 year, 4 year, graduate, and professional degrees in the same table.
- The BS in Technical and Professional Communication ranks 185/229 in programs at the University based on **total cost per student credit hour** ranked from high to low.
- The BS in Technical and Professional Communication ranks 88/229 in programs at the University based on **total program cost** ranked from high to low.
- There are 6 faculty assigned part-time to this program (one serves as a quarter time coordinator).
- According to the Administrative Program Review, the capacity of the program is 80 students.
- The enrollment in this program:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
24	38	33	29	18	25

- The number of on campus graduates in the program:

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
5	3	5	5	9	

- The program faculty wish to expand the scope of the program to include a MS degree which would meet a need in West Michigan and also increase visibility for the BS program.
- The graduate survey was sent to 92 graduates. A total of 23 surveys were returned for a 25 % return rate.
- The program panel used the data from 18 internship evaluation in lieu of surveys to employers.
- A survey was administered to 11 students. A total of 11 surveys were returned for a 100 % return rate.
- The Faculty survey was sent to 40 faculty. A total of 6 surveys were returned for a 15 % return rate.
-

STRENGTHS OF THE PROGRAM

- The faculty in this program are dynamic and enthusiastic
- The program is very flexible and can be tailored to meet the needs of individual students
- The availability of a broad range of technical programs at Ferris allows the program to focus on preparing students for specific areas of professional and technical writing
- The size of program allows close interaction between faculty and students

APRC Recommendations concerning:
BS in Technical and Professional Communication

- The recently allocated facilities are conducive to individual instruction
- Hands on projects allow the development of real world skills

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW COUNCIL HAS THE FOLLOWING CONCERNS:

- The enrollment in this program is very low (25 this fall)
- There is low enrollment numbers in the three courses that are specifically designed for this major
- The space allocations in the Prakken Building and released time for a program coordinator for a very low enrollment program constitute a significant cost to the University

THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW COUNCIL RECOMMENDS THAT THE FOLLOWING STEPS BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE THE PROGRAM:

- University Marketing and Advancement, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the Department of English, and the Faculty of the Professional and Technical Communication Program should develop strategies to identify appropriate target audiences and effectively market this program.
- The program should continue to investigate the feasibility of offering a M.S. degree.



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

September 10, 2004

To: Jack Buss, chair
Academic Program Review Council

From: Sandy Balkema, chair
Technical and Professional Communication Program, Program Review Committee

RE: TPC Program Review report

The Program Review Committee of the Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) Program is pleased to submit the 2004 Program Review Report for your consideration.

The report details the self-study process the Technical and Professional Communication Program completed during the 2003-04 academic year. Included are results from various surveys and data collection activities as well as analysis of these data.

We look forward to meeting with the APRC to discuss our report at our meeting on Thursday, September 30, 2004, beginning at 6 p.m. If you have questions or concerns that you would like to discuss prior to that time, please contact me at my office (120A-Prakken; extension 5631) or by email (balkemas@ferris.edu).

*Technical and Professional
Communication Program*



Ferris State University • Big Rapids, Michigan

Program Review Report

September 2004

TPC Program Review Report

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Chapter 1: Program Overview

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Chapter 1: Program Overview

The TPC Program and its History

The Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) Program at Ferris began in 1984. The program was originally titled the Technical Communication Program; the “and Professional” was added at the time of semester transition in 1992. The TPC Program was designed to prepare students to join the growing profession of technical writing that was demanding employees with strong writing and editing skills who had the ability to work with technical experts and “translate” their material for technical and non-technical readers. Rapidly increasing technological innovation, including dramatic changes in computer technology, resulted in increasing use by a typically non-technical general public and gave rise to this field in the late 70s. Early in the 1980s, faculty members of the Department of Languages and Literature began exploring the possibilities of a B.S. degree based on these market needs. Working with professional colleagues associated with the professional organization, the Society for Technical Communication, the Department of Languages and Literature developed the program and launched it in 1984 with the first student, a transfer student with a bachelor’s degree in Biology, who completed the program coursework in 1986. Since then, the TPC Program has graduated nearly 100 students, an average of 4–5 students per year.

At the time the program was developed, the University identified as one of its strongest features that the TPC Program draws on courses and expertise from across the campus and pulls these together into one flexible and extremely marketable degree. Excluding the internship, only 3 courses were specifically created for the TPC Program; these courses are designed to synthesize the information and skills the students gain in the 4 areas and help them further define their professional identity.

Program Structure

The TPC Program structure, discussed in detail in Chapter 3: Curriculum Evaluation, is centered around a core of courses in 4 major areas:

- writing and editing
- verbal communication
- career entry-level skills (desktop publishing and related skills)
- technical or professional specialty

The technical specialty is the aspect of our degree that makes it different from a traditional English Composition degree. This specialty tells the student’s future employers that he/she has a foundation of expertise in that specific field; that he/she understands the concepts and processes associated with that field; and that he/she can communicate with specialists in the field in order to convey this technical information to technical and non-technical audiences.

Program Administration and Faculty

The TPC Program resides in the Department of Languages and Literature. The faculty who teach in the program all do so on a part-time basis, teaching the 3 upper-level program courses. Student internships are usually supervised by the program coordinator; however, medical/science writing students are usually supervised by D. Haneline and supervision of other students has been split between T. Brownell and S. Balkema.

Department faculty are assigned to the upper-level TPC courses based on professional credentials and education, prior employment, and current professional activities and employment in the technical communication field. The TPC Program has no faculty assigned entirely to the program; one faculty member serves as program coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for all program paperwork and a majority of the program advising. The coordinator, who receives ¼ release time, also chairs the TPC Program Committee that consists of the faculty teaching in the program and other faculty from the department who are committed to the success of the program. The position of TPC coordinator was held by T. Brownell until 1996 when S. Balkema assumed the responsibilities. (Additional responsibilities of the program coordinator are included in Appendix A: Program Coordinator's Responsibilities.)

The TPC Program Mission and Goals

The mission of the Technical and Professional Communication Program is to prepare its graduates to be effective writers and editors with the ability to produce effective and appropriate communication using their document and multi-media production and design skills in technical or specialized settings including government, business, education, and industry. The goals of the TPC Program support this mission.

Goals based on TPC skill areas:

- Goal #1: Graduates will be able to write effectively for various audiences
- Goal #2: Graduates will be able to collect and present material for various audiences and situations
- Goal #3: Graduates will be able to edit their (and others') writing using correct standard written English
- Goal #4: Graduates will be able to create effective document layout and design
- Goal #5: Graduates will be able to produce various technical and business formats
- Goal #6: Graduates will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of publication production cycles and procedures
- Goal #7: Graduates will be able to create and use effective technical and business visuals

Goals based on content / technical specialty area:

- Goal #8: Graduates will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of information, terminology, technology, and expectations of their chosen technical specialty

Behavioral goals:

- Goal #9: Graduates will be able to demonstrate effective collaborative skills.
- Goal #10: Graduates will be able to demonstrate effective teamwork strategies.
- Goal #11: Graduates will be able to demonstrate effective leadership skills.
- Goal #12: Graduates will be able to demonstrate project management skills.

Career entry-level skills:

- Goal #13: Graduates will be able to write using standard written English.
- Goal #14: Graduates will be able to edit their (and others') writing using standard written English.
- Goal #15: Graduates will be able to use word processing programs effectively.
- Goal #16: Graduates will be able to use desktop publishing software programs effectively.
- Goal #17: Graduates will be able to demonstrate as many specialized technical communication skills as possible, including HTML / SGML / JAVA, basic technical illustration, multimedia

Program GPA requirements:

- Goal #18: Graduates will meet all GPA requirements of the program.

Student Outcome Assessment and Evaluation

In order to determine if students meet the programs goals, several levels of student outcome evaluation and assessment are in place. The key elements of the TPC Program's assessment instruments (beyond individual classroom assessment, General Education assessment, and related University assessments) include the required internship and its final evaluation and the TPC Program Portfolio requirement. These assessments and their evaluation mechanism are described in detail in Appendix B, Student Outcomes Assessment Plan.

Introduction to the Report and its Organization

This report describes the self-study process completed during the academic year 2004 by the Program Review Committee established to evaluate the Technical and Professional Communication Program. This report details the data collection and evaluation processes used by the TPC Program Review Committee and reports the results of those processes. This first chapter introduces the TPC Program and describes the overall Program Review plan. Chapter 2 presents the program costs and enrollment trends for the past five years. The next 6 chapters include the reports of the various sub-committees, including the data collection materials, raw data, and data interpretation. These chapters include evaluation by program graduates, employers, current students, faculty, and the program advisory board. Also included are an analysis of the labor market, evaluation of program facilities and equipment, and an evaluation of the program curriculum. The concluding chapter concludes the report with the TPC Program Review Committee's conclusions and recommendations.

Appreciation of the results of this self-study is enhanced by understanding a number of facts about the profession of technical communication and the TPC Program.

Rapid Change in the Profession. Technical communication is not only a rapidly growing field; it is also a rapidly changing one. It is driven by technological advance, but at the same time it relies on an increasingly sophisticated understanding of concepts of language, grammar, and linguistics. Because most technical communicators work in the private sector, employment opportunities and job responsibilities change constantly, and are not limited to speakers of English or residents of the United States.

Unique Demands on Aspiring Technical Communicators. The foregoing characteristics, as well as that fact that technical communication is a profession with a multitude of entry points (unlike, say, nursing or accountancy), mean that students in academic technical communication programs need to learn to define themselves occupationally, to socialize in the profession rapidly, and to become self-starters.

The TPC Program and the Department of Languages and Literature. As previously mentioned, no one in the TPC Program teaches TPC courses full-time. The Department of Languages and Literature provides General Education and professional preparation courses for every college at Ferris State University, and in addition to the TPC Program, the Department has 4 baccalaureate programs and 6 academic minors. TPC faculty are involved in all of the programs except those in Spanish and French. It is important to emphasize the personal and professional commitment of TPC faculty to the program: the 3 courses in the professional core are the only ones not otherwise offered to students across campus. The program coordinator receives ¼ release time to administer the program. All remaining commitment—committee work, etc—is voluntary.

TPC Program Personnel Changes. Since the last program review, one faculty member has retired and another has taken a position at another institution. They were replaced by new faculty, one from academia and one from the workplace.

Campus Geography and the TPC Program. For most of its 20 years, even during the years when the Starr Building was remodeled and the ASC Building was under construction, the TPC Program was housed in the same area as all other Languages and Literature programs, and all TPC faculty offices were located in the same area. Since the fall of 2003, the program and half of the faculty on the TPC Program committee have been housed in a suite in the Prakken Building. The benefit is that the program has excellent facilities, but the splitting of the faculty has made program development harder. This is an important issue for a program that is in the process of developing a graduate degree and several post-baccalaureate certificates.

Program Evaluation Plan

The TPC Program self study began in the fall of 2003 with the creation of the Program Review committee. After being contacted by the APRC chair, Jack Buss, the head of the Department of Languages and Literature, Roxanne Cullen, appointed Sandra Balkema to chair the TPC Program Review committee.

Following a meeting of the TPC Program committee, 2 non-committee members were asked to join our Program Review process: Jonathan Taylor (College of Arts and Sciences, Department of Languages and Literature) and Sidney Sytsma (College of Business). The following research and writing assignments were made when both Taylor and Sytsma agreed to join the committee:

Research / Writing Assignment	Committee Member	
Graduate follow-up survey	Sandy Balkema	Jon Taylor
Employer follow-up survey	Tom Brownell	Dan Ding
Student evaluation	Dan Ding	John Jablonski
Faculty perceptions (non-TPC faculty)	Tom Brownell	Sid Sytsma
Faculty perceptions (TPC faculty)	Doug Haneline	John Jablonski
Advisory Committee perceptions	Erin Weber	Sandy Balkema
Labor Market demand analysis	Erin Weber	Jon Taylor
Facilities and equipment evaluation	Sandy Balkema	Doug Haneline
Curriculum evaluation	Sandy Balkema	Roxanne Cullen

The following pages present the program review plan and budget for the TPC Program, as submitted to APRC chair in February 2004.

February 16, 2004

to: Jack Buss, Chair
Academic Program Review Committee
Academic Senate

from: Sandy Balkema, Coordinator
Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) Program
Department of Languages and Literature

cc: Roxanne Cullen, Chair, Department of Languages and Literature
TPC Program Review Panel

re: Academic Program Review, 2004-05

According to the program review schedule established by the Academic Senate, the Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) B.S. Program of the Department of Languages and Literature is responsible for conducting a self-study for review in the fall of 2004.

Therefore, I am attaching, for your review and approval, the TPC Program's evaluation plan, our program review panel, and our tentative budget. If you have questions, or need any additional information, please contact me at x-5631.

Technical & Professional Communication Program Academic Program Review — Evaluation Plan

Degree: B.S. in Technical and Professional Communication

Purpose: To conduct an evaluation of the Technical and Professional Communication Program in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses and, in doing so, to improve the program and its service to Ferris State University.

Program Review Panel:

Committee Chair: Sandy Balkema, program coordinator
 Program Faculty: Roxanne Cullen, chair, Dept. of Lang. and Lit,
 Tom Brownell, professor of English
 Doug Haneline, professor of English
 John Jablonski, professor of English
 Dan Ding, associate professor of English
 Erin Weber, assistant professor of English
 Jon Taylor, assistant professor of English
 Outside Faculty: Sid Sytsma, professor of Business

Data Collection Instruments:

- graduate surveys — sent to all identifiable alumni of the program
- employer surveys — sent to all identifiable employers of alumni and program interns; and other employers of technical writers
- student survey — sent to all current students of the program
- faculty survey, part 1 — sent to all department faculty
- faculty survey, part 2 — sent to outside faculty and advisors with direct contact with the TPC program
- advisory committee survey — sent to all members of the program advisory committee
- labor market analysis — determined from data collected by related professional organizations, companies, and websites
- evaluation of facilities and equipment — conducted by program coordinator
- curriculum evaluation — conducted by TPC program committee

Evaluation Schedule:

Activity	Co-Leaders	Activity	Co-Leaders
Graduate survey	S. Balkema J. Taylor	Curriculum evaluation	R.Cullen S. Balkema
Employer survey	T. Brownell D. Ding	Facility / equipment evaluation	S. Balkema D. Haneline
Student survey	D. Ding J. Jablonski	Labor market analysis	J. Taylor E. Weber
Faculty survey, part 1	J. Jablonski D. Haneline	Advisory Committee Survey	S. Balkema E. Weber
Faculty survey, part 2	T. Brownell S. Sytsma		

Target date for completion of all data collection activities
 Target date for completion of report draft
 Target date for completion of final report copy
 Submission date for final report Sept. 10th

April 1st
 June 1st
 Sept. 1st

Technical & Professional Communication Program
 Academic Program Review — Tentative Budget

Printing and mailing of approximately 20-50% of the data collection surveys*			
	printing	200 @ 10¢	\$ 20.00
	mailing	200 @ 37¢	74.00
	return envelopes	200 @ 37¢	74.00
*Although we plan to email a majority of the surveys, some will most likely require printing and mailing.			
Printing of final report			
	Binders, copying expenses, etc.		250.00
Compiling email addresses, mailing lists, mailing labels, and survey data			
	100 hrs. secretarial /student support	\$ 6.50 / hr.	65.00
Telephone expenses			
	fax and long-distance		50.00
TOTAL ESTIMATED BUDGET			\$ 533.00

Program Review Report Note: copies of all surveys used for this self study are contained in Appendix C.

Chapter 2: Program Administration

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Chapter 2: Program Administration

Introduction

Each year since the TPC Program began in the mid-1980s, we've graduated from 1 to 12 students. Although our graduation numbers have fluctuated from the lowest year, our first with one graduate, to 2002 when we graduated 12, the TPC Program consistently sees 3-4 students graduate each year. Several factors have affected our enrollment over the years, most importantly the recognition of the field in the popular press and among high school students. In addition, several factors have affected our graduates' success in the job market upon graduation, including a weakened economy. Throughout the ups and downs of the past 20 years, the TPC Program has had consistent success, as based on its enrollments and its program productivity figures.

Enrollment

Official enrollment in the TPC Program has remained steady for the past 5-6 years at around 30 students. The University's fall enrollment figures are often slightly inaccurate, as there always seem to be about 6 students who are between majors, completing double majors, or who are uncertain about their major. The Administrative Program Review report that follows on the next pages illustrates these official enrollment figures for the years 1999-2003.

Program Productivity and Costs

The Technical and Professional Communication Program does not currently have its own account funds. When the TPC Program was established in 1984, a program budget was established to cover internship expenses, professional development expenses (for students and faculty), and computer lab (hardware and software) upgrades. Over the years these budgeted funds were incorporated into the larger department budget and no longer designated for program use. Currently, TPC Program costs are charged to the Department of Languages and Literature and separated only for the annual Dean's report.

Annual expenses incurred regularly include the following:

- Mileage for internship site visits (by the internship coordinator)
- Annual (in some years, bi-annual) Advisory Board meetings
- Printing and publication costs for ENGL 411 and 499 class projects

Annual revenues received regularly include the following:

- Academic scholarship funds provided by the CAS dean's office (\$2,000)
- TPC computer lab / library upkeep budget (\$2,000)

Administrative Program Review 2003

Program/Department:

Technical and Professional Communication, Dept of Languages and Literature

Purposes of Administrative Program Review:

- to make deans and department heads/chairs aware of important quantitative and qualitative information about the programs in their colleges
- to make the Vice President for Academic Affairs' Office aware of important quantitative and qualitative programmatic information from across the University
- to document annual information that will be useful in the University's accreditation efforts
- to provide information for the Academic Program Review Council to use in its deliberations

Please provide the following information:

Enrollment:

	Fall 1999	Fall 2000	Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003
Tenure Track FTE	.25	.25	.25	.25	.25
Overload/Supplemental FTEF					
Adjunct/Clinical FTEF (unpaid)					
Enrollment on-campus total*	24	38	33	29	18
Freshman	9	24	10	8	4
Sophomore	3	3	9	4	4
Junior	5	5	4	8	4
Senior	7	6	10	9	6
Masters					
Doctoral					
Pre-Professional Students					
Enrollment off-campus*					
Traverse City					
Grand Rapids					
Southwest					
Southeast					

*Use official count (7-day)

If there has been a change in enrollment, explain why:

We had a large graduating class in spring/summer 03 which cut our student numbers. This kind of decrease has occurred before (right before semester transition, for example) and is already turning around with the typical increases we see every registration period (as students change majors/career plans).

Capacity:

Estimate program capacity considering current number of faculty, laboratory capacity, current equipment, and current levels of S&E.

60-80 students

What factors limit program capacity?

Only limiting factors now (we have new, expanded program "space") are class limits in upper-level Tech Communication courses (engl 380, 411, 499) of approx 20 students.

Financial :

Expenditures*	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03
Supply & Expense	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Faculty Prof. Development					
General Fund					
Non-General Fund					
UCEL Incentives					
FSU-GR Incentives					
Equipment					
Voc. Ed. Funds					
General Fund					
Non-General Fund					
UCEL Incentives					
FSU-GR Incentives					

*Use end of fiscal year expenditures.

If you spent UCEL and FSU-GR incentive money for initiatives/items other than faculty professional development and equipment, what were they? Explain briefly. Please also include amounts spent on each initiative/item.

Revenues	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03
Net Clinic Revenue					
Scholarship Donations					
Gifts, Grants, & Cash Donations					
Endowment Earnings					
Institute Programs/Services					
In-Kind					

Other:

	AY 98-99	AY 99-00	AY 00-01	AY 01-02	AY 02-03
Number of Graduates* - Total	5	3	5	5	9
- On campus					
- Off campus					
Placement of Graduates					
Average Starting Salary					
Productivity - Academic Year Average					
- Summer					
Summer Enrollment					

* Use total for full year (S, F, W)

1. a) Areas of Strength:

wide range of focus within program and a range of job opportunities for graduates. Coherent curriculum tied to student outcomes performance; new faculty with industry experience
- b) Areas of Concern and Proposed Actions to Address Them:

contact with students prior to Junior year: developed one credit course which is a seminar required of all TPC students. They must take this course three times during their time in the program. This has improved contact between program faculty and students in contact among students. The course has also provided a very nice opportunity for lower division students to learn from the upper division students.
2. Future goals (please give time frame):

MS online with on site component is nearly through curricular process

3. Other Recommendations:

4. Does the program have an advisory committee? YES

If yes, when did it last meet? Spring 2003

If no, why not? By what other means do faculty receive advice from employers and outside professionals?

When were new members last appointed? Fall 2003

What is the composition of the committee (how many alumni, workplace representatives, academic representatives)? 5 members are not alumni

Please attach the advisory committee charge, if there is one.

5. Does the program have an internship or other cooperative or experiential learning course? YES

If yes, is the internship required or recommended? Required

If no, what is the reason for not requiring such an experience?

How many internships take place per year? Depends upon number of seniors

What percentage of majors has internships? 100%

6. Does the program offer courses through the web? YES

a) Please list the web-based courses (those delivered primarily through the internet) the program offered last year? ENGL 311; JRNL 230; ENGL 321

b) Please list the web-assisted courses the program offered last year.

7. What is unique about this program?

For what distinctive characteristics is it known, or should it be known, in the state or nation? There are very few undergraduate degrees in TPC; most are single courses or minors w/in English degrees

What are some strategies that could lead to (greater) recognition? MS and certificate program in FSU-GR

8. Is the program accredited? By whom? If not, why? When is the next review? NO (no accrediting body)

9. What have been some major achievements by students and/or graduates of the program? By faculty in the program?

Internships at key companies / organizations (such as The Letterman Show, JR Automation, etc.)

10. Questions about Program Outcomes Assessment/Assessment of Student Learning at the Program Level (Attach additional sheets, if necessary.)

What are the program's learning outcomes? SEE ATTACHED

[Program Review Report note: this reference is to the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan contained in Appendix B]

What assessment measures are used, both direct and indirect? SEE ATTACHED

[Program Review Report note: this reference is to the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan contained in Appendix B]

What are the standards for assessment results? SEE ATTACHED

[Program Review Report note: this reference is to the Student Outcomes Assessment Plan contained in Appendix B]

What were the assessment results for 2002-03? Students who were ready for graduation submitted portfolios, which were subsequently reviewed by program faculty. All students who submitted portfolios had met program goals

How will / how have the results been used for pedagogical or curricular change? Program has used portfolio and internship results to drive English 280, 380, 411, and 499 course focus. Also, the Program Review process includes regular comparison w/ other Tech Comm curricula (at course, program, and major/minor levels).

11. Questions about Course Outcomes Assessment:

Do all multi-sectioned courses have common outcomes? YES

If not, how do you plan to address discrepancies?

Do you keep all course syllabi on file in a central location? YES

*If you have questions about the outcomes assessment portions of this survey, please contact Laurie Chesley (x2713).

Form Completed by Sandra J Balkema, TPC program coordinator, 3/4/04
Name and Title / Date

Reviewed by Dean _____
Name / Date

Comments by Dean:

Chapter 3: Curriculum Evaluation

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Chapter 3: Curriculum Evaluation

Introduction

At the time the Technical and Professional Communication Program was being designed in the early 1980s, the field of technical communication was primarily identified with the pure “technical” content of engineering, manufacturing, and automotive industries. Within a few short years, the term came to encompass medical and scientific writing as well as the fast-growing computer industry. Its breadth has only expanded in the years following. The professional organization associated with technical writers, the Society for Technical Communication, recognized early in its existence the difficulties of representing communication professionals in such widely varying environments, with widely varying credentials and skill sets.

From those early years until the present time, the technical communication profession has wrestled with the issues of accreditation, licensure, and certification. Leaving these issues to its smaller subsets of professionals has been the STC’s path since this time. For academic programs in the area of technical, scientific, and professional communication, determining how to prepare students to enter this career with enough breadth and depth remains a continual challenge. In addition, the tools that technical writers use—the software tools, especially—change, it seems, with the seasons. Adding these tools to their academic preparation is yet another facet of the challenge the TPC Program faces as it continually assesses its curriculum.

This chapter describes the TPC Program curriculum and its methods for meeting the needs of the technical communication profession.

Description of the TPC Program Curriculum

Program requirements and structure

The Technical and Professional Communication degree is a bachelor of science degree with a graduation requirement of a minimum of 121 credit hours. In addition to the General Education (GE) requirements, the TPC Program has course requirements in 4 areas: program-required courses, directed electives, the TPC course sequence, and the content / technical specialty courses. The program check sheet (see Appendix D: TPC Program Check Sheet) details these requirements.

The back of the check sheet details the GE requirements, offering the students an open selection of courses based on the University’s requirements. Note that the students satisfy the GE Communication requirements with COMM 121 and ENGL 321.

The front of the check sheet has 2 main sections: the top section lists the Program requirements, including 12 hours of directed electives and the TPC course sequence (both discussed below). The bottom section (essentially blank) is available for the student’s chosen technical specialty (also discussed in more detail below).

Program required courses. To fulfill the Program requirements, TPC students complete courses that develop the skills requisite of the technical communication field and assumed as part all entry-level positions. Writing and editing skills are, of course, the foundation of the program requirements. In addition to the 3 writing courses required as part of the GE sequence (ENGL 150, 250, and 321), TPC students complete ENGL 311, advanced technical writing, and ENGL 323, proposal writing.

The remaining defined courses in the Program requirement group round out the skills expected of technical communicators in all areas of the profession, including verbal communication skills and computer expertise. These skills are developed through advanced verbal communication and presentation courses (COMM 301, 332, and 336), and an introductory desktop publishing course (PTEC 153). ENGL 280 (a 1-credit Special Topics course that students must complete 3 times) was added to the curriculum following the last TPC program review, based on needs addressed at that time (see the “Curricular changes” section below for additional discussion of this requirement).

Directed electives. The 12 credits listed as directed electives are determined during advising to augment the student’s content specialty (discussed below) and give the student the best advantage in obtaining the job position of his/her choice. Students can choose additional desktop publishing courses, courses in multimedia production, script writing, journalism, business management, computer programming, and speech communication.

TPC course sequence. The 3 additional program courses (ENGL 380, 411, and 499) develop the students’ writing, editing, and technical communication skills even further. These courses, with the internship (ENGL 491), comprise the “TPC course sequence.” These courses are designed to “put the pieces together”; thus, students typically elect these courses in their senior year. The chart below describes the focus of each of these courses. Catalog descriptions and syllabi for these courses are contained in Appendix E.

Course number and name	Brief course description
ENGL 380 History of Rhetoric and Style	Provides students with an historical perspective of language change and rhetorical theory, focusing on how these have impacted the field of technical writing
ENGL 411 Professional Technical Communication	Emphasizes technical editing and project management, providing students with practical technical editing and project management skills, as well as the theoretical foundations of each
ENGL 499 Technical Communication Seminar	As the program capstone course, this course develops the students’ awareness of their professional options and issues in the field
ENGL 491 Technical Communication Internship	Students typically complete the internship during the summer semester, working in a full-time position to gain professional work experience. They must complete a minimum of 200 hours (although 400 is recommended).

Because these TPC sequence courses have been primarily intended for the TPC students, over the years they have been low-enrollment courses. While the small class size (under 10 students) works well to support the close faculty/student relationship and team project approach that is predominately used in 2 of the courses (ENGL 411 and 499), over the years it has occasionally been a concern in the Department of Languages and Literature and in the College of Arts and Sciences Dean's office. Although these courses are also required of students enrolled in the Professional Writing minor and electives for those enrolled in the English/Education Program and the English B.A. degree, enrollment has occasionally been an issue for all 3 courses.

Content specialty. The final coursework area, the content specialty, consists of a minimum of 21 credits in a student's chosen technical area. The technical specialty is the primary aspect of our degree that makes it different from a traditional English Composition degree. This specialty tells the student's future employers that he/she has a foundation of expertise in that specific field; that he/she understands the concepts and processes associated with that field; and that he/she can communicate with specialists in the field in order to convey this technical information to technical and non-technical audiences.

While each student receives individual advising to help him/her identify a technical field of interest, over the years several areas have been identified because of substantial market need: scientific/medical writing, technical journalism, automotive writing, multi-media writing, and publication management. Ferris' strong program offerings, including those in allied health and technology, provide TPC students with many valuable options for their technical specialties. Faculty from these Colleges have worked with us to develop 6–8 course groupings which serve as our TPC students' specialties. While most students' content specialties are designed individually during advising, we publicize 6 of these viable specialties as program "tracks." Students who complete one of these 6 official tracks have this specialty indicated on their diploma and official transcripts (a list of the tracks and the course groupings is contained in Appendix D: TPC Program Check Sheet).

TPC program goals

The chart on the following page illustrates the TPC curriculum design and the typical timing and sequencing of the courses. This chart also includes the TPC Program goals and links these goals to the specific courses. These 18 goals are separated into 5 areas. The first 7 goals are based on the TPC Program's "foundation skills" including writing, editing, and document design. The second area is tied to the student's individual content/technical specialty area, which is often the key to the student's first position as it indicates his/her ability to work with technical content and material. The third section of the TPC Program goals is based on 4 behavioral skills that we attempt to instill in our students. Most of these skills ensure our students' long-term success in their careers. The fourth group of program goals defines the entry-level skills required by all technical communicators. Many of these skills are linked to the technical tools of the trade: the computer layout and design programs, writing and editing software, and multimedia authoring systems. The final program goal reinforces the TPC Program's entry and graduation GPA requirements.

**Technical and Professional Communication Program
Curriculum Design — Goals — Assessment**

TPC Program Goals	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year	Outcomes		
Goals based on TPC skill areas (Graduates will be able to...)	ENGL 150 (1,2,3)	ENGL 250 (1,2,3)	ENGL 321 (1-5, 7, 9,10)	ENGL 380 (1,2,3)	(measured during senior year)		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> write effectively for various audiences collect and present material for various audiences and situations (including research strategies, oral presentations, interviewing, and using effective interpersonal communication skills) edit their (and others') writing using correct standard written English create effective document layout and design produce various technical and business formats demonstrate their knowledge of publication production cycles and procedures create and use effective technical and business visuals 	COMM 121 (2)		COMM 336 (2)	ENGL 411 (1,2,4,6,7)		Professional Portfolio demonstrating skills in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> writing editing layout/design publication production project coordination and supervision writing in specialty area 	
Goals based on content / technical specialty area:	ENGL 280 (1-5, 7, 9-12)	ENGL 280 (1-5, 7, 9-12)	ENGL 311 (1-5, 7, 9,10)	ENGL 499 (1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8)	Training Internship: gaining experience in and enhancing knowledge of TPC skills and professional practices.		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate their knowledge of information, terminology, technology, and expectations of their chosen technical specialty 	General Education Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication competence (see above: ENGL 150, 250, 321; COMM 121) cultural enrichment (9 cr.) scientific understanding (7-8 cr.) social awareness (9 cr.) quantitative skills (0-4 cr.) global consciousness; race, ethnicity, and gender (no add'l credits req.) 		PTEC 153 (4,6,15)	ENGL 323 (1-5, 9,10)	Capstone course (ENGL499): includes development and presentation of professional portfolio		
Behavioral goals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrate effective collaborative skills. demonstrate effective teamwork strategies. demonstrate effective leadership skills. demonstrate project management skills. 			COMM 301 (2)	COMM 301 (2)	COMM 332 (2)	(see TPC Portfolio Evaluation forms and TPC Internship Evaluation form for complete assessment criteria)	
Career Entry-Level Skills: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> write using standard written English. edit their (and others') writing using standard written English. use word processing programs effectively. use desk-top publishing software programs effectively. demonstrate as many specialized technical communication skills as possible, including HTML / SGML / JAVA, basic technical illustration, multimedia 					ENGL 280 (1-5, 7, 9-12)	ENGL 491 (Summer) (all)	Note: the parenthetical numbers following course names/numbers in the chart below = link to program goal listed in the left column.
Program GPA requirements: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Students will meet all GPA requirements of the program. 							
			Directed Electives (min.12cr.)				drafted Sept. 1993/sb revised 2004/sjb

Measuring program goals

In order to measure our students' success in meeting these Program goals, the TPC Program has an effective program evaluation and assessment process in place. These evaluation mechanisms include (1) a professional portfolio, developed in ENGL 499 and submitted prior to graduation and (2) a required internship, with a formal reporting and evaluation process. The complete Student Outcomes Assessment Plan is described in Appendix B.

Program Administration and Faculty Credentials

The TPC Program resides in the Department of Languages and Literature and is directed by a Program Coordinator and a Program Committee. All of the faculty who comprise the TPC Program Committee do so voluntarily, as a committee assignment. All of these faculty have teaching responsibilities within the Department of Languages and Literature, most teaching writing courses at all levels from 100- through 300-level, some also teaching literature, and/or English Education courses. Some of the faculty members on the TPC Program Committee were hired specifically for their technical communication education and experience, with the express purpose of contributing to the TPC Program; the remaining committee members joined the committee because of their interest in the profession of technical communication. All of the members of the committee have areas of expertise that enrich the program and provide opportunities for program growth and development, as well as opportunities for focused, independent study and advising for TPC students (see the table below).

The faculty who teach in the program do so on a part-time basis, teaching the 3 TPC Program sequence courses based on their expertise. The student internships are usually supervised by the program coordinator; however, medical/science writing students are usually supervised by D. Haneline and supervision of other students has been split between T. Brownell and S. Balkema. Thus, the TPC Program has no faculty assigned entirely to the program; one faculty member, S. Balkema, serves as program coordinator. The coordinator is responsible for all program paperwork and program advising. The coordinator, who receives ¼ released time, also chairs the TPC Program Committee. Appendix F contains summary (abbreviated) curriculum vitae for the faculty members who are currently a part of the TPC Program Committee.

TPC Program Committee member	Areas of expertise and interest w/in the technical communication field	Related professional memberships
S. Balkema	technical editing, instructional design, web-based training, rhetorical theory	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Society for Technical Communication (STC)• Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW)• e-Learning Guild• Council of Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC)• National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)• Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts, & Letters

TPC Program Committee member	Areas of expertise and interest w/in the technical communication field	Related professional memberships
T. Brownell	technical journalism, automotive writing, web-based teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society of Automotive Historians (SAH) • American Planning Association (APA)
E. Weber	project management, technical training, web-based writing and editing, document design, usability, ethics, business communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society for Technical Communication (STC) • Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) • National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
D. Haneline	medical writing, medical and scientific language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Medical Writers Association (AMWA) • National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) • Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW)
D. Ding	global communication, history and rhetoric of scientific and technical writing, engineering writing, multiculturalism in composition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Society for Technical Communication (STC) • National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
J. Jablonski	International communication, business writing, rhetorical theory, history and structure of English, lexicography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) • Michigan College English Association • Dictionary Society of North America

Curricular Changes Since the Previous Program Review

Using the evaluation and discussion prompted by the last program review cycle, the TPC Program Committee enacted 2 changes to the curriculum, changing the prefix of the 4 TPC course sequence (from TCOM to ENGL) and instituting the 1-credit Special Topics course, ENGL 280.

The TPC Program Committee, in consultation with our department head and college dean, decided to drop the TCOM course prefix in order to make these courses more visible to students interested in developing advanced writing and editing skills. Also, because 2 of these courses (ENGL 380 and ENGL 411) are either requirements or electives within other programs or minors, we thought the change would minimize confusion. At the time we changed the course prefix from TCOM to ENGL, we also changed one course number to fit into the English course offerings more logically (TCOM 324 became ENGL 380).

The Special Topics 1-credit course, ENGL 280, was developed for several reasons:

1. While the TPC Program prides itself on its collegiality and team emphasis, most of the time the students didn't develop this valuable esprit de corps until their senior year, when taking the TPC sequence courses. Another of the TPC Program strengths—our reliance on courses and expertise across the University—meant that our students often didn't meet each other until these courses as well.
2. Networking and professional contacts are increasingly important in the field of technical communication. The earlier the students can learn about, and take full advantage of, our program connections to professionals and professional organizations, the earlier they can make important internship and job contacts.
3. The increasing breadth and scope of the technical communication field means that frequently we identify additional skills, content, or career opportunities that we simply can not cover in our program courses, but that we want the TPC students to be aware of.
4. All of the TPC Program Committee faculty have skills, expertise, and interests in the field of technical communication that was untapped by the program curricular structure. While we realized that we could not, because of the limitations of a B.S. degree program, regularly offer full courses in many of these areas, we were looking for a way to offer these in some fashion.

A solution to all of these presented itself in the form of a 1-credit Special Topics course that students would be required to take 3 times prior to graduation (for a total of 3 credits). Each semester, the teaching responsibilities would be rotated among the TPC Program Committee faculty members, who would chose the topic for the course based on personal interests and expertise. These topics could be skill based, such as technical journalism, HTML, or website construction, or content based, such as global communication issues or literature about technology. The faculty members who teach the course all agreed to design the course so that it includes these 2 features:

- The class will spend a minimum of 2 class sessions discussing professional contacts, such as the STC (preferably requiring attendance at a chapter meeting).
- The class will be project based, resulting in a clearly identifiable product for the student's individual professional portfolio.

The list below identifies some of the topics covered since the course was introduced.

- HTML and website construction
- Careers in Technical Communication
- Usability testing in Technical Communication
- Technical journalism
- Global communication issues
- Literature of technology
- Humanistic issues in scientific and technical writing
- Document design using MS Word

Evaluation of TPC Program Curriculum

In order to determine if the TPC Program curriculum (1) provides students with appropriate and marketable skills and (2) is structured logically and realistically, we evaluated the curriculum in 2 ways. First, we compared the program goals to the job skills identified in typical position postings for technical writers. Second, we compared the TPC Program requirements to those of similar technical communication B.S. degree programs. These 2 comparisons provide an indication of whether or not the TPC curriculum provides students with appropriate and marketable skills and if the program is structured logically and has realistic requirements.

Relationship of program goals to job skills

The review of position postings for technical writers (as reported in Chapter 8: Labor Market Analysis) along with the survey of graduates (as reported in Chapter 3: Program Graduate Evaluation), illustrate the strong link between program goals and job skills necessary for employment in the field of technical communication.

The TPC Program emphasizes 4 skill areas: (1) technical writing, including presentation of materials for a variety of audiences using a variety of document designs, editing, proofreading, and creation of visuals; (2) content specialty knowledge, including knowledge of terminology, technology, and expectations of the content area; (3) computer skills, including desktop publishing, and a familiarity with a variety of publication hardware and software, and (4) behavioral skills, including collaboration, teamwork, leadership, and project management. Job postings in technical communication typically list (or assume) writing skills as a key requirement, occasionally including related skills such as proofreading or translation of materials for non-technical audiences. Behavioral qualities in these postings include such phrases as “self-starter,” “detail person,” “highly organized,” “strong interpretative skills,” and “good communicator.” Knowledge of technical/content information is not always required; however, “technical aptitude” is sometimes listed as is “ability to interpret technical information.” Skills in a variety of software applications or programming ability are also often listed.

Comparison of curricula

To evaluate technical communication curricula, we compared the TPC Program curriculum with 18 other technical communication programs, including 3 programs in the state of Michigan. These program descriptions were located on each campus’ Internet websites and are summarized in the table below. To compare these curricula, we categorized the programs’ upper-level (non-GE) courses into 4 areas:

1. advanced writing, communication, and technical communication;
2. media and desktop publishing;
3. technical specialty or content area; and
4. internship or practicum.

These 4 categories loosely compare to the 4 skill areas that comprise the curricular focus of Ferris’ program (with the behavioral skills tied to the practical experience gained in the internship). For this comparison, we excluded the core curriculum, or GE requirements for each school.

Analysis and Discussion

While the number of general education or “core” courses varied considerably from program to program, the mix of courses required for the technical communication curriculum itself was extremely close across programs. In fact, the emphasis on written and verbal communication skills, “media skills” (document design, desktop publishing, photography), alongside the expected writing, editing, and rhetorical skills were very similar across the programs. Several, but not all, of the programs required a technical specialty of some kind, whether specifically defined tracks or specialties (such as Ferris uses) to the general “concentration,” or “electives—or optional minor” terminology used in other programs.

A couple of aspects of this comparison seem especially interesting. First, while our program graduates, advisory group, and employers have all stressed the importance of the required internship, it’s interesting to note that several of the programs do not specifically identify an internship requirement in their descriptions.

The second feature of interest in these comparisons is the number of courses offered from within the different programs. Ferris’ program appears to be unique in that a majority of the supporting coursework—in the “media” skills especially—are offered by “outside” departments and colleges rather than by the program itself.

Conclusion

Strengths

- The TPC Program uses the expertise of faculty and programs from across campus in its technical specialty/content area requirement, preparing students to work directly within these different technical fields.
- The design of the TPC Program allows students to find their niche, to enhance personal interests into a career path, as defined by the 6 advertised “tracks” or content specialties.
- Small class size in the 3 TPC sequence courses supports strong faculty/student relationships and the teamwork necessary for completing collaborative assignments.
- The institution of the ENGL 280 course has increased program identity, program faculty contact with students enrolled in the program, and the program’s esprit de corps.
- Advertising 6 of the content area / technical specialty areas as program “tracks” allows the program to put more emphasis on the marketability of the TPC degree.
- Incoming student awareness of (and interest in) the technical communication field has increased in the recent past, influenced by popular images of technical writers on television, in movies, and in the popular press (such as Tina the Technical Writer in the *Dilbert* cartoon; Andy Richter’s job as a technical writer in *The Andy Richter Show*).
- TPC Program goals are closely linked both to specific program requirements (specific courses) and to marketable skills.
- The comparison of current job postings and the program goals/requirements shows significant overlap.
- The comparison of technical communication bachelor of science degrees shows that Ferris’ TPC Program has similar emphases on writing, verbal communication, and media skills (such as desktop publishing), as well as a dominant technical specialty requirement.
- The upper-level TPC course sequence, with both theoretical and practical aspects, is well supported by library resources (see Appendix G: Technical and Professional Communication Bibliography for an extensive listing of reference materials available in FLITE, prepared by P. Kammerdiner, Librarian / Assistant Professor).

Concerns

- The small enrollment in the advanced TPC sequence courses (ENGL 380, 411, and 499) occasionally makes it difficult to offer these annually.
- Because only a few faculty are tied to the program because of course assignments, commitment to the program, its curriculum, and its students is frequently lost / confused / complicated by other departmental responsibilities.
- Ferris does not attract a large number of students with both technical interest/expertise and language arts facility, therefore making it difficult to maintain a large student enrollment.

Chapter 4: Facilities Evaluation

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Chapter 4: Facilities Evaluation

Introduction

Since the last program review, the TPC Program has moved its primary location from The Starr and Science Buildings to the Prakken Building. This chapter describes and evaluates the facilities and equipment used by the Program faculty and students.

Facilities and Equipment Description

In the fall of 2003, the TPC Program moved to a newly vacated space in the Prakken Building. This space includes the following:

- **Office suite (PRK 120):** This area has 4 full-time faculty offices (3 occupied by TPC faculty) and 4 adjunct offices (no TPC faculty). In addition, there is a faculty work area, with a copy machine, recycle bin, paper and printing supplies, and other necessities. The program has 3 iMac computers located in the office suite as well. Finally, there is a file cabinet with all of the program's files.
- **Seminar room (PRK 122):** This room has seating for 20–24 participants. It is arranged in a seminar (U-shaped) setup, with an overhead projector and screen and “map” rails for hanging samples, posters, student work, and other items. It is planned that the seminar will eventually become a “smart” room.
- **Library/ lounge (PRK 122-A):** this room contains a refrigerator for faculty use, a microwave oven, a coffee maker, a couch, and a small table and chair set; and 4 bookcases.
- **Program library:** Currently housed in 6 bookcases, it includes journals (e.g., *College English*, *College Composition and Communication*, *Intercom*, *Technical Communication Quarterly*, *Publish*, *Syllabus*, and the *AMWA Journal*) and standard and professional reference books, e.g., dictionaries, thesauri, technical communication textbooks, handbooks, and style guides. Recent additions include the Allyn & Bacon Technical Communication series and additional reference works. During the summer of 2004, the program library was moved into the lounge and expanded with materials from this year's program budget.
- **Computer lab (PRK 117):** This room seats 24. The computers (all linked to main campus network) include 2 “super computers” with special software. All computers have ZIP, floppy, and CD drives, and USB ports. The lab houses a resource library that includes software manuals and samples of the work of program graduates and technical communication professionals.
- **Software resource library (PRK-117, in overhead compartments):** These materials include software manuals, samples of work done by program graduates and technical communication professionals. Also available are computer disks of some of the program-owned software.

All of this TPC Program space is shared with other faculty and classes offered by the Department of Languages and Literature department and with units across campus, for classes, meetings, and training sessions. Over 80% of the use of the computer lab is by non-TPC entities—e.g., other Department of Languages and Literature classes and campus activities, such as HRD training. Similarly, the seminar room is used approximately 50% of the time by non-TPC users.

TPC Computer Lab Evaluation

The computer lab (PRK 122) serves as a main gathering point for all students enrolled in the TPC Program. Many students complete homework assignments and discuss and complete group projects using lab equipment. At any time during the day and evening, the lab can be occupied and/or completely filled to capacity.

The computer lab's current hardware inventory is discussed above. All PCs have network software, including MSWord suite, Internet connections, and other features. The 2 "super computers" have, in addition to these offerings, various publication and page layout programs, including the most up-to-date versions of the following: Pagemaker, Quark, Framemaker, Illustrator, Photoshop, and InDesign. These two machines also have scanning software. The TPC Program continues to upgrade software based on industry standards and needs. For example, Pagemaker is supposedly being phased out, with InDesign taking its place. The TPC Program computer lab will follow this progression and revise availability based on the changes. The program does have an annual lab budget for software and hardware needs. This year, since the TPC Program had new facilities, equipment, and software, we did not need to buy new software and instead bought much-needed reference books.

One budgetary issue that may affect the computer lab has to do with the responsibility for replacing printer cartridges. In the past, when only TPC Program students used the former TPC Program computer lab (Science 122), the cost of supplies (paper and printer cartridges) was the program's responsibility. Now that many non-TPC Program groups use the lab facilities, other budgets (via TAC) appear to be helping with this expense. Because the lab is new and all the procedural "kinks" are still being worked out, we're hoping that this practice will be continued without issue.

TPC Facilities Evaluation

Over its history, the TPC Program has had several "homes" as a result of remodeling, restructuring, and other events. As previous chapters have indicated, one of the concerns among the program faculty, advisory board, and current students is that the program have its own "space." This is essential with a program that emphasizes group projects and collaborative efforts, and the TPC Program bases much of its success on the availability of such facilities.

The TPC Program's current program space meets the needs discussed above. Students use the lab nights and weekends quite extensively. Keypad access allows each of our TPC students to have individual and secure access. On weekends, when the Prakken Building is locked, the TPC faculty arrange for the students to have access either by their presence or the lending of their keys.

Conclusion

As indicated above, the TPC Program's facilities and equipment fully meet the needs of the program.

This evaluation of program facilities and equipment—using the input from our program graduates and Advisory Committee—has allowed the program to determine which computer configurations are used in the technical communication profession and whether our program can be successful in meeting the needs of the profession with our training. This evaluation has been an extremely dynamic process as many of our concerns and requests are included in budget requests every fiscal year. Thus, most of the concerns we hold over the years are addressed when they arise.

Strengths

- Support by both the Department of Languages and Literature and the Arts and Sciences Dean's Office has allowed the TPC Program to re-establish an up-to-date computer lab, usable instructional area, and essential program "space."
- Based on the findings of the survey of the program advisory board, the software and hardware available to students match the needs of professionals in the technical communication field.

Concerns

Procedural issues relating to repair, maintenance, and upkeep are still being worked out at the end of this first academic year in the new facilities. The physical distance between the TPC Program area and the main Department of Languages and Literature office means that more responsibility for these aspects fall on the faculty residing in the Prakken Building suite. Although most of these procedural (and responsibility) issues have been resolved easily, these listed below may be of ongoing concern to the TPC Program and, thus, important to identify.

- Since moving into the larger computer lab and sharing this space with other non-TPC groups, the program has had to add "TPC-reserved" hours to the computer lab schedule so other entities couldn't use up too much of the available time.
- Non-TPC Program users of the lab (both faculty and others) look to the TPC Program faculty to fix low-level problems in the lab that are the domain of TAC. Better user education of users of the lab about expected "rules of use" are needed.
- Keeping abreast of the fast-paced nature of technology—with new versions of software (and hardware) being introduced at least once a year (if not more frequently)—is challenging from a budgetary perspective and a training perspective.

Chapter 5: Graduate and Student Evaluation

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Chapter 5: Graduate and Student Evaluation

Introduction

The TPC Program has always been a small program proud of its close relationships among the students and between students and faculty. The individualized nature of the degree means that the students must be in close contact with their faculty advisor to discuss classes, internships, and job prospects. The collaborative nature of the TPC sequence courses and the many team projects required in these classes means that the students spend a considerable amount of time with each other as they work to meet responsibilities and deadlines. The TPC students also learn the value of professional networking, through membership in professional organizations such as the Society for Technical Communication (STC).

This chapter summarizes the program evaluation provided by the graduates of the TPC Program and by its current students.

Introduction: Graduate Evaluation

Because of the close relationships formed by those within the TPC Program, we hear from our graduates regularly; in fact, we **expect** to hear from them. Many of our graduates are in regular contact with the TPC faculty long after they leave Ferris. Many of those who live in the west Michigan area are members of the same STC chapter, and we often see each other at the monthly chapter meetings. A number of those who live across the country, and now even across the world, are in regular email and telephone contact with our faculty. Half of the members of our Program Advisory Board are graduates of the TPC Program, and even more significant, since our last Program Review, one of our program graduates joined our faculty and now teaches in the program from which she was graduated.

Our program graduates have always been an important source of information for us, advising us about changing job skills and market needs, offering internship and job opportunities for current students, and being a ready contact for career advice for current and graduating students.

For our first program review evaluation in 1998, our Program Review Committee developed a rather lengthy questionnaire for our graduates, from which we elicited valuable data for our future program planning and development. Because we had no systematic data prior to this first self-study, we were eager to collect as much data as possible. We used much of this information to improve the program. We also used this information to motivate and assist us as we began planning and developing an online Master of Science and Certificate program (currently being developed).

For this program review cycle, we reduced the survey to a less-involved structure and length. We also included more open-ended questions in order to elicit our graduates' personal stories, comments, and suggestions.

Methods

We initially mailed and emailed 92 surveys, to all of the TPC Program graduates from the degree's beginning in 1985. We began by emailing the surveys to all graduates for whom we had an email address and mailing hard copies to the remaining graduates using addresses from our files and from the office of Institutional Data. If the emailed message was returned, we followed up with a mailed copy. The mailed survey (with letter) also included S. Balkema's email address, prompting the recipient to write if they preferred an email survey to complete.

Of these 92 mailings, we received 23 responses for a response rate of 25%. Several graduates who did not return their surveys either called or sent e-mail messages to say hello and catch up on news. (A copy of the survey and accompanying message are contained in Appendix C: Program Review Surveys.)

The survey questions were organized in 5 sections:

- personal contact information and program demographics (including graduation year and content specialty)
- current job position description (for those in technical communication field)
- relationship of technical communication skills to current job (for those not employed in technical communication field)
- evaluation and discussion of TPC Program course requirements and value to current job
- comments and recommendations

Results and Discussion

Job position description

We initially planned to analyze the survey data based on the graduate's job position, as being within or outside of the technical communication field. However, we encountered a similar problem with this separation as we encountered when writing our last Program Review report: the breadth of the technical communication field makes it extremely difficult to define some job positions as being "in the field." Many job positions depend on the skills the TPC Program develops, without being identified as "technical writing/editing" positions. Many of the respondents' comments, in fact, reflect this difficulty. The table on the following page lists the job position titles reflected in the survey responses.

Technical communication (and related) titles	Non-technical communication titles
information architect senior information developer writing consultant instructional systems designer web developer marketing writer senior writer / editor senior methods analyst customer service representative / marketing assistant project manager, training training developer / writer assistant professor of English freelance writer / editor marketing specialist	auditor fleet manager graduate student–film production graduate student–athletic communications / management tenant services / office manager telecommunications technician graphics / layout designer stay-at-home mom (2 responses) substitute teacher

An interesting aspect to these results is that many of the respondents whose job titles are listed in the left column (technical communication and related positions) did not see themselves as working as a “technical communicator.” One respondent commented about this identification issue: “yes, technical communications and instructional design are closely related, though many in the field poo-poo tech comm.”

During our 1992 program review, we encountered a similar job title-professional identity issue. At the time, we assumed that the relatively young ‘age’ of the profession was the reason for the wide range of job descriptions. The similar results in 2004 indicates a residual difficulty in defining our profession by those within and outside of our field. Some of our respondents’ comments suggested potential reasons for this difficulty:

- the term “technical” leads many to assume a connection to mechanical, engineering, or industrial businesses
- the underlying writing, editing, and communication skills are seen as a secondary, rather than primary, focus of the degree, with the primary focus being the chosen specialty area. That is, they define themselves by their niche field, rather than by the communication nature of their position.
- the breadth of the technical communication field is increasing, moving more strongly into marketing and training (as indicated by the Instructional Design / Developer positions).

This professional identity problem is shared and discussed by many in the field. In fact, the field’s primary professional organization, the Society for Technical Communication (STC) is currently wrestling with the issue of professional definition. Many in the field predict that this increasing breadth will lead to more specialization and, thus, to practitioners aligning themselves with more specialized organizations, such as the e-Learning Guild, the American Medical Association (AMWA), International Association of Business Communication (IABC), the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), instead of the “umbrella organization,” STC.

The TPC faculty is also aware of this push toward specialization; our faculty members each represent different aspects/areas of the technical communication field. We are increasingly spreading ourselves and our professional interests into these areas to better assist our students and to keep up with changes in the field more readily. The Curriculum Evaluation chapter (Chapter 3: Curriculum Evaluation) discusses the effect of this increasing breadth on the TPC curriculum.

Preparation for employment

Of the new open-ended questions in the survey, 2 elicited some valuable insights into the job market, the skills valued within corporate America, and the changes in the technical communication field over the past 20 years. We asked these related questions:

- Has your technical communication education benefited you in your current position?
- Do you believe your technical communication education was a positive factor in your employer's decision to hire you?

We were, of course, pleased that responses were unanimously positive; more importantly, though, we realized that they reflect the importance of the TPC skill areas within the technical communication field and within the business world in general. As noted in Chapter 3: Curriculum Evaluation, the course requirements for the TPC Program build the students' skills in 4 key areas:

- writing, editing, and communication skills
- media, desktop publishing, and layout/design skills
- a specialty "content" concentration
- project management, including collaboration and teamwork skills

The table below includes some of the graduate's comments, categorized by their emphasis on one or more of the TPC Program's 4 skill areas.

- category 1: writing / editing / communication skills
- category 2: media / publishing / layout and design skills
- category 3: technical / content specialty
- category 4: project management / collaboration / teamwork skills

1 W, E, C	2 M, P, L/D	3 T / CS	4 PM, C, TW	Survey comments
x	x	x	x	I am responsible for planning, recommending resources, vendor management and quality, training and mentoring employees, task break downs, technical writing, content and design plans, and implementing corporate-wide initiatives. Ferris prepared me well.
x	x		x	Yes, I do a good deal of customer communication, both written and oral. I write reports and write and review technical specifications for products and services. I have had several occasions of working with multi-media equipment and productions. I have interviewed hundreds of applicants for technician jobs.... Those are just a few of the many examples.
x		x	x	Yes, I work as a course developer for an engineering software company. Most, if not all, of my TCOM course work has definitely benefited my work here.

1 W, E, C	2 M, P, L/D	3 T / CS	4 PM, C, TW	Survey comments
x		x	x	Yes, it has trained me for graduate school by teaching me how to study and really concentrate on the work at hand. It has also provided me with a broad background in computer programs, public speaking business writing, and interpersonal communication that are all pertinent to the "real world" work experience
x	x	x	x	Definitely. I was always hired to do the exact job I was trained to do. They all liked the fact that Technical communication was my major and not English or a liberal arts degree –or that I just "fell into" technical writing. Many of the people I worked with were never trained to be a tech writer; they just fell into it somewhere down the road.
x	x	x	x	Yes, I've written documentation, policies and procedures, training materials, and marketing materials. All my positions were looking for someone with a degree in technical communication (or English). For those employers who didn't know about my degree, the interview was my opportunity to explain why my academic studies prepared me for the job.
x	x		x	Yes. I found the writing courses to be most beneficial. Also "real-world" projects helped develop project management and teamwork skills. These projects help students gain confidence in their abilities and provide a sense of accomplishment.

Evaluation of specific program requirements

The third section of the survey instrument listed the 17 items for the graduates to rate on a 5-point scale from "strongly agree" or "very important" to "strongly disagree" or "unimportant." The first 12 items they rated included the required program courses; the final 5 items included program activities. Some of the graduates did not rate the courses, noting that they didn't remember specific course names and numbers. Those who did rate these items gave high (4 or 5) ratings to nearly all of the courses and program activities.

The table below summarizes, using numerical values for the responses, this section of the survey.

How valuable have these been to you?	n	total	Avg. rating
<i>Verbal communication courses</i>			
1. interviewing (COMM 301)	17	69	4.06
2. persuasive speaking (COMM 332)	18	69	3.83
3. technical and professional presentations (COMM 336)	18	78	4.33
<i>Written communication courses</i>			
4. adv. technical writing (ENGL 311)	18	88	4.89
5. adv. composition or bus. writing (ENGL 321 or ENGL 325)	19	86	4.78
6. proposal writing (ENGL 323)	20	79	3.95
<i>Program required courses</i>			
7. computer layout /design (PTEC 153, PTEC 171, or VISD 116)	17	74	4.35
8. technical specialty (21 credits)	19	91	4.79
9. internship	19	88	4.63
10. history of rhetoric and style (ENGL 380)	19	70	3.68
11. editing and project mgmt. (ENGL 411)	19	90	4.73
12. profess issues in technical communication / capstone course (ENGL 499)	16	69	4.31
13. The program prepared you for entry into the technical communication field	19	83	4.37
<i>How important were the following in preparing your awareness of the profession and your professional identity?</i>			
14. TPC required classes	18	83	4.61
15. TPC computer lab	19	83	4.37
16. STC / professional meetings	20	74	3.70
17. TPC assignments and team projects	20	83	4.15

Recommendations and Comments

The final open-ended section of the survey asked for recommendations for improvement to the program. Many of the responses we received in this section were predictable, based on the respondent's current job position. The graduates who work in multi-media or web-based writing predictably emphasize the need for additional training in HTML or related software skills. Similarly, those who work extensively with external clients or customers tend to emphasize the need for additional conflict resolution or management skills.

Again, however, we found these comments useful for the view they present of the current business environment. We've included a sample of the comments here, grouping them by the skill area on which they focus. For our pat-on-the-back purposes, on the following page we've also included some of the numerous expressions of appreciation (we recognize, of course, that respondents to surveys such as these tend to be either very positive or very negative, and not nearly as representative as we'd hope).

writing / editing / communication skills

- I found the writing courses to be most beneficial, so keep up the strong emphasis on writing and editing.
- The persuasive speaking course led me to the debate team—that experience was **INVALUABLE**.

media / publishing skills

- I thought that the PageMaker courses we took back in 93–95 were super. Any layout/design (Photoshop, etc.) and web software is key for future graduates. I never thought as a writer/designer I'd be taking on the whole process of development.
- It has been 10 years since I attended FSU, and it appears that there have been new classes added in computer layout and design. This is the only area that was missing content when I attended. I'm glad to see that the focus is on the digital medium, instead of print.

technical specialty knowledge / skills

- I would strongly encourage students to bulk up on the technical classes.

project management / collaboration / teamwork (also professional networking)

- Real-world projects helped develop my project management and teamwork skills; such projects help students gain confidence in their abilities and provide a sense of accomplishment.
- I felt very prepared by the program based on the projects I worked on. I enjoyed working in the computer lab and liked having it available to do projects and assignments. All of the hands-on assignments were great!
- I suggest classes be added in Training and Courseware Development as well as Task Analysis.
- More involvement of all of the faculty in the program and with the students.
- I believe that job placement and networking opportunities with graduates of the program would lessen the sting of real world job hunting.
- I think the students could use a clearer picture of how business works. Many tech writers work freelance, some work for large corporations, some for the government. I think the students would benefit from a class that looked at the market for tech writers, how jobs are landed, how they fall in the corporate structure, etc.
- The STC meetings were a great way to encourage networking and I really feel that should continue to be stressed. The one thing I've learned is that networking is the single most important thing you can do for your career.
- I enjoyed the working lab opportunities because they simulate a real world working environment.

general positive comments

- It is an excellent program, just as it is.
- I credit the program with my success in my career.
- I can't sing your praises enough! It is a great program. What makes it great is you professors who take the time for us. Thank you!
- Thank you so much for all of your time—personal and school related. Given that I stumbled into the program, I appreciate your God-given talent of recognizing and helping others (like myself) over the hump.
- I think that the program was both practical and challenging.

Strengths

- Many stay in touch with our program faculty, even if contact is simply once a year at the holidays.
- The faculty continues to foster close relationships with students, which in turn, allow the Program to stay connected with the graduates.

Concerns

- There continues to be a large percentage of graduates who are “missing in action.”
- Graduates shy away from contributing back to the program because they are working outside the field, did not feel connected to the program, etc.

Opportunities for future development

The TPC Program must continue to outreach to all graduates through regular communication (email, newsletters, etc.). Current students can become involved through interviews or mentoring-style relationships. The Office of Alumni Relations is a possible ally in our efforts to reconnect with missing alumni; they have the tools, resources, and expertise for effective alumni relations.

Introduction: Student Evaluation

Surveys were distributed to students in the TPC Program in the Winter 2004 semester to determine student perceptions in the following areas:

- Employment plans
- Perceived usefulness of courses taken in the Program
- Skills developed in the Program
- Overall evaluation of faculty, facilities, and advising

Methods

Surveys were distributed to a total of 11 students, who ranged across all 4 academic years (first-year through fourth-year). The number of students by class is as follows:

- First year 2
- Second year 1
- Third year 5
- Fourth year 3

One concern with these numbers is the inclusion of first- and second-year students, since they have not taken a range of TPC or related courses and are as not familiar with faculty and facilities as well as the third- and fourth-year students are.

Results and Discussion

In general, according to both numerical data and written comments, students seem to be satisfied with the TPC Program, its faculty, facilities, and particularly with advising. Students are positive about the communication and problem-solving, skills that they receive in the Program, the expertise and approachability of core faculty, availability of “content specialty” classes, and opportunities to meet with professionals in the discipline. On a scale of 1–5 (with 1 being lowest and 5 highest) students are positive about the following areas of their TPC training (scores of 4 or 5):

- Preparation for careers (72.7 % approval)
- Preparation for advanced education (72.7% approval)
- Intellectual challenge (72.7% approval)

Written comments also indicate that students are very positive about their relationships with core TPC faculty (defined as those who regularly teach ENGL 380, ENGL 411, ENGL 499 and internship coordinators), but little or no positive mention is made about ancillary faculty who teach ENGL 280 (one-hour introductory classes) or any of the writing classes offered through the Department of Languages and Literature, which are taught by non-program faculty or by ancillary TPC faculty.

Student demographics and career preparation

As indicated above, a full range of students was surveyed. Of the responses 18.1% came from first-year students, 9% from second-year students, and 72.6 % from third- and fourth-year students (45.4% and 27.2% respectively). Most students (54.5 %) entered the TPC Program as first-year students. Similar to responses in the last TPC Program Review, most students (63.6%) enter TPC from other programs or institutions. On-campus programs from which TPC students entered include Public Relations, Criminal Justice, Dental Hygiene, Applied Speech, English bachelor’s program; other institutions from which the TPC Program has drawn students are Baker College and Western Michigan University.

Graduation plans

The survey sought two kinds of graduation plans: short term (immediately after graduation with a B.S.) and long term (5–10 years after graduation). The responses are as follows:

Graduation Plans	Percent of Responses
Look for a position as a technical communication in business, industry, or healthcare	36.3%
Work as a freelance communicator	9%
Attend graduate school	27.2%
Seek “other” paths	27.2%

Those students who selected “other” plans are interested in such areas as media production, journalism (print and broadcast), and “art related.” No students seem to be interested in working as technical communicators in education or government.

TPC education and career preparation

As indicated above, students are uniformly positive about their perceived career preparation.

Evaluation of required coursework

Survey questions sought students' perceptions about the quality of their coursework in writing and composition courses, in courses in Speech Communication and Printing Technology, and in TPC core classes. In general, students are satisfied with both the kind of classes that they are required to take and the quality of those classes. Students were asked to evaluate classes that they have taken on a scale of 1–5, with 1 being “low” or poorly rated and 5 being “high,” or “excellent.” The survey question asks students to use 0 to indicate “don’t know” (haven’t taken). Therefore, the guidelines gave students maximum flexibility in portraying gradation of quality between 1 and 5. The numbers below indicate percentages of student responses.

Course	0	1	2	3	4	5
ENGL 311, Advanced Technical Writing	0	27.2	9.0	18.1	18.1	18.1
ENGL 321, Advanced Composition	18.1	0	0	18.1	27.2	36.3
ENGL 323, Proposal Writing	27.2	0	0	0	18.1	63.6
PTEC 153, Digital Page Layout	72.7	0	0	0	9	18.1
COMM 301 Interviewing	45.5	0	0	9	36.3	9
COMM 322, Argumentation	63.6	0	0	9	18.1	9
COMM 336, Technical and Professional Presentations	54.5	0	0	18.1	18.1	9
ENGL 491, Internship	54.5	0	0	0	9	36.3
ENGL 411, Technical Editing and Publication	54.5	9	9	0	9	36.3
ENGL 380, History of Rhetoric and Style	54.5	9	9	0	9	18.1
ENGL 499, Professional Seminar	36.3	0	0	0	18.1	45.5
ENGL 280, Special Topics	18.1	0	0	18.1	9	54.5

An analysis of the data above suggests that, if 4 and 5 may be interpreted and “very good” and “excellent” respectively, students who have taken most of the requires program coursework (presumably third- and fourth-year students) are more than satisfied with what they learn in these courses.

Looking at response data from the 1998 TPC Program Review, a notable change has occurred. Combining scores of 4 and 5 (“very good” to “excellent”) only 36% of 2004 responses indicate a positive perception of ENGL 311. In the 1998 sample 83% of responses were “very good” to “excellent.” Responses to all other courses in the 1998 sample were 100% positive in the same sense. It should be noted that all of the courses noted above except for the TPC core required courses are not necessarily taught by TPC faculty and that the 1998 sample consisted of only 6 students, all of whom were third- or fourth-year students. Some of the students taking the 2004 survey were first- and second-year students and, so, responded with 0, “not taken.” In both surveys, though, students perceptions to courses seem to be positive.

Evaluation of curriculum, facilities, and faculty performance

Similar to the survey question about student perceptions of required courses, another question sought their evaluation of the TPC Program curriculum, facilities, professional opportunities, and faculty. Again, students are satisfied, for the most part, those aspects of the TPC Program. Students were asked to evaluate these areas on a scale of 1-5, with 1 being "low" or poorly rated and 5 being high, or excellent. Again, the guidelines gave students maximum flexibility in portraying gradation of quality between 1 and 5. The numbers below indicate percentages of student responses.

Areas of Concern	1	2	3	4	5
Development of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills	0	0	9	45.5	45.5
Development of writing skills	0	0	9	27.2	63.6
Development of editing skills	0	0	9	36.3	54.5
Development of oral communication skills	0	0	9	36.3	54.5
Development of computer skill necessary for technical communicators	0	0	18.1	36.3	45.5
Development of collaboration/teamwork skills	0	0	9	63.6	27.2
Broad choice of communication electives (printing, oral communication, multimedia, television production, etc.) relevant to career choice, content specialty, and interests	0	9	0	36.3	54.5
Broad choice of "content specialty" areas relevant to student career goals and professional interests	0	0	18.1	27.2	54.5
Faculty with expertise in professional areas	0	0	0	45.5	54.5
Sound advice when needed about careers in technical communication	0	9	0	27.2	63.6
Sound academic counseling when needed about course selection appropriate to students' career goals and professional interests	0	9	0	27.2	54.5
Opportunities for meeting and working with other TPC students	0	0	9	36.3	54.5
Opportunities for developing professional contacts with practicing technical communicators	0	9	9	45.5	27.2
Lab facilities with useful hardware and software	0	0	0	36.3	63.6

Again, the responses cited above indicate that TPC Program students are satisfied with curriculum, faculty, and facilities. Looking at curricular issues, students are positive about their experience. Adding responses for 4 and 5 (very good and excellent), responses show the following approval ratings as compared with those taken in the 1998 TPC Program Review:

Skills	2004	1998
Problem-solving, critical-thinking skills	91.0%	66.6%
Writing skills	91.0%	83.0%
Editing skills	91.0%	83.0%
Oral communication skills	91.0%	83.0%
Computer skills	81.8%	66.6%
Collaboration/teamwork skills	91.0%	83.0%
Choice of electives	91.0%	99.6%
"Content-specialty" choices	81.7%	100%

(It should be noted, again, that the 1998 responses were based on a sample of 6 students, while the 2004 sample contains 11 students, which might skew the data.)

The responses show that in curricular issues students are positive and seem to be more positive than the 1998 sample. While students are less positive about curricular choices than their 1998 counterparts, the majority is very satisfied.

Applying the same method as above to facilities, students seem to be positive about their experience. All respondents in the 2004 were satisfied with the lab facilities as compared to 82.8% in 1998. It's clear that students' perceptions about technical facilities have improved in the past 5 years, most likely a reflection of the TPC Program's improved facility, first in the Science Building and then in its move to the Prakken Building.

Perceptions of faculty, counseling, and professional contacts and their changes are as follows:

Faculty, Counseling, Contacts	2004	1998
Faculty expertise	100%	83.0%
Career advice	91.0%	83.0%
Academic counseling	91.0%	100%
Meeting with TPC students	91.0%	83.0%
Professional contacts	82.0%	66.4%

There has been marked improvement over the past 5 years with the exception of academic counseling. However, the change in this regard, it should be noted, is the result of only 1 student out of 11 in the sample, and several students' comments especially note the quality of their counseling. And perhaps for a program that prides itself on preparing students for the technical-writing workforce, the increase in contacts with professional, practicing technical communicators is noteworthy. Even given the caveat above about the change in student sample size and the fact that the 2004 survey was given to students from their first through fourth years, the perception of sound counseling is very positive, indeed.

Conclusion

The survey responses indicate that TPC Program students are positive about the program and its capacity to prepare them for the workforce. Students rate the core faculty high and are uniformly impressed by the quality of the counseling that they receive. A significant improvement from the 1998 program review is the perceived quality of facilities by TPC Program students and their perception that they have more contact with working professionals. The survey also indicates an improvement from the 1998 sample in students' perceptions that there is more opportunity for collaboration and general "mingling" among students. Also, it is noteworthy that current students perceive that they learn problem-solving and critical-thinking skills more than the 1998 sample.

Among the written comments on the survey, one student noted that there are too many electives, but that was one of the few less-than-positive comments about the program. In general, it can be stated that TPC students are uniformly pleased with the quality of the Program.

Chapter 6: Faculty Evaluation

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Chapter 6: Faculty Evaluation

Introduction

This chapter discusses 2 faculty perspectives of the TPC Program: first, perceptions of non-TPC faculty; second, perceptions of the TPC faculty. It is important to discuss both perspectives not only as a requirement for the program review process but also to assess a 360-degree view of the Program. This chapter is organized into two main sections (non-TPC faculty perceptions and TPC faculty perceptions) that each report and interpret the results of a survey filled out by respondents during the Winter semester 2004.

Non-TPC Faculty Perceptions

The Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) Program was established as a cross-disciplinary program. While our students take their core of English (including TPC-major) courses, the curriculum includes cognates in Speech Communication, New Media Production, and professional specialty areas such as computer science and automotive technology. Because faculty from the Department of Languages and Literature specifically dedicated to core TPC courses and internship supervision number only 3, the typical TPC student takes more courses from faculty outside of the TPC Program. It is therefore incumbent on us for program review to assess non-TPC faculty perceptions of program students and resources.

Methods

To gather data on perceptions of non-TPC Program faculty, surveys were distributed through the campus Lotus Notes email system to 16 Ferris faculty in program areas outside of the Department of Languages and Literature and 24 full-time members of the Department of Languages and Literature (our adjunct faculty teach freshman-sophomore courses and many of our TPC students do not identify with their B.S. track until their junior year, hence limiting the surveys to tenured and tenure-track faculty). Six surveys were returned. This low response is probably accounted for by the timing of the survey distribution (late in winter semester) and because most faculty do not identify students by their major; therefore, though they are probably aware of the TPC Program, surveyed faculty may not feel they have meaningful comments to make about the program's students.

Non-TPC faculty survey results

Familiarity with the TPC Program. Of the respondents, 5 felt they were "somewhat familiar" with the TPC Program. Only one said "very familiar." It would be unusual and unexpected for any non-program faculty member not closely allied through responsibilities such as the program review process to claim strong familiarity with any program outside her/his teaching area. Presumably, faculty members who were "unfamiliar" did not feel it worthwhile to complete and return the survey.

Faculty were also asked what could be done to keep them informed about the program. Two asked for "Periodic email about developments." Another said, "Keep letting me know what courses [in my discipline] you are requiring... and what specific outcomes you want from your students' experience with [X-discipline] courses."

Student Conduct. Faculty were asked to rate TPC students by their conduct. This was an open-ended question that could be interpreted to mean behavior, academic performance, a combination or some other standard. Two respondents checked “good;” the others, “excellent.” Our students graduate with a B.S. degree. Do they measure up to that standard? The consensus here was that they do and their overall conduct/performance was rated as “good.”

Program Support. The survey asked non-TPC faculty to assess how their course(s) support the TPC Program. This would be difficult for someone not fairly familiar with TPC to answer. One said the courses were a natural fit and that many TPC students enrolled in their program’s minor. Another felt the reverse, that his/her course supported TPC. Another felt her/his courses gave TPC students’ tools in media production.

What relationship do we maintain with other programs? Aside from one who “didn’t know,” responses varied from “excellent” to “good.”

Bias-Free Environment. Apart from two who said “don’t know,” the consensus was that we look at the person, not extraneous background.

Our New Offices. During the Fall Semester 2003 the TPC faculty moved into a newly remodeled office suite in the Prakken Building (formerly occupied by the Registrar and Business Offices) with faculty offices, a work room, a seminar room, student lounge, computer lab, and multi-media classroom. Of the survey respondents, 3 have seen our new facilities. Do our non-TPC colleagues need an invitation to visit? No, it’s a matter of finding time to stop by.

TPC Program Strengths. What do we do well? Respondents said that we make excellent connections with the work place leading to opportunities for internships and professional networking. One felt that our professional activities and awareness of the profession leads us have high expectation for our students.

TPC Program Weaknesses. Where do we fall down? One didn’t know of any weaknesses. A more sobering comment said that we enable students with less-developed skills to advance but added, “We’re all guilty of that.” “You need more students,” another responded. Another faulted our students who serve their internships on campus.

Guidance for the Future. Work with others to develop joint-programs where we can build on the President’s vision for Ferris State, said one respondent. Much potential exists for what this respondent is suggesting.

Discussion

While we didn't get the number of responses we had hoped for, we feel that the those who took time to complete and return the surveys have more than passing knowledge about us and are thoughtfully concerned about the well being of our program. We feel especially complimented by their assessment of our students and their awareness of our involvement with the working side of our profession. Each of us extends her/his working day to maintain our professional contacts: S. Balkema by having recently served on the Executive Board of the Society for Technical Communication/West Michigan Shores chapter and having served a sabbatical externship with working professionals; E. Weber by having come to us recently from industry, involving her TPC senior seminar students in West Michigan Shores STC chapter meetings, and keeping contact with her former world-of-work colleagues; T. Brownell by his technically-oriented journalism columns, articles, and books, and the internship site exploration he conducted on his recent sabbatical.

We would like to see opportunities for joint-program development, and we're very thankful for our new offices and teaching facilities—the limp HVAC system notwithstanding.

Survey responses prompt the following:

Familiarity. We agree with the respondent who said that keep updates on the TPC Program was, "My responsibility, not yours." However, the email update is a good suggestion and relatively easy to provide. Whether faculty will actually read the program update email in their busy schedules is another matter.

Student Conduct. One respondent editorialized, wishing "our students were (frown) [as excellent]. Others commented about "great students." One wrote "...a couple of students seem interested only in the bare minimum." We've all had students who seek to perform minimum effort despite efforts at motivation.

Program Support. That a respondent found TPC courses to be a natural fit with her/his curriculum and noted and that many TPC students enrolled in their program's minor is good symbiosis. The same with non-core courses supporting the TPC curriculum; that's why these courses are on our program check list. Both we and our graduates emphasize the importance of media skills are essential for today's technical communicators.

Bias-Free Environment. Our efforts to provide a gender-free, and other forms of bias-free, environment appears supported by respondents comments on that question.

Program Facilities. We hope that our non-TPC colleagues will visit our new program area. One apparently visited late spring or summer as the comment was made that we need better air conditioning. The remodeling is complete so an air-conditioning upgrade isn't likely. Our offices face south. However, if it's cooler outdoors, we throw back the blinds, open our windows, and enjoy both the pleasant view of the new Prakken/Alumni and Automotive Center courtyard and outside air.

To encourage colleagues crossing campus from ASC, Johnson Hall, Swan, or elsewhere to see our new program area, S. Balkema, our coordinator, hosted the 2003 Department of Languages and Literature Christmas Party in our seminar room.

Perceived program strengths

All TPC faculty work hard at cultivating contacts and keeping current with our profession. One respondent complimented us, our students, and our curriculum. Thank you, but our students select us and the curriculum. We can't take credit for them.

Perceived program weaknesses

Insights and critical comments are helpful so that we can improve. We agree that the program could benefit from more students and have an ongoing recruitment program within the Department of Languages and Literature as a whole where faculty recommend to TPC students with strong communication interest and skills. We are conscious of the on-campus internship problem, which in large measure has been brought about by students who need to enroll in courses concurrent with their internship to receive financial aid and by foreign students who lack a green card. We try to push students into internships off campus and continually work on developing opportunities.

We are frankly confused by the response that said, "lack of broad professional representation," because this same person saw our strength as "good faculty who practice professionally." It is unclear if the respondent was suggesting a more diverse range of professional experiences among faculty: maybe more in advanced forms of media. If so, we recognize the merit of that response.

Guidance for the future

The TPC Program is built on links with other programs and President Eisler's vision of joint program efforts closely allies with our philosophy.

TPC Faculty Perceptions

This section measures perceptions that the faculty who are associated with the TPC Program have about the program and its students. The faculty consulted in this survey are typically involved with the TPC students in their technical communication courses, such as ENGL 280, ENGL 380, ENGL 411, ENGL 499, and ENGL 491; in related writing courses, such as ENGL 311, ENGL 321, ENGL 323, and ENGL 325; or in the TPC Program Committee.

Faculty identified above are generally familiar with both the subject matter and the pedagogy of technical communication courses; and in most cases they are also experienced in the following areas of professional writing:

- Industrial
- Business
- Biomedical
- Government (including military)

These faculty members view TPC students' skills by industry and professional standards and often evaluate their writing on that basis.

Methods

Surveys were sent to 6 faculty from the TPC Program Committee. All surveys were filled out and returned, yielding a return rate of 100%. The surveys asked faculty to evaluate both the TPC Program and its students in 11 areas. Respondents were asked to rate each of these areas as one of the following:

- Excellent (E)
- Good (G)
- Acceptable (A)
- Below Expectations (BE)
- Poor (P)
- Don't Know (DK)

Numbers were assigned to each response as follows: E=5, G=4, A=3, BE=2, and P=1. DK responses were assigned no numerical value. Items not responded to were labeled NR (no response). In addition to these 11 questions, faculty were also asked to give discursive answers to 3 questions—program strengths, program weaknesses, and the program's future direction.

Results and Implications

The results of the numerically-scored TPC faculty survey are as follows:

Item	E	G	A	BE	P	DK	NR	Ave. Score
1. Program Development Participation	1	5						4.2
2. Labor Market Opportunities	1	1	3			1		3.6
3. Student Conduct	2			3			1	2.6
4. Support Course Relevance	2	2	1				1	4.2
5. Internship Value	3			1		1	1	4.0
6. Bias-Free Environment	6							5.0
7. Program Advisement	3	1	1			1		4.4
8. Career Planning and Guidance	1	3	1			1		4.0
9. Adequacy of Facilities	6							5.0
10. Student Quality		2	2	1		1		3.4
11. Relationships with Other Programs	3	2	1					4.2

The high level of faculty response to the survey and the low levels of DK (n=5) and NR (n=3) answers indicate that the TPC Program faculty as a group are committed to the program.

TPC Program faculty assigned the highest scores (5.0/5.0) in 2 categories: (6) Bias-Free Environment and (9) Adequacy of Facilities. These high ratings reflect a perception on the faculty's part that both faculty and students are fairly and ethically dealt with, and that the recent changes in the program's facilities and equipment have been a significant improvement.

A larger group of questions—(1) Program Development Participation, (4) Support Course Relevance, (5) Internship Value, (7) Program Advisement, (8) Career Planning and Guidance, and (11) Relationships with Other Programs—were all assigned scores in the 4.0–4.4/5.0 range. These scores indicate a high level of confidence in the operational aspects of the TPC Program.

Faculty comments highlight these perceptions, but show differences in detail. TPC faculty recognize that the move to the Prakken Building, by lessening opportunity for spontaneous interchange, has created the need for more formal program meetings. To the general perception of the relevance of current support courses were added suggestions regarding the value of more instruction in current technology, and more systematic study of issues in language, grammar, and linguistics. Likewise, on the subject of student internship opportunities, it was noted that more on-campus internships were becoming available, but also that the program should not become too reliant on them.

TPC Program students are all advised by the program coordinator, the one person in the TPC Program to receive course release for program activities. This advisement burden, as one faculty member suggested, may become too unwieldy as the program grows, and in any case there might be educational value in splitting advisees among all TPC Program faculty. The reductions in the Career Planning and Placement Office have reduced its value to the TPC Program students, and TPC faculty have stepped in to give the students advice on careers and opportunities. Finally, the relationships between the TPC Program and other programs on campus are seen as good and functional.

A second group of questions—(2) Student Opportunities and (10) Student Quality—were assigned scores in the 3.4-3.6/5.0 range. The first reflects the faculty's perception of the weak labor market for technical communicators. The second reflects the faculty's wish for students with higher levels of achievement. The TPC faculty see the current students as worthwhile individuals, but wish that they had more initiative and a stronger work ethic.

One item—(3) Student Conduct—received the lowest rating—a 2.6/5.0. This low score reflects the faculty's wish that the students would develop a better work ethic and attitude toward the profession.

Summary

Strengths

According to the faculty, the strengths of the TPC Program are many.

- Significant improvements have been made since the last program review.
- The faculty is highly qualified and (academically and otherwise) diverse.
- Several TPC faculty have strong connections to the technical communication workplace and professional associations. Others publish and present in the field.
- The program's facilities are excellent.
- Faculty are committed to the program development process.
- The current curriculum and support courses work well.
- The internship experience is positive educationally.
- The advisement process works well.
- Faculty feel that relationships with other programs are good.

Weaknesses

The TPC faculty have some concerns as well:

- Concerned with the quality and conduct of TPC students.
- Need to work more effectively as an oversight committee.

Future developments

Suggestions for future developments come out of the foregoing comments:

- Continue to develop the graduate and certificate programs.
- Meet more often and work more effectively as an oversight committee.
- Review the baccalaureate curriculum and consider changes in instructional emphases.
- Develop a plan to recruit higher quality students to the program.
- Consider splitting advising duties among the faculty, or possibly a faculty mentor program.
- Revisit the idea of systematic competency testing for entering students of core technical communication skills.
- Help students develop a better work ethic and sense of professional pride and identity.
- Help students find greater opportunities in the job market.
- Develop stronger ties to the program advisory board.

Chapter 7: Employer Evaluation and Labor Market Analysis

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Chapter 7: Employer Evaluation and Labor Market Analysis

Introduction

The immediate and long-term success of the graduates of the TPC Program depends on several factors:

- their preparation before they leave Ferris,
- their awareness of the demands and needs of the job market they're entering;
- their flexibility and motivation to adapt to an ever-changing work environment; and
- the job market and careers available to them upon graduation and throughout their work lives.

While the TPC program is responsible for preparing them for the technical communication job market and making them aware of the challenges they'll face upon entering it, much of the responsibility for their success lies with the students personally. Ferris State University's responsibility is to provide as many opportunities for education, learning, and hands-on experience for the students as possible. As an educational institution, we also have the responsibility to offer educational experiences with real-world applications – and with the potential for providing enriching life-long careers.

In order to determine the students' readiness for their first jobs, we've examined their first employers' evaluations: the internship evaluations. And, to provide a picture of the future and career opportunities available to our graduates now and into the foreseeable future, we've analyzed various job/career indicators.

Employer Evaluation

A summary of intern evaluations is significant to the TPC Program in 2 major aspects. First, the evaluations show that the program has kept records of its students' professional work experience. Student performance in an actual workplace setting is a first priority for the program. Second, the evaluations suggest to the evaluators what expectations the TPC Program holds of its students, so that these evaluators may help the program modify these expectations.

Technical communication has expanded in the last 20 years or so to include perspectives and theories of almost every discipline so that it has become a diverse field (not just an area) of study. Thus, it is helpful to see the picture the evaluations paint of the types of companies and businesses offering internships, the departments in which the students work, and the job titles they hold. The internship evaluation form asked evaluators to identify most critical skills required of the program interns, and this information is revealing. The skill rating provides a target, revealing how well prepared employers see the program interns to be in the desired skill areas. While information from evaluations often confirms faculty suppositions, the data do provide an external objective view of the interns' preparedness and performance.

The internship evaluations also tell employers' expectations of the TPC Program interns. For example, the question "Is this intern the type of person you would consider for permanent employment?" provides both the student/intern and the TPC Program internship supervisor with an evaluation of the intern's performance as weighed against professional expectations at the jobsite. Finally the surveys also solicit general evaluative comments, offering respondents opportunity to voice their concerns or observations not germane to any specific survey questions.

The question may be raised as to why internship evaluations have been used in place of an employer survey. The reason for this decision is simple: employers in today's climate are reluctant to share confidential information about their employees with the public. Intern evaluations provide the desired employer feedback and do not violate employee confidentiality.

This chapter discusses the views of employers who have sponsored a training internship for students of the Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) Program. This chapter first reports the results of internship evaluations conducted between 1998 and 2004; then it interprets the results; finally, it discusses the significance of the interpretations.

Methods

We use and analyze 18 internship evaluations conducted between 1998 and 2004, because these evaluations have data that we know will not be forthcoming from actual employers of graduates due to right of privacy issues. First we summarize the respondents' ratings for the TPC Program students in 8 categories. Then we look at the actual assignments given to these students, which tells us a lot about the nature of the profession. Next, we discuss the job settings of these students. Finally, we summarize the general comments made by the respondents. After we present the data, we discuss the strengths of the program, and we also address the concerns as well as suggest future developments.

Survey Results

Of the recent student intern evaluation forms, 18 responses were analyzed. The internship form asks the intern's immediate jobsite supervisor to rate performance in 8 categories. These categories and ratings for TPC Program students who have served internships since 1998 are as follows:

Relation with Others avg. 4.5		Attitude—Application to Work avg. 4.5	
5 - Exceptionally well accepted, 10		5 - Outstanding enthusiasm, 9	
4 - Works well with others, 7		4 - Interested and industrious, 9	
3 - Gets along satisfactorily, 1		3 - Average in diligence and interest, 0	
2 - Has difficulty working with others, 0		2 - Somewhat indifferent, 0	
1 - Works poorly with others, 0		1 - Definitely not interested, 0	
Judgment avg. 4.4		Dependability avg. 4.7	
5 - Exceptionally mature, 11		5 - Completely dependable, 14	
4 - Above average in making decisions, 3		4 - Above average in dependability, 1	
3 - Usually makes the right decision, 4		3 - Usually dependable, 2	
2 - Often uses poor judgment, 0		2 - Sometimes neglectful and careless, 0	

1 - Consistently uses bad judgment, 0	1 - Unreliable, 0
Ability to learn avg. 4.6	Quality of work avg. 4.6
5 - Learns quickly, 12	5 - Excellent, 11
4 - Learns readily, 5	4 - Good, 5
3 - Average in learning, 1	3 - Average, 1
2 - Rather slow to learn, 0	2 - Below average, 0
1 - Very slow to learn, 0	1 - Poor, 0
Ability and willingness to adjust avg. 4.7	Personal appearance avg. 4.5
5 - Excellent, 11	5 - Excellent, 11
4 - Good, 2	4 - Good, 5
3 - Average, 1	3 - Average, 2
2 - Below average, 0	2 - Below average, 0
1 - Poor, 0	1 - Poor, 0

Nature of the profession

Position descriptions listed on the internship evaluation forms reflected the diverse nature of the Technical and Professional Communication profession. The position descriptions and responsibility categories are listed as follows:

- Writing: student technology guide; technical writer for multi-media project; copy writing; press releases; manual of job descriptions; automotive technical writer; documentation writer; project documents; document specifications
- Design coordinator
- Recruitment coordinator
- Production: flyers
- Website design
- Editing: press releases
- Marketing research / research / interviewing
- Graphics
- Proof reading
- Project management

Internship locations

TPC students served their internships in a variety of employment settings in wide ranging geographic locations. Ferris State University had 8 TPC interns, while the other settings each had only one (1) intern. The following table shows the settings and the number of interns per setting.

Job Settings	# of Interns
JR Automation Technologies Inc, Holland, MI	1
Flint Personnel Agency, Flint, MI	1
The Launs Company, Grosse Pointe Farms, MI	1
Lake Michigan College, Benton Harbor, MI	1
The Big Rapids Community, Big Rapids, MI	1
The Elkton-Pigeons Bay School District	1
Big Rapids Cardinal Rocket Football	1
Greene County Health District, Xenia, OH	1
Muskegon Area Big Brothers/Big Sisters	1
World Wide Pants, New York, NY	1
Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI	8

The above list job settings list lacks mention of some of our already established contacts through the TPC advisory board (e.g., The Bishop Company, Provia, and others). See Chapter 7, Advisory Board Evaluation for further discussion on this topic.

Intern preparedness

Internship site supervisors were asked whether they would consider this intern for permanent employment. On 17 of the evaluation forms this question was answered with an unequivocal “yes.” One form made no response.

General comments

Of the respondents, 8 wrote general comments; one of them commented extensively on the intern; and 7 respondents claimed that their interns learned good habits very quickly. These comments suggest that the interns quickly pick up the required “lore” from the floor, something they cannot do in the classroom. The first one noted that the intern has lots of ideas and was very dependable. The second one claimed that the intern was great asset to the university, because the intern had “great organization skills.” The third one stressed that the intern looked professional with high level of maturity. The fourth one highly recommended the intern because the latter made good project decisions. The fifth one described the intern as a good web developer who took initiative in developing the web site. The sixth one explained that the intern’s work did require team work, meaning that one of the questions did not apply to the intern. The seventh was concerned that the intern might need to learn how to work with others. The eighth respondent commented extensively. In short, this respondent “thoroughly enjoyed working with” the intern and “wish[ed] her the best of luck in the future.” As these crude summaries indicate, most of the respondents are satisfied with their interns’ performances.

Discussion

These evaluations suggest that the TPC Program is very strong. On the other hand, they also suggest that the respondents have concerns. Based on these responses, we can develop strategies for approaching our future.

Strengths

We are encouraged by the strong responses to the survey questions and to the preparedness of interns; 17 out of 18 were willing to hire the interns. It seems that intern quality has been consistent in the past 6 years. One of the strengths our interns have demonstrated is that they are “completely dependable.” This strength suggests that the interns have the necessary professional knowledge to handle the tasks in the workplace. It also suggests the courses the TPC Program offers enable these interns to perform their job duties efficiently. Particularly, the responses indicate that these interns are willing to learn new skills and that they learn these skills very fast. Another noticeable strength is that these interns show professionalism in the job settings, which is a very important to a professional. Generally speaking, the respondents’ general comments suggest that the interns learned good habits quickly and that they are good assets to the workplaces.

Concerns

From these responses, we learn that the respondents are pleased with the interns' overall performances. However, there are a couple of concerns. First, one respondent implies that the intern needs to learn to work with others in the workplace. Second, 3 respondents indicate that the interns "usually" make the right decision, suggesting that the interns does not always make the right decision. Perhaps the TPC Program needs to consider strengthening humanistic components in its courses, so that future graduates know better how to be a "person" before performing any duties.

We have concerns, too, regarding the intern "employers." First, we wish the respondents would take more proactive stance in evaluating the preparedness of their prospective employees by, for example, looking at their portfolios and requiring a writing sample, perhaps these questions on the survey can help the responding employers realize that interns are prepared to have their skills tested and bring some demonstrated experience to entry-level employment.

Additionally, some of the aforementioned employment settings are not work settings where people would normally be hired to operate as a technical communicator. The supervisors in these internship settings may not be fully familiar with working with technical communicators and the broad scope of abilities that a technical communicator brings to the job experience. However, in defensive of the students, the interns, at times, are faced with some limitations that keep them from exploring the full range of possible internships, including the following:

- not able to move out of Big Rapids or away from family responsibilities.
- full-time financial aid limitations
- depressed Michigan job market

We recognize that internships (some or all) may not always be in "pure" technical communication environments, but are crucial for preparing graduates for the next stage of employment. Ideally we would like our student interns to move out of the Ferris environment into a new geographic setting to expose the interns to diverse experiences, thus fostering an appreciation of working with a wide variety of professionals in various work settings.

Finally, we have trepidation regarding the interns themselves, which is probably more related to college students in general rather than specifically to the TPC student. Noting the high number of intern sites that were either at Ferris State or within the close community indicates that the students are scared to take the leap into the "real world." They don't appreciate the need to network with professionals to build a web of professional contacts. The argument can be made that the TPC faculty need to take a stronger lead in this area; however, we cannot hold their hands forever. They must make their own opportunities.

Future developments

We recommend that the TPC Program carry forward its strengths and address the concerns of the respondents. One method is to educate students to learn to be an ethical professional (learn to be a "good person," in Quintilian's words) first before performing any actions. An ethical professional knows how to work with others and makes the right decisions. Another suggestion is to focus on context-oriented learning. That is, we need to teach students to solve real workplace problems and have them write papers based on real business problems.

Furthermore, the TPC Program Committee can do more to initiate and foster professional relationships with the program to at least open doors for our students. We need to use our current TPC courses to encourage students to look beyond the walls of Ferris State University and develop their confidence to leap towards opportunities.

Based on the internship supervisors' comments and use of the form over the years, we'd like to propose some revisions to the internship evaluation form. These suggestions are included below.

Current form wording	Suggested wording
Ability and willingness to adjust	Ability and willingness to accept challenges
Projection of future success	Preparation for entering the technical communication field
Have you discussed this evaluation form...	Please discuss this evaluation form....

Labor Market Analysis

For any program, it is critical to its existence on whether or not the labor market can support graduates of the program. The TPC program was established in 1984 to fill a market need for skilled communicators to fill career opportunities in a variety of technical industries. As we evaluate the TPC Program, we need to realistically assess the labor market to determine if our graduates can continue to find sustainable employment within the broad field of technical communication. As a result, along with the other information collected in this report, what changes, if any, do we need to make to the program to ensure the success of our graduates.

Methods

The labor market analysis for the TPC Program was conducted using two different approaches: a focused, job-title-specific survey and a broader, career-path analysis. A discussion follows regarding the implications to the TPC Program.

Job-Title-Specific Survey

A labor market analysis for the TPC Program was conducted intermittently throughout the 2003–2004 academic year primarily using electronic sources. The only print source checked was the monthly *Job Market Sheet* of the American Medical Writers Association (AMWA). The electronic sources, which were previously available in print-only form, were job postings at monster.com, careerbuilder.com, and careerpath.com, and the like.

The searching revealed an active and favorable job market for technical writers in major metropolitan areas across the United States. These results confirm the conclusions by the Michigan Occupations Information System (MOIS) under “Technical Writer” and by the Department of Labor’s *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (OOH) (2004–05 edition). The annual Society for Technical Communication Salary Survey also provides helpful data regarding the state of the profession.

In 1995 there were 53,000 technical writers in the United States; there were 1,650 in Michigan. According to the most recent MOIS data, the national number has increased by 24% to 70,000 but this has number not changed within the state. However, there is no evidence that the statewide estimate has been updated since the last program review.

Technical writers in private industry had average annual salaries ranging between \$30,000 and \$62,700 in 2000. This is a 17% increase on the starting salary. The average was \$43,555, which is 13% increase from the last program review in 1998.

In Michigan, technical writers in the computer and data processing industries earned annual median salaries of \$45,200 (Detroit area) (+36%) and \$42,700 (Grand Rapids) (+25%), in early 2001.

Freelance writing can be an additional source of income. Some magazines pay \$50 to \$2,000 or more for special articles.

Employment of technical writers in Michigan is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2008. Employment opportunities will be affected by the need for scientific and technical information.

A comparison of job announcements from various professional sources also indicates a strong market for employee with qualifications the TPC Program develops. Most of these descriptions require a minimum of a bachelor's degree in technical writing or related field, and strong writing editing, communication, and project management skills. Important to all is technical expertise and desktop publishing/computer skills—also key components of the TPC Program.

The STC Annual Salary Survey, which surveys members of STC and thus respondents can vary from year to year, illustrates the grow of the industry. In 2003, the average STC member earned \$61,670. Entry-level technical communicators earned \$43,260. Within the Great Lakes region (Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky), the average yearly salary was \$52,000. Specifically within Michigan, the average salary was \$61,000 (within ZIP codes starting with 48***, which is the eastern area of the state). These numbers are encouraging because they demonstrate that employers value the knowledge, skills, and abilities that technical communicators bring to the business.

Career-Path Analysis

Technical writers, according to the OOH, put technical information into easily understandable language. In the workplace, technical writers find themselves at a crossroads of sorts. They work at the intersection of different groups within a project or corporation. For example, they may be the common bond between end users, developers, and management. Within this intersection, the technical writer must communicate effectively with all groups, and in many ways unite these groups as needed. Therefore, a technical writer's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) must have appropriate depth and breadth. They translate information from one group to another. To effectively do this, technical writers need the appropriate KSAs.

In the past, technical writers developed the necessary KSAs by moving from the shop, lab, or ward for which their education prepared them to a writing position. As university-based programs in technical communication have become more common, younger writers make this movement before entering the work force—they enter higher education intending to major, for example, in engineering or medical technology, but they find their interests and aptitudes draw them to technical communication, where they can use both their communication skills and their technical aptitudes. Increasingly, technical writing requires a degree in, or some knowledge about, a specialized field—engineering, business, or one of the sciences, for example. In many cases, people with good writing skills can learn specialized knowledge on the job. Some transfer from jobs as technicians, scientists, or engineers. Others begin as research assistants or as trainees in a technical information department, develop technical communication skills, and then assume writing duties.

The Department of Labor Occupational Outlook Handbook (2004–05 Edition) (OOH) categorizes technical communication under “Writers and Editors.” Within this discussion, the OOH lists the following significant points related to this career:

- Most jobs in this occupation require a college degree in communications, journalism, or English, although a degree in a technical subject may be useful for technical writing positions.
- The outlook for most writing and editing jobs is expected to be competitive, because many people with writing or journalism training are attracted to the occupation.
- Online publications and services are growing in number and sophistication, spurring the demand for writers and editors, especially those with Web experience.

Writers and editors held about 319,000 jobs in 2002. More than one-third were self-employed. Of this 319,000, about 50,000 were technical writers. More than half of the 319,000 jobs were salaried positions in the information sector (newspaper, periodical, book, and directory publishers; radio and television broadcasting; software publishers; motion picture and sound recording industries; Internet service providers, web search portals, and data processing services; and Internet publishing and broadcasting).

Employment of writers and editors is expected to grow about as fast as the average for all occupations through the year 2012. Opportunities should be best for technical writers and those with training in a specialized field (which the TPC Program at Ferris requires). Demand for technical writers and writers with expertise in specialty areas, such as law, medicine, or economics, is expected to increase because of the continuing expansion of scientific and technical information and the need to communicate it to others.

Discussion

The bottom-line question is what is the future for technical communicators, specifically those who graduate from Ferris State University's Technical and Professional Communication Program? The best answer is that it really depends on the graduates themselves. The combination of communications skills and technical aptitudes has enabled them to move easily within or between organizations as the economy and business environment have changed and their careers have developed. Ultimately a graduate's success in the great field of technical communication is dependent on the graduate's ability to take ownership of his/her career by adapting to the needs of the market. This may also require the graduate to relocate to another part of the country to find the ideal job opportunity.

At the beginning of each year, STC publishes a respectable "trends" report relating to the state of the technical communication profession. In reviewing these yearly trend outlooks, the constant factor is that this field is always changing. What doesn't change is that technical communicators must possess strong communication skills (written and oral). Employers, according to the 2004 trends report, want candidates to have strong writing skills, experience, computer skills, and editing skills. Technical communicators need to tie their efforts directly to business goals and performance; it is all about the return on investment (ROI). Yet, this is terribly challenging for experienced technical communicators let alone fresh graduates entering the field. Technical communicators need to think of their skills as a product—creating and communicating information—and this product directly adds value to the company. A factor in the difficulty to communicate the ROI is that the field itself does not have a clear identity. Many fields can easily define what graduates will do when they enter the workforce. Career opportunities are clearly defined, too. For technical communication, on the other hand, this is much more challenging. The field has grown tremendously in the past several decades, and it has changed significantly since its early years in the mid 20th century. This has left the field in an ongoing identity crisis.

As the economy struggles to stay balanced, companies continue to look for ways to operate more efficiently on tighter budgets. This influences all areas of a business. Particularly, technical communicators are forced to be innovative and work with what they've got to do more. This is evident in the tools we use to do our jobs. We need be creative in working with what we have, not what we need to do what we want. This requires adaptability and ingenuity on the behalf of our students. At the same time, we need to be quick learners as it relates to technology. It is critical that our students possess the skills to quickly learn new skills and adapt their career to the ever-changing business community.

Chapter 8: Advisory Board Evaluation

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Chapter 8: Advisory Board Evaluation

Introduction

The advisory board for the Technical and Professional Communication Program has been an important part of the curriculum-planning process from the Program's beginning. Early in the 1980s, when the Department of Languages and Literature first conceived of and began developing the TPC Program, we relied heavily upon our contacts in the Society for Technical Communication to construct the degree requirements. Since then, our advisory board has undergone several changes, both in membership and its relationship to the TPC Program Committee.

For many years it served informally, with individuals having regular contacts with the Program Coordinator and program faculty at various professional meetings. Program faculty used the advisory board members as resources for internship, mentoring, and advising opportunities.

In the early 1990s, we started integrating our advisory board more directly into our curriculum discussions and meeting with it more regularly as an entire group. We also expanded our membership to include program graduates.

This chapter discusses the current advisory board and related activities, with the primary focus of discussion related to the results of our meeting this summer, which provided the advisory board with a renewed interest in the Program.

Current TPC Advisory Board Members and Activities

Our current advisory board membership now includes 8 professional members, four of whom are TPC graduates. The membership also represents many different areas of the technical communication field. The members and their technical communication "specialty" are listed below.

Board Member	Specialty Area	Industry
Michael Hood	Technical documentation / specifications	Aeronautics industry
J. P. Kavanagh	Proposal writing / sales and marketing	Software / computer industry
Kristine Petrin-Feko	Technical documentation	Contract house / automotive industry
Patrick Sweeney	Technical writing / illustration	Contract house
Ryan Vis	Technical writing / instruction	Software / computer industry
Chris Willis	E-learning / WBT / CBT	Contract house
Mimi Miles	Marketing	Manufacturing industry
Brion Eriksen	e-Business, e-marketing	Contract house

For the past several years, the advisory board has met at least once each year to discuss issues including the role of the technical specialty in the TPC Program curriculum, the direction of computer hardware/software use in the technical communication field, our plans for developing a masters degree and certificate program, and, most recently, the program review efforts and results.

Methods

In August 2004, we held an advisory board meeting to discuss the current program review efforts, to elicit reaction and evaluation from our advisory board members, and to discuss the responsibilities and direction of the TPC Program advisory board. Prior to that meeting, we sent the members the following list of questions asking their impressions of the TPC Program and their thoughts regarding the role of the advisory board. The rest of this chapter discusses the results of the focused discussion.

1. What do you think the TPC program does well?
2. What do you think we should brag about?
3. What do you think needs to be better?
4. What can we improve?
5. What does it mean to be a member of an academic program's advisory board?
6. What should advisory members do?
7. What kinds of roles should advisory members have?
8. How frequently should the TPC Advisory Board meet?

Discussion

The overall positive results of the informal survey are not surprising considering the supportive nature of the Program's advisory board. While supplying support and encouragement for the Program is clearly important, the members of our group recognize the importance of their "advisory" function and have, over the years, offered a great deal of sincere and useful suggestions and assessment. These data should be considered in the same light, we believe, as their valuable input during our meeting.

Perceived program strengths

The board's responses to the first 2 questions above embody their perceptions of the Program's strengths.

What do you think the TPC program does well?

- Instills good organization, multitasking, pagination (layout and design), editing, and business writing skills.
- Teaching students to write effectively.
- Provides students with exposure to practicing technical writers, through planned activities in class or via attendance of professional organization meetings.
- We have trained good writers who have been successful in the profession
- I think the program does a great job of recruiting students with basic writing skills who aren't sure what they want to do and providing a realistic career path for them

What do you think we should brag about?

- Strong advising; faculty with different academic backgrounds satisfy program needs
- Highly qualified graduates (based on the results of the internship evaluation)
- Offering multiple tracks
- Your percentage of placing new writers
- One of few formal programs in the state
- Experienced, respected staff with ties to the professional community
- State-of-the-art computer equipment, with latest tools and systems, and chances to use these tools
- We should brag about our better graduates
- The accomplishments of your students who have gone on to find fulfilling careers—however that is defined by the individual student

Perceived program weaknesses

On the flip side, the advisory board members honestly articulated their concerns about the Program and the board itself. These perceived weaknesses are pulled from the responses to the 3rd and 4th questions.

What do you think needs to be better? What can we improve?

- Teach students help systems such as RoboHelp, FrameMaker, and Webworks Publisher Professional, as well as advanced MS Excel and PowerPoint skills.
- From an industrial standpoint, greater exposure to gathering information and how technical manuals have to relate and support company objectives from the proposal (cradle) to end of product life cycle (grave).
- Writers need to have more project management skills and appreciate the business market to which they must contribute
- We're improving on the overall quality of our students, especially since we're no longer a place holder for undecideds
- We can improve student internship locations and their professional preparation
- We need more "finished" grads with more hands-on work experience. We (the tech comm. business community) have needs for mature, skilled writers with polished client-facing skills; it is rare to find that in a new grad.
- We have talked about a certificate program in the past; I think that would be very helpful for us as a recruiting resource.
- I also think that the program needs to focus on instructional writing –not just "technical" writing—as a viable career choice.
- Continue to work on writing for an online audience and web site development.
- Include some coursework in taxonomy, including organizing and categorizing large volumes of information

Roles and responsibilities of the board

In the past few years, the advisory board's role has settled into a comfortable, albeit semi-inactive state. Several members of the (previous) board, including 2 TPC Program graduates, changed jobs, moved to distant locations, or felt unable to participate actively in the board. Most of the current advisory board members also see each other regularly at professional meetings of the West Michigan Shores STC chapter and have additional contacts through professional and personal activities. Recognizing the busy professional lives of our advisory board members led us to keep our contacts informal and our meetings brief.

As both groups approached the meeting this August, we considered the future of the board and the best ways we could strengthen its role and broaden its responsibilities.

The advisory board members feel strongly that the board needs to be an active body that meets at least twice year to discuss the Program and meet the students. The meetings, however, need to be valuable and productive for everyone involved and possibly linked with other events such as Homecoming and senior portfolio presentations. In addition, the TPC Program faculty felt that market and economy changes necessitated a broader-based advisory board with wider representation, both geographically and professionally.

As mentioned in Chapter 7, Employer Evaluation, the quality of the internship experience needs to be examined. The advisory board confirmed our concerns about some of these experiences and wants to be a source of opportunities for students. This is a key opportunity area for the TPC Program Committee to develop further.

Summary

While the advisory board's responses predominately reinforce the TPC Program's awareness of its strengths and weakness, they also reflect an important Program asset: our advisory board members know who we are, what our goals are, and what issues we are wrestling with. Their awareness—and their concern—puts them in a useful and necessary position for the TPC Program. They are an important source of information about the technical communication profession and provide us with an easily accessible link to that information.

With that said, the TPC Program Committee needs to use the resource of the advisory board more effectively. The board members' comments clearly indicate that they would like a more active role in the Program; they want to be a valuable resource, more of a partnership.

Our August 2004 meeting provided the forum to revitalize our advisory board and review its membership, roles, and responsibilities. Out of this meeting, the joint board (faculty and professionals) determined the following:

- We have a commitment from several new people to serve on the board and a goal to contact representatives from other professional groups in our geographic area.
- The TPC faculty has committed to better communication with the board.
- We agreed that the board needs to meet at least twice a year and have a better defined set of responsibilities and goals.
- The advisory board members responded with enthusiasm offering their (continued) support and offers for more involvement in the Program in terms of internship and mentorship opportunities.
- To help us find ways to keep the communication open and more effective, define the responsibilities of the board, and set goals for the coming years, 2 co-chairs who will work to make this happen; one person representing the professional membership (J.P. Kavanagh), one person representing the faculty membership (E. Weber).

Finally, this self-study opportunity has inspired us to challenge ourselves to expand the role of the advisory board and look beyond our own comfort zone. Specially, we recommend the joint advisory board (faculty and professionals) consider the following:

- Outreach to regional educators (high school teachers, Calvin College, GVSU) and other professional organizations (IABC, ASTD, AMWA, etc.) to serve on the advisory board.
- Create connections with professionals outside of west Michigan (e.g., metro Detroit, Chicago, Cleveland, etc.) to support the Program and our students.
- Connect advisory board members with students.

Chapter 9: Conclusions and Recommendations

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Chapter 9: Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

As we completed the Program Review process and polished the final drafts of our chapters, the TPC Program committee members commented in various settings about the value of the experience. While the work of collecting data is an involved, time-consuming task, it's the work of compiling the data and considering its meaning that becomes the most exhausting and daunting aspect. Although no one can claim to enjoy the Program Review process, few can deny that it forces all participants to take several giant steps backwards to view and evaluate our jobs as instructors and mentors.

The process is many things, including exhausting, depressing, enlightening, invigorating, and humbling. This chapter's purpose is to provide a look at the entire self-study process and cull some conclusions from our year's work. However, rather than simply restating the conclusions from the previous chapters, we felt that a more useful final assessment would be to examine the program assessment criteria separately from their previous discussion in the chapters.

Program Assessment Criteria

The following items are listed within the Academic Program Review manual as being central to the self-study process. Although this report as a whole addresses the criteria, it does so in the context of the various evaluations and assessments. We provide summary comments here to reinforce these.

Centrality to FSU mission

The mission statement of the University states that

Ferris State University will be a national leader in providing opportunities for innovative teaching and learning in career-oriented, technological, and professional education.

The TPC Program clearly reflects the same goals as the University with its focus on effective communication within technical and professional settings ranging from business and industry to education and government. The Curriculum Evaluation chapter has discussed the Program goals in more detail.

Uniqueness and visibility

The TPC Program provides its students with a valuable combination of practical, entry-level job skills with the theoretical background necessary for career advancement. Ferris State's solid career focus makes the TPC Program—with the content specialty at its core—a strong, well-designed, well-respected preparation for the technical communication field. The Curriculum Evaluation chapter has discussed the Program's structure in detail.

Service to state and nation

The TPC Program serves the state and the nation in several ways: its graduates have successfully entered the job market for the past 20 years, enhancing communication in business and industry; several graduates have continued their educations with graduate degrees, moving into managerial positions, teaching positions, and company ownership; TPC Program faculty have represented the Program and the University by professional activities, publications, and presentations. The Graduate Evaluation chapter and the Faculty Evaluation chapter discussed these aspects.

Demand by students

Students with the rather unusual combination of interests—writing/communication skills and a technical aptitude—find their niche in the TPC Program. We often joke among ourselves that we're language nerds who love explaining complicated concepts as clearly as possible. Is there a high demand by Ferris State students for our program? It's a consistent, healthy demand. The Program Administration chapter detailed the enrollment statistics for the TPC Program.

Quality of instruction

TPC faculty, all of whom are full-time, tenure-track faculty from the Department of Languages and Literature, are active teachers, scholars, and technical writing professionals. We consider our responsibilities to our students to include mentorship, advising, as well as instruction and education. The Graduate Evaluation chapter, the Student Evaluation chapter, the Curriculum Evaluation chapter, and the Faculty Evaluation chapter all discussed the contributions of the TPC Faculty.

Demand for graduates

While the job market in west Michigan has been weak in all areas in recent years, the long-term outlook for technical communicators at the state, national, and international levels, is strong and expected to continue to grow. The Employer Evaluation and Labor Market Analysis chapter provided career descriptions and projections.

Placement rate and average salary of graduates

Although specific placement rates and salary data are not available for recent TPC Program graduates, the Graduate Evaluation surveys did ask graduates for their salary ranges, from their first job position to their current job position. TPC Program graduates have always met, or exceeded, salary and placement rates as reported by the Society for Technical Communication for our geographic region. The Graduate Evaluation chapter and the Labor Market Analysis provided more information about these rates.

Service to non-majors

The TPC Program has 3 courses that are program specific; of these only one—the capstone course—serves just TPC students. The other 2 courses, ENGL 380 and ENGL 411, are either electives or requirements in the Professional Writing minor, the English Education program, and the English B.A. program. All other Program requirements are offered by other departments or are part of the Department of Languages and Literature course offerings. The Curriculum Evaluation chapter described the program structure in detail.

Facilities and equipment

With its relocation to the Prakken Building in the fall semester 2003, the status of the TPC Program's facilities and equipment increased dramatically. We moved seemingly over night from tight quarters with insufficient equipment to spacious classroom, seminar, and computer lab facilities with room to grow. The Facilities Evaluation chapter described and assessed our facilities and equipment.

Library information resources

Not only does the TPC Program have its own growing Program library, it also is supported by a broad collection of library materials and resources in FLITE, as well as by superb FLITE staff (such as Paul Kammerdiner) who have assisted TPC faculty in assignment and course development. A bibliography of FLITE materials in the areas of technical and professional communication, prepared by P. Kammerdiner, is provided in Appendix G of this report. The TPC Program library was described in the Facilities Evaluation chapter.

Cost

Because the TPC Program faculty and courses are "shared" by the Department of Languages and Literature, program costs are extremely low. The indirect costs of the Program facilities, the 1/4 administrative release time, and the 3 courses that comprise the TPC course sequence comprise the major Program expenses. The Program does not have its own budget but is operated from within the Department of Languages and Literature.

Faculty: professional and scholarly activities

TPC Program faculty, as described in the Curriculum Evaluation chapter and the Faculty Evaluation chapter, are active in numerous professional areas. Each of the TPC Program committee faculty members has his/her areas of interest and specialty, enriching the Program with this variety and breadth.

Appendices

A: TPC Program Coordinator Responsibilities

B: Student Outcomes Assessment Plan

C: Program Review Surveys

- Graduate survey
- Student survey
- Non-TPC faculty survey
- TPC faculty survey
- Internship evaluation form (employer survey)
- Advisory board survey

D: TPC Program Check Sheet

E: Course Syllabi (examples) from TPC Program Sequence

- ENGL 280
- ENGL 380
- ENGL 411
- ENGL 499

F: Vitae of TPC Program Committee Faculty

- S. Balkema
- T. Brownell
- D. Ding
- D. Haneline
- J. Jablonski
- E. Weber

G: Technical and Professional Communication Bibliography

Appendix A: TPC Program Coordinator Responsibilities

Advising and University Reporting

1. Advise all **current TPC students** for semester-by-semester course selection
2. Advise all **current TPC students** for content specialty selection and career paths
3. Maintain files for all **current TPC students** (now approx.30), including courses completed, progress toward degree, GPA, etc.
4. Advise all **TPC seniors** regarding internship sites, contacts, and arrangements
 - during the academic year, direct and supervise all internships at no additional pay/release time;
 - during the summer, direct and supervise internships at pro-rated course pay
5. Complete graduation clearance forms and curricular audits for **all TPC seniors**
6. Advise all **potential TPC students** regarding course election, content specialty selection, career paths, etc.
7. Maintain contact with **international TPC students'** support agencies, including grade reports, progress reports, etc.
8. Maintain records of **TPC program** (longitudinal), including numbers of students, GPA, etc.
9. Develop **current TPC students'** awareness of professional activities by arranging and coordinating
 - their attendance at professional meetings (such as monthly WMS-STC meetings, etc.)
 - contact with graduates, advisory board members, and other professional technical communicators
 - awareness of work of professional technical communicators (via WMS-STC Effective Communication Competition, program library, etc.)

Program Direction

10. Organize and direct **TPC program committee** meetings and activities, including
 - annual student scholarships and awards
 - curricular discussions and review (and completing curriculum change forms, as needed)
 - annual portfolio review sessions
 - annual Advisory Board meetings
 - Program Review
11. Maintain program facilities
 - program computer lab (work with TAC and the ALC Consortium to maintain hardware and software, to address security issues, to upgrade and develop annually, and as needed)
 - program library, including periodical and book collection, collection of materials produced by graduates
12. Maintain contact with **TPC graduates and TPC Advisory Board** members to identify areas for program development

Department, College, and University Activities

13. Represent the TPC program in department activities, including Curriculum Committee, planning, assessment, faculty development, etc.
14. Serve as liaison with university and college offices for the program, including contacts with A & S dean's office, A & S academic counselors, Career Planning and Placement, Admissions Office, Registrar's Office, etc.
15. Develop, revise, and maintain articulation agreements with community colleges through FSU Articulation office, Admissions Office, and CAS dean's office
16. Prepare written materials to represent TPC program for on-campus and off-campus students (including updated brochures, letters, web page, etc.)
17. Organize program "presence" at campus activities, such as Dawg Days, Career Expo, Job Fairs, UNIV103 classes, athletes' college day visits, University College activities

Professional Recognition and Development

18. Represent TPC program (and FSU) by
 - attending professional organization meetings and
 - maintaining membership and/or contacts in related professional associations:
 - Society for Technical Communication (and West Michigan Shores chapter)
 - Association of Teachers of Technical Writing
 - NCTE/CCC's Technical Writing Interest Group
 - American Medical Writers' Association
 - Council for Programs in Scientific and Technical Communication
 - International Association of Business Communicators
 - Michigan Academy of Science, Arts, and Letters
19. Represent TPC program and FSU by meeting with area schools and/or educators regarding technical communication programs and curricula, for example, in 2001-2002:
 - Grand Rapids Community College (regarding A.S. / certificate program)
 - Lansing Sexton High School (regarding tech writing courses)
 - Reed City High School (regarding tech writing courses)

Appendix B: Student Outcomes Assessment Plan

TPC Program Goals and Objectives with Assessment Methods and Links to Required Classes

TPC Skill Area Goals

Goal #1: Graduates will be able to write effectively for various audiences

Objectives: a) write for technical and non-technical audiences
b) write for general and specific audiences

Classes: ENGL 150, 250, 311, 321, 323, and 411

Assessment: professional portfolio (ENGL 499)

Procedure: for the professional portfolio, students collect work from their academic careers, assemble the portfolio in ENGL 499, and present the portfolio for evaluation (in a professional non-class setting) for ENGL 499. If the portfolio does not pass the evaluation at this time, a student must revise and resubmit (to the TPC committee) prior to graduation.

Goal #2: Graduates will be able to collect and present material for various audiences and situations.

Objectives: a) collect material using various research strategies (incl. traditional research and interview)
b) present material using effective oral presentation techniques and appropriate tools and/or software (i.e., Powerpoint)
c) present material using effective written presentation techniques and appropriate tools and/or software (i.e. word processing, document design programs [i.e., Adobe Pagemaker or Quark Xpress or Adobe FrameMaker], web site construction and/or design programs [i.e., HTML])

Classes: ENGL 150, 250, 311, 321, 323, 380, 411, 499;
COMM 336 (or OSYS 209), 301, 332;
PTEC 153 (or 253)

Assessment: professional portfolio (ENGL 499)

Procedure: for the professional portfolio, students collect work from their academic careers, assemble the portfolio in ENGL 499, and present the portfolio for evaluation (in a professional non-class setting) for ENGL 499. If the portfolio does not pass the evaluation at this time, a student must revise and resubmit (to the TPC committee) prior to graduation.

Goal #3: Graduates will be able to edit their (and others') writing using correct standard written English.

Objectives: a) present grammatically correct writing in professional and academic situations
b) revise own and others' writing to meet standards of formal written English

Classes: ENGL 150, 250, 311, 321, 323; ENGL 380, 411, 499

Assessment: professional portfolio (ENGL 499) and editing test

Procedure: For the professional portfolio, students collect work from their academic careers, assemble the portfolio in ENGL 499, and present the portfolio for evaluation (in a professional non-class setting) for ENGL 499. If the portfolio does not pass the evaluation at this time, a student must revise and resubmit (to the TPC committee) prior to graduation.
For the editing test, students take the test as a diagnostic early in ENGL 411. Their areas of strength and weakness are identified (typically minor by this point in their academic careers). They must pass the test in order to receive a passing grade (C or better) in the course.

Goal #4: Graduates will be able to create effective document layout and design

Objectives: a) produce effective page layouts using appropriate tools and/or software
b) produce effective page layouts for various single- and multiple-page documents

Classes: PTEC 153 (or 253); ENGL 411, 499

Assessment: professional portfolio (ENGL 499)

Procedure: For the professional portfolio, students collect work from their academic careers, assemble the portfolio in ENGL 499, and present the portfolio for evaluation (in a professional non-class setting) for ENGL 499. If the portfolio does not pass the evaluation at this time, a student must revise and resubmit (to the TPC committee) prior to graduation.

Goal #5: Graduates will be able to produce various technical and business formats

Objectives: a) produce proposals, reports, business memos and letters, newsletters, informational brochures
b) also use e-mail, HTML, SGML, multimedia, as appropriate

Classes: ENGL 311, 321, 323, 411, 499;
COMM 336 (or OSYS 209); PTEC 153 (or 253)

Assessment: professional portfolio (ENGL 499)

Procedure: For the professional portfolio, students collect work from their academic careers, assemble the portfolio in ENGL 499, and present the portfolio for evaluation (in a professional non-class setting) for ENGL 499. If the portfolio does not pass the evaluation at this time, a student must revise and resubmit (to the TPC committee) prior to graduation.

Goal #6: Graduates will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of publication production cycles and procedures

Objectives: a) know how to prepare materials for printing
b) know how to work with printers (choose paper, ink, etc. and specify printing specifications)

Classes: PTEC 153 (or 253); ENGL 411, 499

Assessment: professional portfolio (ENGL 499)

Procedure: For the professional portfolio, students collect work from their academic careers, assemble the portfolio in ENGL 499, and present the portfolio for evaluation (in a professional non-class setting) for ENGL 499. If the portfolio does not pass the evaluation at this time, a student must revise and resubmit (to the TPC committee) prior to graduation.

Goal #7: Graduates will be able to create and use effective technical and business visuals

- Objectives: a) develop and use traditional technical and business visuals appropriately (incl. photos, graphs, clip art, etc.)
b) develop and use basic computer visuals appropriately
- Classes: ENGL 311; ENGL 411, 499; PTEC 153 (or 253)
(also optional courses: VISC 212 / PHOT 201)
- Assessment: professional portfolio (ENGL 499)
- Procedure: For the professional portfolio, students collect work from their academic careers, assemble the portfolio in ENGL 499, and present the portfolio for evaluation (in a professional non-class setting) for ENGL 499. If the portfolio does not pass the evaluation at this time, a student must revise and resubmit (to the TPC committee) prior to graduation.

Technical Specialty Area Goals

Goal #8: Graduates will be able to demonstrate their knowledge of information, terminology, technology, and expectations of their chosen technical specialty

- Objectives: a) present information from specialized field using the terminology (jargon) of the field appropriately
b) present information from specialized field using presentation methods appropriate to the field
c) present information from specialized field demonstrating knowledge of the specialized audience
- Classes: 21 credits of technical / content specialty
- Assessment: professional portfolio (ENGL 499)
- Procedure: For the professional portfolio, students collect work from their academic careers, assemble the portfolio in ENGL 499, and present the portfolio for evaluation (in a professional non-class setting) for ENGL 499. If the portfolio does not pass the evaluation at this time, a student must revise and resubmit (to the TPC committee) prior to graduation.

Behavioral Goals

Goal #9: Graduates will be able to demonstrate effective collaborative skills.

- Objectives: a) work collaboratively with others to problem solve, to identify the needs of the audience, and to determine an appropriate presentation method
b) work collaboratively with others to prepare written documents
- Classes: ENGL 311, 321, 411, 499
- Assessment: behavior observation
- Procedure: Instructors in all upper-level TPC requirements will require collaborative projects and evaluate students for their successful completion of collaborative projects and their demonstration of effective collaborative skills

Goal #10: Graduates will be able to demonstrate effective teamwork strategies.

- Objectives: a) work as a team with others to problem solve, to determine potential approaches to problems, to set project goals, and to work constructively to meet goals
b) work as a team to complete tasks efficiently
- Classes: ENGL 311, 321, 411, 499
- Assessment: behavior observation

Procedure: Instructors in all upper-level TPC requirements will require collaborative projects and evaluate students for their successful completion of collaborative projects and their demonstration of effective collaborative skills

Goal #11: Graduates will be able to demonstrate effective leadership skills.

Objectives: serve as a catalyst to action in team work and collaborative efforts
Classes: ENGL 411, 499
Assessment: behavior observation
Procedure: Instructors in English 411 and 499 will assign and evaluate collaborative projects that require each student to assume project leadership roles

Goal #12: Graduates will be able to demonstrate project management skills.

Objectives: a) demonstrate effective project organizational skills
b) demonstrate effective project resource (time and budget) management skills
c) demonstrate effective project human resource management skills (including assigning tasks and assessing project members' work)
Classes: ENGL 411, 499 (possibly ENGL 311, 321)
Assessment: behavior observation
Procedure: Instructors in English 411 and 499 will assign and evaluate collaborative projects that require each student to demonstrate effective project management skills.

Entry-level Skills Goals

Goal #13: Graduates will have career entry-level skills: write using standard written English.

Objectives: a) write for technical and non-technical audiences
b) write for general and specific audiences
Assessment: internship assessment (ENGL 491)
Procedure: Internship evaluation form and closing interview will identify areas of strength, including writing and editing ability, software knowledge, and other job skills

Goal #14: Graduates will have career entry-level skills: be able to edit their (and others') writing using standard written English.

Objectives: a) present grammatically correct writing in professional and academic situations
b) revise own and others' writing to meet standards of formal written English
Assessment: internship assessment (ENGL 491)
Procedure: internship evaluation form and closing interview will identify areas of strength, including writing and editing ability, software knowledge, and other job skills

Goal #15: Graduates will have career entry-level skills: use word processing programs effectively.

Objectives: demonstrate ability to use Microsoft Word (or other dominantly used word processing program)
Assessment: internship assessment (ENGL 491)
Procedure: Internship evaluation form and closing interview will identify areas of strength, including writing and editing ability, software knowledge, and other job skills

Goal #16: Graduates will have career entry-level skills: use desk-top publishing software programs effectively.

Objectives: demonstrate ability to use Pagemaker, Quark Xpress, and/or FrameMaker (or to use new desktop publishing software based on ability to use another program)

Assessment: internship assessment (ENGL 491)

Procedure: Internship evaluation form and closing interview will identify areas of strength, including writing and editing ability, software knowledge, and other job skills

Goal #17: Graduates will have career entry-level skills: demonstrate as many specialized technical communication skills as possible, including HTML / SGML / JAVA, basic technical illustration, multimedia.

Objectives: demonstrate ability to use specialized technical communication skills, as required, including HTML, SGML, JAVA, XML, illustration software programs, multimedia software programs, etc.

Assessment: internship assessment (ENGL 491)

Procedure: Internship evaluation form and closing interview will identify areas of strength, including writing and editing ability, software knowledge, and other job skills

Program GPA Requirements

Goal #18: Graduates will meet all GPA requirements of the program.

Objectives: a) min. 2.0 cumulative GPA in English-prefix courses through English 325 (150, 250, 321 or 325, 311, 323)
b) min. 2.0 GPA in each of the TPC program course sequence courses (ENGL 380, 411, 491, 499)
c) min. 2.0 cumulative GPA overall

Assessment: individual student grade reports

Procedure: • checked by the program coordinator each semester
• notices sent to students when objectives aren't met

Appendix C: Program Review Surveys

The following surveys, which are included in this appendix, were used to collect data during the program review process:

- TPC Program Graduate Evaluation
- TPC Student survey
- Non-TPC faculty survey
- TPC faculty survey
- Internship evaluation form (employer survey)
- Advisory board survey

Program Graduate Evaluation Technical and Professional Communication Program

The Technical and Professional Communication (B.S.) degree program is currently evaluating its success and making plans for the future. We are conducting this assessment as part of the University's Program Review process (which we must do every 6-8 years). For our Program Review activities, we are contacting our program graduates, our Advisory Board members, and our current students for their assessment and personal comments about the program.

We would appreciate your comments as a TPC program graduate. Your responses to these questions are, of course, confidential. We will be compiling the information for a report (which will be submitted to the University's Program Review Panel in the fall) that covers all aspects of the TPC program, from curricular issues to graduate preparation for the workplace. However, your personal comments (to the open-ended questions) are valuable as well. We would love to hear your news, your stories... all the good stuff. Please take time to let us know what (and how) you're doing.

To complete the form, choose your response by moving your cursor over the appropriate shaded response box, clicking, and when the drop-down menu appears, selecting your choice. For the open-ended questions, simply type in the shaded area. The box area will expand as you type in it.

When you are finished with the entire assessment, save the form and e-mail the saved form to Sandy Balkema at balkemas@ferris.edu or fax it to (231)591-2910. Thanks!! We appreciate –and enjoy– hearing from you.

Your Name		Telephone (Home)
Street Address	City/State/Zip Code	Telephone (Work)
Graduation Year	E-Mail Address	Fax
Graduation year		
What was your technical specialty?	What was your starting pay in your 1st technical communication position?	

If you are currently employed as a technical writer (full-time or part-time), please complete these questions:

How long have you had your present job?	What is the title of your position?
years in job	
What is your pay currently?	Which of the following best describes your employer?
current pay range	employer/company type

If you are NOT presently working in the technical communication field, please answer these questions:

Has your technical communication education benefited you in your current position? (yes/no) Please explain.
What is the title of your current position?
Have you worked as a technical communicator since leaving Ferris? (yes/no)
If yes, please include information about the job(s), including dates of employment, job / company titles, etc.
Do you believe your technical communication education was a positive factor in your employer's decision to hire you? (yes/no) Please explain.

What are the reasons you are not presently working as a technical communicator or in the tech comm field?

Please rate the following required courses, experiences, and aspects of the Tech Comm program.

#	How valuable have these been to you?	Response
	Verbal Communication (COMM courses)	
1.	➤ Interviewing (COMM 301)	rate the course
2.	➤ Persuasive Speaking (COMM 332)	rate the course
3.	➤ Technical Presentations (COMM 336)	rate the course
	Written Communication (ENGL courses)	
4.	➤ Technical Writing (ENGL 311)	rate the course
5.	➤ Advanced Composition (ENGL321 or ENGL 325)	rate the course
6.	➤ Proposal Writing (ENGL 323)	rate the course
7.	Computer Layout and Design (includes digital page design) (PTEC 153 or VISD 116)	rate the course
8.	Technical Specialty (21 credits/ Approximately 7 courses)	rate the course
9.	Internship (ENGL 491)	rate the course
	Technical Communication Courses	
10.	➤ History of Rhetoric and Style (TCOM324 –old number; ENGL380-new number)	rate the course
11.	➤ Editing and Project Management (TCOM411- old number; ENGL411-new number)	rate the course
12.	➤ Prof. Issues In Tech Comm (capstone course) (TCOM499 – old number; ENGL499-new)	rate the course
13.	The program prepared you for entry into the technical communication field.	rate the experien
	How important in preparing your awareness of the profession and your professional identity were....	
14.	➤ The TPC required classes	rate the experien
15.	➤ The TPC Computer Lab	rate the experien
16.	➤ STC/Professional Meetings	rate the experien
17.	➤ TPC assignments/team projects	rate the experien

What recommendations do you have for improving the Technical & Professional Communications Program?

TPC Student Survey

This year the Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) Program at Ferris State University is completing a self-study evaluation as part of the University's program review process. One step in this process is to collect information from our current students. The Program Review Panel for the TPC Program would appreciate your candid responses to the following questions.

Please complete the survey questions and **return** this form **as soon as possible** to Dr. Sandra J. Balkema, coordinator, TPC Program, Languages and Literature Dept., ASC 3087.

Your opinions are important to the Program Review Panel. Thank you for your time and willingness to help us evaluate the TPC Program. We also invite any additional written comments you might have.

1. Did you enter the TPC program as a (circle one)
freshman sophomore junior senior

2. What is your current academic status?
freshman sophomore junior senior

3. Did you transfer from another program at Ferris? YES NO

If yes, which one?

If you were a transfer student from another university, please indicate which institution (s) you attended:

4. What are your plans upon graduation (please circle the letter which best describes your plans):

- a. look for a position as a technical communicator in business/industry/healthcare
- b. look for a position as a technical communicator in education/government
- c. do freelance work as a technical communicator
- d. attend graduate school
- e. other: _____

5. What are your plans 5-10 years after graduation (circle as many as apply):

- a. work as a technical communicator in business/industry/healthcare
- b. work as a technical communicator in education/government
- c. do freelance work as a technical communicator
- d. attend graduate school
- e. gain management/supervisory experience and advance into a management position
- f. other: _____

6. On a scale of 1 (unsatisfactory) to 5 (excellent) how do you rate your TPC education in terms of

- _____ preparation for a career
- _____ preparation for advanced education
- _____ intellectual challenge

7. Please rate the TPC required courses (from the following list) using the scale

1 = low, 5 = high; 0 = don't know (haven't taken)

- | | |
|---|--|
| _____ a. ENGL 311, Advanced Technical Writing Presentations | _____ g. COMM 336, Tech. & Prof. |
| _____ b. ENGL 321, Advanced Composition | _____ h. TCOM 491, Internship |
| _____ c. ENGL 323, Proposal Writing | _____ i. TCOM 411, Tech Editing & Publ. |
| _____ d. PTEC 153 (or 271), Digital Page Layout | _____ j. TCOM 324, History of Rhetoric & Style |
| _____ e. COMM 301, Interviewing | _____ k. TCOM 499, Professional Seminar |
| _____ f. COMM 332, Argumentation | |

8. Rate the following areas of the TPC curriculum on a scale of 1 (weaknesses) to 5 (strengths):

- _____ the development of problem solving and critical thinking skills
- _____ the development of writing skills
- _____ the development of editing skills
- _____ the development of verbal communication skills
- _____ the development of computer skills necessary for technical communicators
- _____ the development of collaboration / teamwork skills
- _____ a broad choice of communication electives (printing, verbal communication, multimedia, television production, etc.) relevant to my career choice, content specialty, and interests
- _____ a broad choice of "content specialty" areas relevant to my career goals and professional interests
- _____ a faculty with expertise in their professional areas
- _____ sound advice, when I sought it, about careers in technical communication
- _____ sound academic counseling, when I sought it, about course selection appropriate to my career goals and professional interests
- _____ opportunities for meeting with and working with other TPC students
- _____ opportunities for developing professional contacts with practicing technical communicators
- _____ lab facilities with useful hardware and software

Thank You !

Program Review: Technical and Professional Communication Program Non-Program Faculty

Thank you for taking time to assist us with our Program Review evaluation process.

Please respond to the following questions about the Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) program. In addition to the numerical ratings, we would also appreciate your written comments and suggestions.

Once you have completed your responses, please return this survey by email to BalkemaS@ferris.edu or by mail to Sandy Balkema, PRK 120A

1. What is your level of familiarity with the TPC program?
 Very Familiar Somewhat Familiar Unfamiliar

What can the TPC faculty do to keep you informed about the program?

2. What is your perception of student preparedness for the labor market?
 Excellent Good Acceptable Below Expectations Poor Don't Know
 5 4 3 2 1 0

3. Student Conduct

Excellent Good Acceptable Below Expectations Poor Don't Know
 5 4 3 2 1 0

- Excellent = Students conduct themselves professionally in classes and work diligently to develop their skills.
- Poor = Students seem unprofessional.

Comments:

4. In what ways does your course (or courses) support the TPC program?

5. Efforts to Achieve a Bias-Free Environment

Excellent Good Acceptable Below Expectation Poor Don't Know
 5 4 3 2 1 0

- Excellent = Emphasis seems to assure that students are not subject to illegal or improper bias (whether it be gender, race, or other) in the program
- Poor = Improper bias seems to be the norm.

6. Have you visited the new TPC offices and classrooms in the remodeled Prakken building to see the computer lab and teaching facilities for the program?

Yes No

Comments:

If yes, rate the facilities for their usefulness/ value to the program:

Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Below Expectations	Poor	Don't Know
5	4	3	2	1	0

7. Would you like to receive a personal invitation to see the new facilities? Yes No

8. Perceptions of Students Receiving a B.S.

Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Below Expectations	Poor	Don't Know
5	4	3	2	1	0

- Excellent = TC students are some of the better students on campus.
- Poor = TC students are generally poor academically.

Comments:

9. Relationship of Program with other Programs

Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Below Expectations	Poor	Don't Know
5	4	3	2	1	0

- Excellent = TPC program has developed and maintains strong relationships with cognate disciplines (English Education, Speech Communication, Printing Technology, etc.) and seeks to develop further relationships to meet student needs
- Poor = TPC program does not seek out, develop, or maintain strong relationships with related disciplines

10. What do you see as the TPC Program's strengths:

11. What do you see as the TPC Program's weaknesses:

12. Please offer suggestions for program guidance in the future:

Ferris State University
Technical and Professional Communication Program
ENGL 491 — Internship

Student Name _____ Date _____

Supervisor _____ Title _____

Company Name _____

Address _____

_____ zip code _____

Phone (_____) _____ email _____

INSTRUCTIONS: The student's immediate supervisor will evaluate the student objectively, comparing him/her with other students of comparable academic level, similar age and experience groups, and with other personnel assigned the same or similarly classified tasks.

What experiences and/or assignments were provided to the intern at your site?

Check the appropriate evaluation

Relations with others
___ exceptionally well accepted
___ works well with others
___ gets along satisfactorily
___ has some difficulty working with others
___ works poorly with others
Comments:

Attitude - Application to work
___ outstanding enthusiasm
___ interested and industrious
___ average in diligence and interest
___ somewhat indifferent
___ definitely not interested
Comments:

Judgment
___ exceptionally mature
___ above average in making decisions
___ usually makes the right decision
___ often uses poor judgment
___ consistently uses bad judgment
Comments:

Dependability
___ completely dependable
___ above average in dependability
___ usually dependable
___ sometimes neglectful or careless
___ unreliable
Comments:

Ability to learn
 learns quickly
 learns readily
 average in learning
 rather slow to learn
 very slow to learn
 Comments:

Quality of work
 excellent
 good
 average
 below average
 poor
 Comments:

Ability and willingness to adjust
 excellent
 good
 average
 below average
 poor
 Comments:

Personal appearance
 excellent
 good
 average
 below average
 poor
 Comments:

Your projection of the future success of this intern in the technical communication field:

Excellent Good Average Below average Poor

Reasons:

Attendance: Regular Irregular **Punctuality:** Regular Irregular

Overall Performance (select the category that applies):

Outstanding Good Average Marginal Unsatisfactory
 (A A-) (B+ B B-) (C+ C C-) (D+ D) (D- F)

What strong characteristics does this intern possess:

Is this intern the type of person you would consider for permanent employment?
 (NOTE: an affirmative answer in no way commits you, since that would depend on your needs and the intern's plans for employment.)

Did you discuss this evaluation with the student? YES NO

Supervisor's signature _____



You're Invited!

The Fall 2004 Meeting of the

Advisory Board for the Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) Program

of Ferris State University

Where: Ferris State University-Grand Rapids
Applied Technology Center (ATC), Room 120
151 Fountain St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503
*Parking is available in the ramp below the building, off the
Ransom Street entrance. (Link to map: [http://
www.ferris.edu/htmls/academics/atc/map.pdf](http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/academics/atc/map.pdf))*

When: Thursday, August 26th
12:30 pm
Box lunches will be served

Topic: Technical communication at Ferris State: 20 years and counting

Before the meeting:
Please respond to the Discussion Questions below and send
your written comments to DrSandy@aol.com by Weds, August
25th.

*Even if you're attending as an invited guest, we would like you
consider these questions and respond prior to the meeting.*

Agenda:
12:30 pm lunch

1:00 pm The Program Review Process

- what it means
- what we hope to find out
- where we've come from
- where we're going
- how you can help

What does it mean to be an Advisory Board?

2:00 pm End of formal meeting; move to informal setting (Cambridge
House, 600 Monroe NW) for continued discussion

Advisory Board for the Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) Program

Discussion Questions:

(Respond to these questions from your personal experience w/ the program: as a program graduate, program friend, new member of the Ad.Bd., guest/visitor)

The TPC Program at Ferris State

What do you think the TPC program does well?

What do you think we should brag about?

What do you think needs to be better?

What can we improve?

The TPC Advisory Board

What does it mean to be a member of an academic program's advisory board?

What should advisory members "do"?

What kinds of roles should advisory members have?

How frequently should the TPC Advisory Board meet?

Appendix D: TPC Program Check Sheet

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN TECHNICAL & PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION

FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

PROGRAM COORDINATOR: SANDY BALKEMA
PHONE: (231) 591-5631 E-Mail: balkemas@ferris.edu

- Admission requirements for first year students:
1. Minimum 2.0 overall high school grade average
 2. Minimum ACT composite score of 16
- Admission requirements for transfer students:
1. Minimum 2.0 grade average for all previous college course work with a 3.0 grade average in writing courses or
 2. Challenge by portfolio assessment
- Graduation Requirements:
1. 2.0 CUMULATIVE grade average in all courses.
 2. 121 minimum semester credits including general education requirements.
 3. Residency requirement: 30 minimum FSU semester credits.
 4. Minimum of 40 credits numbered 300 or higher.
 5. Portfolio approval

STUDENT'S NAME

STUDENT #

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED	COURSE TITLE – FOR PREREQUISITES, SEE FSU CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTIONS	FSU S.H.	GRADE
MAJOR COURSES: 44 Total Hours Required			
ENGL	311	Advanced Technical Writing	3
ENGL	323	Proposal Writing	3
COMM	301	Interviewing	3
COMM	332	Persuasive Speaking	3
COMM	336	Technical & Professional Presentation	3
PTEC	153	Digital Page Layout	3
ENGL	380	History of Rhetoric and Style	3
ENGL	280	Special Topics in Tech Comm	1, 1, 1
ENGL	411	Professional Technical Communication	3
ENGL	491	TPC Internship	4–8
ENGL	499	Technical Communication Seminar	3
		Directed Elective	
		Directed Elective	
		Directed Elective	
		Directed Elective	
		Directed Elective	

CONTENT specialty: 21 credit minimum - Consult with program advisor for approval of appropriate course work

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

REQUIRED	COURSE TITLE		FSU S.H.	GRADE
COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE – 12 Credit Hours Required				
ENGL	150	English 1	3	
ENGL	250	English 2	3	
COMM	121	Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3	
ENGL	321	Advanced Composition	3	
SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING – 7-8 Credit Hours Required: Two courses from the following subject areas (one must be a lab course): ASTR, BIOL, CHEM, GEOG 111, GEOG 121, GEOL, PHSC				
QUANTATIVE SKILLS – Proficiency in MATH 115 or higher: This requirement can be completed by ONE of the following options: 1) Pass MATH 115 or higher; 2) Pass course proficiency exam in MATH 115 or higher; 3) ACT Math sub test score of 24 or higher				
CULTURAL ENRICHMENT – 9 Credit Hours Required: Three courses from the following subject areas: ARCH 244 PHOT 101, ARTH, ARTS, COMM 231, ENGL 322, FREN, GERM, HIST, HUMN (except HUMN 217), LITR, MUSI, SPAN, THTR. These courses must include at least one course at the 200 level or higher and no more than 5 credit hours in music activities courses or theatre activities courses may be used to complete this requirement.				
	200 +			
SOCIAL AWARENESS – 9 Credit Hours Required: Three courses from the following subject areas: ANTH, ECON, GEOG (except GEOG 111 or 121) PLSC, PSYC, SOCY, SSCI. These courses must include: 1) Courses in at least two different subject areas; 2) One Social Awareness Foundations Course; 3) One course dealing with issues of race/ethnicity and/or gender; 4) One course at the 300 level or higher.				

GLOBAL CONSCIOUSNESS: Each student must complete one course from the Global Consciousness Group, which may also count toward fulfilling the Cultural Enrichment or Social Awareness requirement, respectively. Global Consciousness courses deal specifically with contemporary cultures, languages, and societies outside North America.

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RACE, ETHNICITY & GENDER

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ELECTIVES: To the minimum total of 121 required for the degree.

SAMPLE COURSE SEQUENCE: The following chart depicts one method to begin the course work requirements. In order to complete this program in a four year plan, students must average 16 – 17 credit hours per semester. Students **MUST** consult their faculty advisor to develop a course sequence plan appropriate to their academic development and educational plan.

<u>FIRST YEAR Fall Semester</u>		<u>FIRST YEAR Winter Semester</u>	
ENGL 150 English 1	3	Cultural Enrichment elective	3-4
COMM 121 Fundamentals of Public Speaking	3	Scientific Understanding elective	4
MATH by placement	3-4	PTEC 153 Electronic Composition	4
Cultural Enrichment elective	3-4	Social Awareness elective	3
Social Awareness elective	3	TCOM specialty course	3
	15-17		17-18

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Effective Winter 1999

Appendix E: Course Syllabi from TPC Program-Sequence Courses

The following course syllabi are included here:

- ENGL 280: Special Topics in Technical Communication, Fall 2001, Winter 2002, Winter 2003, Winter 2004
- ENGL 380: History of Rhetoric and Style
- ENGL 411: Professional Technical Communication
- ENGL 499: Technical Communication Seminar

English 280: Special Topics in Technical Communication

Global Issues and Practices in Technical Communication

Instructor: Sandra J. Balkema

Class meeting times/locations: Mondays 3-4 p.m. Starr 216 and 105

Welcome to English 280, a one-credit course designed to introduce technical and professional communication students to the profession of technical communication, to career options in the field, to current issues affecting the profession, and to the students and faculty in the program.

This semester we will be investigating some of the issues that affect technical communicators in a global marketplace. In a few years, you may find yourself working for a company with offices around the world, or for a company owned by non-U.S. interests. Even if your employer is a local, U.S.-based firm, chances are you'll have international connections, if only through your company's web site readers.

Knowing how to write for and communicate with international audiences is something every technical writer must learn. During this semester, as a class we will explore the issues that affect all global communication and, individually, we will research the specific cultural issues and practices of one country.

Class goals:

identify and define some of the cultural characteristics that affect communication including

- individualism vs. collectivism
- low-power vs. high-power distance cultures
- universalism vs. particularism
- high-context vs. low-context cultures
- specific vs. diffuse relationships

Method:

case study analysis and discussion.

Our class textbook, *Global Contexts: Case Studies in International Technical Communication*, will provide the material for discussion. We will read, prepare, and discuss 6 of the case studies in the book (approximately 1 every two weeks). You will be responsible to lead, as a member of a 2-person team, the class discussion for one case. With your teammate, you will prepare a page of additional background information that the class can use to understand the case study's issues more fully.

Product:

For each case, you will have a portfolio of information consisting of

- your (written) responses to the case's discussion questions
- the materials prepared as part of each case's "written assignments"
- a one-page (minimum) supplemental study sheet prepared by the supervising team

Individual Goals:

identify and define some of the technical communication (and related business) practices in a specific (non-U.S.) country through research materials you can locate and personal interviews and communication.

Methods:

after you've identified a country you're interested in studying, you will begin your research by finding resources which discuss communication issues / practices within that country and by arranging interviews (written or in person) with

- technical writers from that country, *
- Ferris students from that country,
- Ferris faculty who have taught or studied in that country,
- STC members who have worked in that country, and/or
- other contacts you may have.

(* REQUIRED source of information)

Product:

By the end of the semester, you will have a portfolio of information about communication, business, and technical communication practices in your chosen country. This information will include all of the following items:

- a map showing the location of your chosen country
- a one-page summary report highlighting your key findings (you will provide copies of this report to the class and present a brief oral report near the end of the semester)
- copies of all email communications between you and technical communicator(s) from the country
- an 8-page (minimum; s-s, 12-pt. font, 1-inch margins) report summarizing the information you collected and describing as many of the following features / topics as possible: cultural communication features of the country; general communication practices and characteristics; education and special training typically required for technical communicators; kinds of companies that employ technical communicators; kinds of jobs available for technical communicators; kinds of writing prepared by technical communicators; "day-in-the-life" practices of technical communicators. (For these last topics, you can describe your contact's job specifically, rather than attempt to generalize about an entire country's technical communication field.)
- samples of technical writing from that country (if possible).

English 280: Humanistic Issues in Technical Communication, 001

Semester: Winter, 2002
Meeting Times: 2:00-2:50 Thursday
Meeting Place: STR 137
Instructor: Dr. Daniel Ding
Office: ASC 3092
Office Hours: 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. MWF; 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. MW; and by appointment
S-Mail: Dept. of Languages & Literature, ASC 3080
V-Mail: 591-2330
E-Mail: dingd@ferris.edu

Text

Required:

Paul M. Dombrowski, Ed. *Humanistic Aspects of Technical Communication*
Daniel Ding. *Handouts* to be distributed in class.

Recommended:

Diana Hacker. *A Writer's Reference*.

Course Objectives

Technical communication is very humane, as many researchers and scholars have pointed out. Technical communication has two aspects, as Dombrowski argues: the technical aspect and the humanistic aspect. This course focuses on the second aspect. Generally speaking, the humanistic aspect deals with the humanity of communicators, for example, how science develops theories, how humans interpret these theories, how humans transmit technical information, and how humans treat their coworkers. Through this course, students will understand the basic humanistic issues in technical communication, analyze these issues in the workplace, and discuss these issues with their peers. More specifically, students will learn

1. Rhetoric of science,
2. Social constructionism of technical information,
3. Ethics in technical communication, and
4. International issues in technical communication.

Students will write three exercises, 3-4 double-spaced pages long each, and a term paper, 5-7 double-spaced pages long, to synthesize various perspectives. In addition, each student will lead a discussion session during the semester on an issue from the textbook.

All of these objectives are intended to introduce students to the ongoing and dialogue process of examining humanistic issues of technical communication in the workplace.

Course Rationale

The best way to learn about humanistic issues in technical communication is to problematize a given perspective to examine these issues, not to take it for granted that it

is *the* perspective. Therefore, we will learn to understand these perspectives, examine them, and critique them.

Written Drafts

Although this is not a writing class, I think the best way to demonstrate that you have benefited from this class is writing papers. You must turn in at least two drafts of every written assignment. The first draft is a rough draft. After you finish this draft, I will have one-on-one conferences with you. So please bring a FULL rough draft to your conference. If you fail to bring it (or bring a partial draft) to your conference, it is a missing draft.

A missing first draft reduces the grade of the paper for which the draft is written by **one letter**. A missing final draft means that you will not receive any credit for that paper.

Conferences

Conferences are the primary means by which I discuss your drafts with you. I will schedule a session of conferences for every draft we write. Basically, I will focus on such things in a conference: the problems in your draft and strategies to improve your draft. In short, I give my feedback to you so that you can revise your draft in light of my suggestions and comments.

There are two points you must keep in mind: First, you must have a FULL first draft for every conference. If you do not have a full draft, I consider it a missing draft. Second, you must show up for every scheduled conference; failure to show up is an absence.

I will schedule conferences with ONLY those who are present in the classroom. It means that those who are absent will not have a scheduled conference time. It is their responsibility to get hold of me to set up a conference time. If they do not and as a result fail to come to a conference, it counts as one absence.

Grading

Like most technical writers, I am a firm believer that project writing is a process. To be successful in this course you need to do **at least** the following things:

- participate actively in all parts of the class;
- complete all assignments;
- turn in for comments at least two hardcopy drafts of your papers;
- read all assigned chapters and write two- to three-page, double-spaced summaries for all readings;
- lead a discussion session; and
- orally present your final paper to your peers

Keep in mind that in this class, as in the workplace, learning is recursive and evolves. As a communicator, you too will evolve. The scale below reflects this recursive, evolutionary

nature of learning and takes into account the likelihood that instruction, reflection, and revision will make you a better thinker and communicator.

3 Exercises	25%
Term Paper	30%
Discussion	15%
Presentation Package	10%
Participation (questions, comments, attendance, etc.)	20%

Participation

Absence from work is never a cause for reward. Neither is it in this class, which seeks to prepare students for the world of work. I will allow you **three (3)** unexcused absences without questions asked. Each subsequent unexcused absence, regardless of cause, will lower your course grade one-third of a letter. If you have **5** or more absences for whatever reasons, valid or not, you will automatically receive an F for the course. Coming more than **10** minutes late to class is considered an absence. Leaving class without my permission is also an absence. Repeated lateness will not be tolerated. Be assured that I will enforce this participation policy. *Failure to come to a scheduled conference will be considered an absence.* Be assured that I will enforce this participation policy.

Attendance Sheet

For every meeting, I will give the class an “Attendance Sheet” about 5 minutes after the class starts for everyone to sign. Your signature is the proof that you are NOT absent. It is your responsibility to sign. If you do not sign, for whatever reasons, I assume that you are absent.

Late Work, etc.

Tardy submittal and delinquency in reporting are not causes for reward either. Lateness can be a serious problem—in the class like this one, as in the workplace that this class seeks to mimic.

You must turn in your work on time. **I will dock you one letter for each calendar day it is late.** In addition, I read late work only after I am caught up with other aspects of this course, the other courses I am teaching, and my other professional duties. It’s quite possible that you may not get back late work until the end of the semester. Or quite possibly, I will never get to your late work. If I do get to your late work, I provide less or no feedback at all. Here I want to stress to you that your schoolwork should be your top priority. Thus, I encourage you to do your schoolwork before doing anything else.

At the same time, I realize that life is not totally predictable. It is important for you to remain in touch with me. Do not merely submit something late and then let me imagine what has happened. Let me know if you are running into a problem that threatens to force a late submittal. Like a good manager, I will respond to reasonable adjustments in schedule, but if lateness—whatever its cause—gets to be a problem, I will dock you one grade for each day a document is submitted late.

I will not accept any of the following or similar excuses for failing to turn in a paper on time:

- “My computer broke last night.”
- “My disk got a virus in the library.”
- “The paper got jammed in the printer, but the lab monitor could not fix it.”
- “I lost my disk last night.”
- “I left my disk at home.”
- “I saved my paper to the computer, but I cannot find it now.”
- “The computer in the lab was down this morning.”
- “I lost my backpack.”

In short, you should prepare early for all the papers, **not** the day before it is due.

Student conduct rules follow those outlined in the “Student Conduct and Discipline Policy” found in the *Ferris State University Student Calendar/Handbook*. Plagiarism (use of other’s ideas or words, quoted or paraphrased, without acknowledging the source) is strictly forbidden. Plagiarism will result in failing the course. If one student allows another to copy (plagiarize) his or her work, both will fail the course, no matter who plagiarizes whose.

Turning in Your Assignments

All students are expected to observe the follow guidelines when turning in a paper. Failure to do so will result in rejection of your paper, and as a result, you will be responsible for a late or a missing paper.

1. Staple all pages together if your paper has more than one page. Except otherwise stated, put your name, your class and section number, the due date, and my name in the upper left-hand corner of the first page:
John Doe
English 311 003
January 19, 2002
Dr. Dan Ding
2. Do not staple two separate assignments together, and do not clip them together either.
3. Turn in your previous draft when you are turning in your final draft. For example, when you are turning in the final draft of your second memorandum, you are expected to turn in with it the previous draft of the second memorandum. Failure to do so will result in a late or a missing paper. So do not lose your rough drafts. Clip your two drafts together.
4. You are expected to hand-deliver your papers to your professor. And when you are handing in your papers, you are expected to sign and date the “Assignment Check-in Sheet” in the presence of your professor. Failure to do so will leave you responsible for any late or missing paper.

I will distribute detailed assignments of the two papers in the semester.

English 280: Special Topics in Technical Communication

Usability and You: Practices for the Tech Comm Professional

Winter 2003 • Thursdays from 1 p.m.–1:50 p.m. • STR 130

Instructor:	Erin Weber, Assistant Professor
E-mail:	webere@ferris.edu
Office:	ASC 3090
Office Phone:	231-591-3740
Home Phone:	616-866-2820 (before 10 p.m.)
Office Hours:	During breaks
Prerequisite:	Technical & Professional Communication Students

This syllabus contains several materials that you'll find useful in English 280. For example, it includes the course schedule, the course objectives, and projects required in this course. Please keep this syllabus and use it as your guide to course work throughout the semester. Keep in mind that, as in other courses, the schedule and the assignments outlined here may change as we go along. I'll explain any changes in class, but be alert for them.

If you have questions about the matters discussed in the syllabus or anything else concerning the course, please see me. I'll be glad to talk with you and answer your questions.

Welcome to English 280, a one-credit course designed to introduce technical and professional communication students to the profession of technical communication, to career options in the field, to current issues affecting the profession, and to the students and faculty in the program.

This course is designed to provide you with the knowledge and practical experience of usability testing. You will learn the usability issues and the strategies for planning and conducting a test, with or without a lab. Once the basics are established, the course will focus on your work in a team to plan, prepare, and conduct a usability test, then analyze and present the results in a written report and oral presentation.

Materials

1. *Usability Testing and Research* by Carol Barnum
2. Various articles provided by instructor
3. Plain two-pocket folders

Goals

1. define usability—what it is and what it is not
2. define and discuss usability issues
3. determine usability methods
4. design and implement a usability test

Methods

The course will combine lectures, in-class activities, and discussions to meet the course goals. Teams will design, implement, and report on a usability test. Teams may need to meet outside the class to prepare for work due in class. Our class textbook, *Usability Testing a Research* by Carol Barnum, and various journal articles will provide the material for discussion.

Projects

1. Written Responses to Reading [individual]—15 points each

For each chapter (or article), you will answer response questions or complete exercises. The responses must be typed (12 pt font, max 12 point type, 1.25 inch margins, page numbers) and provide insightful thoughts on the reading. These responses/exercises will provide the basis for our class discussion. Expect at least 10 written responses; there may be more.

2. Usability Test [group]—450 points

The group project will consist of the following items:

- Heuristic Evaluation (100 points)
- Test Plan (100 pts)
- Final Test Report (100 pts)
- Oral Presentation (100 pts)
- Team Evaluations (50 pts)

Over the course of the semester, your team will methodically create and implement a usability test. The group will submit a portfolio that will include at least aforementioned documents and all supporting documentation. You will receive more information about the project later in the semester.

Policies/Expectations

Because the course is applications-oriented and hands-on, attendance is required. You may miss two (2) classes, although you are responsible for all work missed. If you miss more than two (2) classes, you will fail the course because you will not be able to complete the requirements for the course. Please contact me if you will miss class and keep your team members informed as well. You will earn five (5) points for each session, for a total opportunity for 225 attendance points.

All work must be turned in on time, at the beginning of class. Late work will not be accepted.

There is an opportunity to earn at least 825 points (maybe more depending on assignments) throughout the semester. If you have any questions regarding your progress in this course, please see me in my office.

Tentative Class Schedule

- | | |
|------------|---|
| WK 1: 1/16 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Introduction and overview of the course▪ Getting Started with Usability Testing”▪ For Next Session: Read Chapter 1, Appendix A |
| WK 2: 1/23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Review Chapter 1, Appendix A—<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ What is usability and what is usability testing?○ How does usability testing fit into a user-centered design process?○ Working in teams (small group communication issues)▪ For Next Session: Read Chapters 2 & 3 |
| WK 3: 1/30 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Review Chapters 2 & 3▪ Usability evaluation methods▪ Introduce project, form teams, discuss project assignments▪ Schedule a team meeting to discuss project/establish timeline▪ For Next Session: Read Chapters 4, 5; Conduct heuristic evaluation |
| WK 4: 2/6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Review Chapters 4 & 5▪ Discuss findings from heuristic evaluation▪ Begin development of test plan▪ Get information about users and tasks |

Tentative Class Schedule

- WK 5: 2/13 ➔ **Heuristic Evaluation Due**
- Review Chapter 5—Planning for usability testing:
 - Setting goals and measurements
 - Establishing the user profile
 - Selecting tasks to test
 - Determining how to categorize the results
 - Meeting with project sponsor, Q&A
 - For Next Session: Read Chapter 6; continue development of test plan
- WK 6: 2/20 ▪ Review Chapter 6—Preparing for usability testing:
 - Creating the screening questionnaire
 - Recruiting the participants
 - Creating scenarios
 - Creating post-task and post-test questionnaires
 - Defining members' roles
 - Planning walkthrough
- For Next Session: Read Chapter 7; final test plan due
- WK 7: 2/27 ➔ **Test Plan Due**
- Review Chapter 7—Conducting the usability test:
 - Testing processes
 - Organizing the data
 - Collating the data into findings
 - Plan schedule for all participants/all tests
- WK 8: 3/6 ▪ Each team conducts “walkthrough” with “tolerant use”
- For Next Session: Read Chapter 8
- 3/13 SPRING BREAK
- WK 9: 3/20 ▪ Review Chapter 8—Analyzing and reporting results
 - Determining causes of problems
 - Determining scope and severity
 - Making recommendations
- Preparing oral and written reports
- WK 10: 3/27 ▪ Each team conducts pilot test
- WK 11: 4/3 ▪ Project Planning session for first test
- WK 12: 4/10 ▪ Usability evaluation
- WK 13: 4/17 ▪ NO CLASS
- WK 14: 4/24 ▪ Writing workshop on final report
- Conferences with instructor
- WK 15: 5/1 ▪ Writing workshop on final report
- Conferences with instructor
- FINALS WK ➔ **Final Report and Evaluations Due; Team Oral Presentation**

**English 280: Careers in Technical Communication
Winter 2004**

Week #	Date	Class topic / speaker
(Tuesday 1/13 = STC meeting in GR)		
1	Jan.14	Weds Introduction to the class, books, assignments, schedule
2	Jan.21	Weds Ryan Vis, Siemens-Dematic (confirmed)
3	Jan.28	Weds
4	Feb.4	Weds Karen Casmier, Provia software
5	Feb.11	Weds
6	Feb.18	Weds Tim Slager, Siemens-Dematic (STC meeting in Kzoo)
7	Feb.25	Weds
8	Mar.3	Weds Mike Hood, Eaton Aerospace
SPRING BREAK MARCH 6 - 14		
9	Mar.17	Weds Andrea Newell, Steelcase University (contractor)
(Thursday 3/18 = STC meeting in GR — Awards banquet) Ohio panel? Friday session?		
10	Mar.24	Weds
11	Mar.31	Weds Chris Willis, Media 1 Interactive
12	Apr.7	Weds
13	Apr.14	Weds Mimi Miles, Terryberry Corp.
(Tuesday 4/20 = STC meeting in Kzoo — final meeting)		
14	Apr.21	Weds (revision / production)
15	Apr.28	Weds (revision / production)

Potential speakers/guests:

Speaker	Contact Info	Tentative date	Additional contacts	Contact info
Mimi Miles	mimimiles@hotmail.com	4-14	Michelle VanLangevelde	vanlangevelde@novagate.com
Chris Willis	cfwillis@m1tech.us	3-31	Matt Lawless	Lawless.matt@hotmail.com
Karen Casemier	Karen.casemier@provia.com	2-4	Charlotte Hubbard	primahub@aol.com
Mike Hood	michaelhood@eaton.com	3-3	Megan Roth	megan@explainers.com
JP Kavanagh	Jp.kavanagh@provia.com		Kerry Hogan-McLean	Kdhogan@kdh-tech.com
Ryan Vis	Ryan.vis@siemens.com	1-21	John Buursma	John.buursma@provia.com
"Ohio" panel		3-19 (Fri)	Susan Lampshire	SusankLampshire@eaton.com
Tim Slager	Timothy.slager@siemens.com	2-18	Scott Byers	sbyers@m1tech.com
Pat Sweeney	psweeney@explainers.com		Tom Johnson	tjohnson@m1tech.com
Brion Eriksen	brion@elexicon.com		Ginger Anderson	gingera@cowww.com
Andrea Newell	Andrea.newell@comcast.net	3-17	Blain Heneghan	bchengn@iserv.net
			Peggy Frizzo	Peggy.frizzo@siemens.com
			Lauren Weller	laurenweller@hotmail.com
			Other STC members	(see STC email list)
			Other program grads	(see program mailing list)

English 280: Careers in Technical Communication Winter 2004

Our class goal: to write a collection of stories about technical writers and how they got to the field, to their first job(s), to this point in their lives, --and where they're going next. The final product: a monograph (printed volume) of stories.

Our class plan: to invite technical writers of all kinds to talk to us, to share their stories, to let us write their stories. According to the preliminary schedule, we'll have a visitor every other week. On alternate weeks, we'll discuss class readings, plan the monograph, and edit/revise each others' work.

Individual plan: to write two (three?) stories, to edit each others' stories, to prepare them for (limited) publication. One story will be about a class guest. The second story will be about another technical writer.

Questions for our guests to consider before the campus visit:

Education / training / career path

- What degrees and formal training do you have?
- How and what aspects of your formal education prepared you for your career / jobs? What didn't you get from your education that you have needed?
- What additional formal training have you had since entering the field (or since finishing your formal schooling)?
- What jobs / positions have you held since finishing your education?

The Technical Communication Field

- What's the biggest challenge that you've faced as a technical writer?
- What are the biggest and/or most significant changes in the technical communication field that you've seen?
- Where do you think the field is going? How is it changing? What will change next in the field?

Personal / Professional Goals

- When and why did you decide to be a technical writer?
- Where would you like to go next with your career?
- What is one thing that you'd like to do (professionally) before you retire?

Personal / Outside of work

- Family members / pets / etc.
- What are some of your main outside interests?

English 380—History of Rhetoric and Style

Winter 2003

instructor: Dr. Sandra J. Balkema
class sessions: M-W-F 9-10 a.m., Starr 222

office: 3087 ASC x-5631 balkemas@ferris.edu
office hours: Mondays 10-11 a.m. Fridays 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. Others by appointment

texts: *Style and Statement*, by E. Corbett and R. Connors
English Simplified, by
lots of handouts, available from Sandy (get a 3-ring binder for these, please)

"reserve" texts (available from Sandy):

Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student, Corbett
Editing: The Design of Rhetoric, Dragga/Gong
A Biography of the English Language, Millward
A Synoptic History of Classical Rhetoric, Murphy
Classical Rhetoric, Kennedy
The Rhetorical Tradition and Modern Writing, Murphy
A Rhetoric for Writing Teachers, Lindemann
Rhetorical Traditions and the Teaching of Writing, Knoblauch and Brannon
Readings from Classical Rhetoric, Matsen, et al.

Course Audience:

This course is a requirement in the Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) B.S. program, a recommended elective in the English Education B.S. program, an elective in the Professional Writing minor, and an elective in the English B.A. (writing track) program.

Course Plan:

My primary goal for this class is for you to gain an appreciation for the English language, its history, its structure, and its politics. We'll focus our attention on how we use our language in writing and how our use has changed over the centuries. We'll look at the political forces that affect our view of "correctness" or "beauty" in our language use, and how these political forces have changed over the centuries. Thus, we will be ANALYZING language use, questioning the reasons that we use it the way do.

By looking at our language from this theoretical and abstract viewpoint, we'll be encountering the nitty-gritty issues that control the way each of you will, in your future careers, write and edit text and/or teach writing.

In order to examine these problems, we'll examine

- our own definitions of "good" writing (and agree on some shared vocabulary to talk about our language),
- the classical definition of rhetoric and good writing,
- study historical definitions of good writing ("eloquence" and "style"), and
- a topic of personal interest (for your research project)

Course Goals:

By the end of the semester you will

1. know the history of rhetoric and style--
 - a. know key historical periods in development of theory of rhetoric
 - b. know key people who developed the theory
 - c. know the influence of historical events on rhetorical theory
 - d. know the relationship of "power" and prestige with rhetorical theory and "style"
2. be able to analyze a text for its stylistic features
 - a. be able to identify features of diction, syntax, punctuation, grammar, figures of speech, format, "voice," organization, explication, awareness of audience, purpose, etc. in various historical texts
 - b. be able to identify effective/ineffective use of these features in the texts
 - c. be able to identify stylistic features particular to the text's historical period
3. be able to edit (or help students edit) a text for its adherence to current stylistic "standards"
 - a. be able to identify features of diction, syntax, punctuation, grammar, figures of speech, format, "voice," organization, explication, awareness of audience, purpose, etc. in (others') texts which should be changed in order to make the text "more effective"
 - b. be able to identify effective/ineffective use of these features in your own texts

Course Requirements:

You will each complete a language journal, 8-10 language and mini-research assignments, 6 stylistic analyses with class presentation, and one research project with class presentation. We will also have a test at the end of each "section" (language terms, historical rhetoric information, and stylistic analysis). In addition, because this is an advanced/theoretical course, we will be running it as a seminar; thus, you will share the responsibilities for class sessions with me. This means that the material you present is as important (and "testable") as the information I present.

Attendance is, then, clearly mandatory. I don't like enforcing attendance with penalties; however, if forced to, I will. If you miss class more than 3 times—for **any** reason—you will fail the course. I also don't like enforcing reading and preparation assignments with tests and quizzes; however, if you need tests to motivate you, I will give them. If I see that a majority of the class has not read the assigned materials, we will have daily or weekly quizzes to ensure your preparation.

English 411 • Fall 2004

Instructor: Sandra J. Balkema, Ph.D.
Phone: 231-591-5631 (office)
E-mail: balkemas@ferris.edu
Class schedule: Mondays and Wednesdays: 2-4 pm
TPC seminar room (PRK-122) and computer lab (PRK-117)

Introduction:

Welcome to English 411! This course is designed to build on your technical writing skills and develop your awareness of the professional issues surrounding the technical communication field. We will read critically, conduct research, manage projects, as well as design, write, and edit technical documents. We will expand our knowledge as technical communicators in the areas of technical editing, ethics, project management, and specialized media.

For those of you who aren't Technical and Professional Communication (TPC) majors, relax☺. The skills we'll be developing are essential for good English teachers, and writers, and... well, anyone who uses the English language and works on collaborative or team projects.

Course Organization and Goals:

The course material will focus on two main topics: project management and technical editing. Upon successful completion of the course, you'll be able to do the following:

Managing Projects and People—looking beyond what's known or expected

- combine and synthesize the skills you've developed in prior technical writing and communication courses
- know how to identify the personality traits and problem-solving approaches of your colleagues (co-workers)
- know how to best tap these traits and approaches in team settings to complete work effectively
- know how to approach new projects, break them into their components, and assign and manage the components successfully.
- know which aspects of effective communication are affected by global / international issues
- know which aspects of effective communication are affected by gender and power issues

Editing and Technical Communication: where does it fit?

- know what technical editing is, how it's defined, and how to determine what (and when) to edit
- know what ethical issues affect technical editing
- know how to focus on micro-editing issues
- know how to identify micro-editing errors and how to correct them
- know how to focus on macro-editing issues
- know how to identify macro-editing errors and how to correct them

Prerequisites:

Before entering this class, I expect you to have the following skills:

- the ability to write for technical and non-technical audiences
- the ability to choose an appropriate style, format, and approach for your audience
- the ability to write technical reports, using appropriate visuals and research sources
- the ability to write expository texts for various audiences
- the ability to edit your writing to meet the conventions of standard written English
- the ability to edit other's writing to meet the conventions of standard written English
- the ability to use a word processing program, a page layout program, as well as the tools associated with these (e.g., spell check, index generator, t of c generator).

Textbooks and course materials:

- *Lots of handouts (please get a 3-ring binder for these)*

Your Responsibilities:

ENGL 411 has two main focuses: technical editing and project management. The editing and background information we'll cover through lecture and discussion activities; the project management aspect will be covered primarily in "lab" activities. This semester we will complete three major lab projects. For each project, one of the class members will serve as team manager. Each project's team manager will be responsible for organizing and directing the project. Every class member will have a key area of primary responsibility on one of the projects, with everyone contributing in part on both projects. The team managers will discuss the project with me prior to the project and discuss the requirements and scope of the project. I will assist with providing background material and additional resources as needed.

Class Sessions:

You are responsible for

- reading the assigned materials,
- completing the assigned research or exercises,
- leading class discussions, and
- writing reports on the reading and research.

Lab projects:

1. You are responsible for completing your assigned portion of **each** project.
2. The team managers are responsible for
 - managing the schedule and the work of the team
 - ensuring that a weekly progress report and time log is submitted every Monday @ 2 pm for the project (note: this does *not* mean the project manager should *write* each one).

Lab Projects / Activities:

project	Software / tools	deadline	manager
TPC Program Newsletter	MSWord	Mailed by Thanksgiving	Bree'Ann Hildreth
TPC Program Posters	Pagemaker / Quark / Printmaster	To printer by Thanksgiving	Kristen Schmidt
TAC project	MSWord	TBD	Shanna Reynolds
Miscellaneous activities / skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Basic HTML• Writing for online delivery• Software?		

overall lab goals:

designing and producing a (print) newsletter
writing newsletter articles
creating a PDF from MSWord
collecting and organizing information
analyzing the needs of various audiences

writing material for online delivery
writing (and understanding) basic HTML code
learning add'l software skills?

English 499: Technical Communication

Winter 2004 • M and W from 2:00 p.m.–3:50 p.m. • PRK 122/PRK 117

Instructor:	Erin Weber, Assistant Professor
E-mail:	webere@ferris.edu
Home Phone:	616-866-2820 (before 10 p.m.)
Office/Phone:	PRK 120-E / 231-591-3740
Office Hours:	T / TH: 2:00–4:00 p.m. and by appointment

In this class we will look at the profession of technical communication, discovering the options open to professionals in this field, the skills needed by professionals in this field, and the future trends of the field. We will research these areas individually and report our findings to the group. We will also have client projects during the second half of the semester.

The minimum requirements are listed with each assignment. If you meet the minimum, you will earn a "C" grade. To earn a "B" or an "A" grade, you must exceed these minimums. I expect a responsible, professional work ethic, both in class and in lab. Thus, any absences in class or lab will affect your grade negatively and your participation in both is expected to be active.

Text and Materials Requirements

1. *Writing a Professional Life: Stories of Technical Communicators On and Off the Job* by Savage and Sullivan
2. *Ethics in Technical Communication* by Paul Dombrowski
3. A recent writer's handbook (e.g., Harbrace; Little/Brown, *A Writer's Reference* by Hacker, Gregg manual)—DO NOT RELY ON INTERNET SOURCES FOR THIS INFORMATION
4. A good dictionary (e.g., Webster's, American Heritage, etc.)—DO NOT RELY ON INTERNET SOURCES FOR THIS INFORMATION
5. Portfolio materials: professional binding system, page sleeves, high-quality paper, etc.

Course Policies

Assignments

You will be required to turn in two (2) versions of major projects (unless otherwise noted): an electronic version to turnitin.com and a hardcopy version in a two-pocket folder. Please submit complete assignments by the due dates listed in the syllabus or assignment sheet or noted during class. Late assignments will not be accepted **unless arrangements are made with the instructor BEFORE the due date.**

Electronic Version (turnitin.com)

You will need to register before you turn in your project. More instructions to come on this procedure. Not all projects will be submitted to turnitin.com.

Hardcopy Version

Please submit your hardcopy final projects in a plain two-pocket folder. Please put only one assignment in a folder at one time.

Attendance

Attendance is taken at the beginning of each class period. While you will not earn points for attendance, frequent and/or excessive absences (i.e., more than 3) will be taken into consideration in your final participation grade. Excused absences will earn attendance points for the day (please provide proper documentation of such absences such as University-approved travel the day you return to class). I appreciate a phone call or email message

when you are going to be absent; however, this notification does not constitute an excused absence without proper documentation. For example, if you have a wedding on Saturday and are going to miss class on Friday, that is not an excused absence. If you have a court appearance during class, that is not an excused absence. Any questions, ask!

If you cannot attend class for any reason, you are responsible for finding out from a classmate what you missed. You may see me during my office hours to find out what you missed. I do not give make-up lectures or repeat assignments.

Computer Lab

A portion of ENGL 499 is set aside for time in the computer lab to work on projects related to ENGL 499. This privileged has been abused in the past with students using the time to work on projects not related to ENGL 499 during the ENGL 499 lab session. Such behavior and actions will not be tolerated. If the ENGL 499 lab session is abused, we will eliminate lab privileges during the class session.

Evaluation

All of your graded projects will be evaluated on the basis of general and specific criteria. The specific criteria will be related to the nature of the project and the progress you will have made in the course by the time the project is due. As upper-level writing/communication students, I expect your final projects to be professional.

The following general criteria apply equally to all assignments:

Promptness: In this course, as in the workplace, you must turn in your work on time. All the projects are due at the beginning of the class on the dates given either in the syllabus or by the instructor. **Late papers will not be accepted.** Plan ahead and take advantage of on-campus resources (such as the library). If you are going to be absent the day a project/assignment is due, be sure to arrange for your project to be handed in.

Appearance: All your projects must be typed (unless indicated otherwise), and you should use standard margins and spacing as described in the assignment prospectus. Whether it is a letter, memo, or report, your work should have all of the appropriate formal elements. At this point in your academic career, you should be very familiar with appropriate formats.

Audience: Your communication should be directed to a specific audience and should reflect a concern with the needs and potential responses of all who may read it.

Completeness: Your communication should be appropriately organized in terms of its purpose. The information should be conveyed usefully and persuasively. Your writing should make your organization clear to your readers so that they'll know what point you're making and how that point relates to the rest of your message.

Clarity: Your writing should convey its message precisely and with immediate clarity to the reader. In style, it should be substantially free of wordiness, jargon, and other stylistic awkwardness.

Grammar and mechanics: Your writing should be free of grammatical and mechanical errors.

In this course, you may discuss the problems with other people and to have them comment on your rough draft or proofread your final copy. You may use spelling and grammar checkers; however, note that spelling and grammar checkers are not 100% foolproof. You are still responsible for your final paper.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism that falls into the category of academic dishonesty will be reported to the department office who will in turn notify Judicial Services. Instances of academic dishonesty will result in failure of the course (grade of F) and possible expulsion from the University. Plagiarism of this nature includes, but is not limited to, turning in another person's work as your own, turning in published work from another author as your own. Other work may of course be consulted as sources and properly documented, but the body of the work must be your own.

Plagiarism that falls into the category of stylistic error will be revised by the student. This includes, but is not limited to, failure to document a source, omission of quotation marks, improper paraphrasing, etc. These examples are on a smaller level than academic dishonesty, the bulk of the work having been done properly by the student writer.

Professionalism

This course emphasizes professionalism—in the way you approach the task of writing, in the way you work with others, and in the quality of the work you produce. In the course, you should strive to do work that would succeed in the professional world. I will expect you to achieve professional quality in your working and will evaluate your work on the basis of how well it would succeed in professional circumstances. Therefore, when you turn in your projects, they should look—and be—professional in every respect.

Specifically, professionalism translates to:

- Be on time for each class period.
- No cell phones or pagers during class.
- No extraneous talking during class discussions or disruptive behavior.
- No sleeping in class.
- Active participation in class discussions.
- Respect for your classmates and professor; all opinions and ideas are welcome.
- Being prepared for each class period—reading is complete, drafts/homework is complete, etc.

Revisions

There will not be an opportunity to revise your projects for this class.

Assignments and Grading

Coursework will focus on the following five areas:

1. The Technical Communication Profession
2. Technical Communication Ethics
3. "Hot" issues in Technical Communication
4. Personal Job/Intern Search
5. Client Projects (group project)

Unit 1: The Technical Communication Profession

This unit will consist of four (4) written responses from "Writing a Professional Life." There will be multiple cases for each response.

Unit 2: Technical Communication Ethics

Ethics is a critical component of a communication career. This is why we will be spending a significant portion of the course discussing readings from "Ethics in Technical Communication." Assignments in this unit include chapter summaries and exercises from the book. I will provide supplemental reading as needed. Additionally, I will provide you with several case studies from *Intercom*, the monthly journal from STC.

Unit 3: Research

Research is an important component of any writing career. The ability to research efficiently and effectively, and then pull all the information into a well-written document is essential. For this unit, you will write a 10–20 page research paper and present your research and findings to your peers. I will provide the research scenarios, which are taken from “Ethics in Technical Communication.”

Unit 4: Personal Job/Intern Search

At this point in your academic career, you should be looking for full-time employment for May/June or an internship (as a requirement to graduate). There are three (3) main components to this unit: resume/letter, portfolio, and portfolio presentation. **The portfolio presentation will be Saturday, April 24. Please mark your calendars now.**

Unit 5: Client Projects

You will divide into two (2) teams to complete the client projects. One team will work with Dennis Ruzicka to produce a job manual for *The Torch* staff. One team will work with folks in the Administrative Computer Consortium to write technical documentation. More details on these projects later, as the majority of this work will happen in the second half of the semester.

Grading

Grades will be based on the following:

	Points
Unit 1: Profession	100
Unit 2: Ethics	275
Unit 3: Research.....	150
Unit 4: Job/Intern	425
Unit 5: Client	200
Final Exam	200
Participation.....	150
TOTAL available points for the semester	1500

You will be provided with regular updates as to your grade in the course. Individual progress will not be discussed in the classroom—these conversations will be had only in my office. Please feel free to stop by during office hours or to make an appointment to discuss course-related matters.

Appendix F: Vitae of TPC Program Committee Faculty

The following abbreviated vitae include the following:

- Sandra J. Balkema
- Thomas H. Brownell
- Daniel D. Ding
- Douglas L. Haneline
- John Jablonski
- Erin M. Weber

Sandra J. Balkema

Education

Ph.D., English and Education, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, 1984

Selected Consulting and Professional Activities

Consulting

- Contractor / Instructional Designer. Media 1 Interactive, Inc., Grand Haven, MI. Contract as an instructional designer, editor, technical writer on web-based training projects for Media 1 clients, including Hewlett-Packard and Meijer, 2001 – present.
- Contractor / Faculty Intern. Provia Software, Inc., Grand Rapids, MI. As part of a year-long faculty internship sabbatical, worked in the documentation department, editing and revising an existing web-based training course and writing a software user manual, 2001-02.
- Consultant / Instructional Designer. Interactive Learning Systems, Battle Creek, MI. As part of a year-long faculty internship sabbatical, researched e-learning platforms and developed a web-based training course to assist faculty converting traditional course materials into effective online materials, 2001.
- Consultant. Bishop Corporation, Kalamazoo, MI. Research and develop plan for usability study of company's Integrated Instruction project, 2001.
- Consultant / Technical Trainer, Morley-Stanwood High School. Designed on-going assessment program to measure and improve students' writing skills. Trained cross-curricular faculty, 2001.
- Writing Assessment Consultant. Mecosta-Osceola Career Center, Big Rapids, MI. Evaluated writing samples, established evaluation baseline, developed on-going writing assessment program, 1997-98.
- Michigan Law Enforcement Training Directors' Association, annual meeting. Presented one-day professional writing session for representatives of MLETDA, 1991.

Professional Activities

- Program Coordinator, Technical and Professional Communication Program, Ferris State University. Advise program students, oversee student internships, complete administrative duties, 1997-present.
- Competition Judge. Annual Effective Communication Competition, Society for Technical Communication (STC), West Michigan Shores Chapter. Judge, 1997-2004; 1987-90. Co-chair and organizer, annual competition, 2001-04. Judge, STC International Effective Communication Competition, 1999.

Recent Conference Presentations

- International Society for Technical Communication Conference, Chicago, 2001; Denver, 1987.
- Fourth International Conference for Global Conversations on Language and Literacy, Utrecht, The Netherlands, 2000.
- Conference on College Composition and Communication, 2000, 1999, 1994, 1992, 1987, 1984.
- Women's Professional Development Conference, Ferris State University, 1997, 1996.
- Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters, 2003, 1994, 1987.

Assessment Projects

Assessment Coordinator

- Honors Program Writing Assessment, Ferris State University. 1997-present.
- Writing Proficiency Examination Program, Ferris State University. 1989-2002.
- General Education Writing Outcomes Assessment Program, Ferris State University, 1996-2002.

- Spaghetti Bridge Invitational Competition, Ferris State University, Technical Report Component, 2000-present.

Selected Technical Writing, Editing, and Design Projects

- Ferris State University's *Self-Study Report*, submitted to the North Central Association, Technical Editor and Production Manager, 2000-01.
- "Developing a Professional Identity with Journal Reading and Writing," chapter in *The Journal Book for Teachers in Technical and Professional Programs*, 1998.
- "Promotion, Development, and Equity," brochure. Written and designed for the Ferris Professional Women organization, Ferris State University, 1996.
- *Analyze and Apply™* (a 14-volume curricular guide for grades 1-12), Technical editor, Analyze and Apply, Inc., 1994.
- Ferris State University's *Self-Study Report*, submitted to the North Central Association, Co-editor, 1993.
- *Nurse Aide Course Guide*. Editor, Matthew Scott Publishers, Inc., 1990.
- *Nurse Aide Test Study Guide*. Editor, Matthew Scott Publishers, Inc., 1989
- Ferris State College's *Self-Study Report*, submitted to North Central Association, Technical Editor and Production Manager, 1987.

Professional Recognition

Teaching Awards

- Teaching Excellence Award, Michigan Association of Governing Boards, *Recipient*, 2000; *Finalist*, 1991.
- Jay R. Gould Award for Teaching Excellence, Society for Technical Communication, *Nominee*, 2000.
- Distinguished Teacher of the Year Award, Ferris State University, *Finalist*, 2000, 1994, and 1991.
- Teaching Excellence Award, Ferris State University, *Recipient*, 1991; *Finalist*, 1990.

Professional Honors and Awards

- Presidential Recognition Award. Ferris State University. Recognized for service to the University in technical editing and publication of the 2000-01 accreditation self-study report.
- Ferris State University Sabbatical Leave. Awarded year's leave to serve as consultant/faculty intern in computer-based education and training in west Michigan technical writing firms, 2001-02.
- Merit Award. Editing and production of *Analyze and Apply™* (a 14-volume curricular and training guide for grades 1-12). Effective Communication Competition, West Michigan Shores Chapter, Society for Technical Communication, 1996.
- Excellence Award. Editing and production of *Nurse Aide Test Study Guide*. Effective Communication Competition, West Michigan Shores Chapter, Society for Technical Communication, 1990.

Professional Memberships

- Society for Technical Communication, West Michigan Shores Chapter
- e-Learning Guild
- Association of Teachers of Technical Writing
- College English Association
- National Council of Teachers of English
- Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters
- Council of Professional, Technical, and Scientific Communication

Thomas H. Brownell

Writer

- Authored 14 automotive books for MBI Publishing, Krause Publications, and Car Tech Books (1983–2000)
Titles include *Automotive Refinishing and Custom Painting*, *How to Restore Your Collector Car*, 1st and 2nd editions (Motorbooks Best Seller), *Illustrated Chevrolet Pickup Buyer's Guide*, 1st and 2nd editions, *History of International Trucks*, *History of Mack Trucks*, *Ford Pickup Color History*, *How to Restore Your Ford Pickup*, *Illustrated International Pickup and Scout Buyer's Guide*, *Best of Old Cars Questions & Answers*, *How to Restore Your Chevrolet Pickup*, 1st and 2nd editions, *Dodge Pickups: History and Restoration*, co-authored with Don Bunn (a Motorbooks Best Seller), *Heavyweight Book of American Light Duty Trucks*, co-authored with Don Bunn
- Textbook: Desktop Publishing Using PageMaker and Teacher's Guide, South-Western Publishing
- Manuals: Wells-Index CNC Operator/Programmer Manual, co-authored with Kitty Manley, Wells Manufacturing, Retail Transaction Processing System, BASIC Retail System manuals, NCR Corporation
- Syndicated Columnist, Motor News Media Syndicate, average monthly circulation 900,000
- Magazines:
U.S. Correspondent, *Off-Road*, Germany (Europe's largest circulation SUV enthusiast magazine) 1995 to 1999
Questions and Answers columnist, *Old Cars Weekly*, circulation 78,000. Written weekly since 1983. Never missed a deadline.
Editor-at-large, *Vintage Truck* magazine. Write bi-monthly *Reflections* column
Nice Ride feature writer, *Michigan Auto* and *RV* magazine, circulation 92,000

Teaching and Online Course Design

Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI, 1983–present

Rank of Professor: Design and deliver courses in Journalism and Technical Writing on the internet as well as in the classroom

Consultant

- Guest Curator, Alfred P. Sloan Museum, Flint, MI. Developed history of pickups exhibit, 2004
- Presented seminars for the Transportation Faculty at the Politechnic University of Bucharest and the University of Transylvania in Brasov, 1996
- Consulted with ROMAN, the Romanian truck manufacturer on marketing, 1996

Education and Technical Training

Ohio University, Master of Arts

Dartmouth College, Bachelor of Arts

Boston University School of Law

30 graduate credit hours, law

University of Michigan, Japan Technology Center

Lean Manufacturing

Ferris State University, German language

Daniel D. Ding

Education

Ph.D. in English, May 1998, Illinois State University, Normal, IL
Major field of concentration: rhetoric/scientific and technical communication
Dissertation: "Historical Roots of the Passive Voice in Scientific Discourse"

Teaching Experience

Assistant Professor, August 1998–July 2002, Ferris State University, Big Rapids, MI
Associate Professor, August 2002–Present

Teaching and Research Interests

Scientific and technical communication, rhetoric/composition, multiculturalism and teaching of writing, and translation.

Publications

- "Rationality Reborn: A Proposal for the Historical Roots of the Passive Voice in Scientific Discourse." *Essays in the Study of Scientific Discourse: Methods, Practice, and Pedagogy*. John Battalio (ed.). Greenwich, CT: Ablex Publishing, 1998.
- "Marxism, Ideology, Power and Scientific and Technical Writing." *The Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* 28: 133-61, 1998.
- "Teaching Analysis in a Multicultural Classroom." *In Our Own Voice*. Tina Good and Leanne Washauer (eds.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 146-152, 1999.
- "Influence of Burke and Lessing on the Semiotic Theory of Document Design: Ideologies and Good Images of Documents." *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* 30: 31-47, 2000.
- "Object-centered: How Engineering Writing Embodies Objects—A Study of Four Engineering Documents." *Journal of Society for Technical Communication* 48 (3), 2001.
- "Challenges and Opportunities: Teaching Technical Writing at Suzhou University, China." *Journal of Technical Communication* 48 (4), 2001. (Co-author: John Jablonski)
- "Another Multicultural Classroom: A Personal Essay." *China Today*, 2001.
- "How Does Scientific Passive Voice Embody Social Values of Science?" *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* (32) 2, 2002
- "The Emergence of Technical Communication in China—*Yi Jing (I Ching)*: The Budding of a Tradition." *Journal of Business and Technical Communication* (17) 3, 2003
- "Context-oriented: How Is Chinese Traditional Drug Labelling Developed." *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication* (33) 3, 2004.

In Press

- "Proper Human Relationships, Self-denial, and Distaste for Gains: How Confucianism Influences Professional Communication in China." ATTW Series on International Technical Communication.

Forthcoming (as one the two contributors):

- Forum Devoted to International Technical Communication, a Special Issue of *Journal of Business Communication*. (The other contributor to the Forum: Dr. Mohan Limaye, emeritus professor from Idaho State University at Boise)

Membership

- Modern Language Association, 1997–Present
- Society for Technical Communication (senior member), 1996–Present
- National Council of Teachers of English, 1997–Present
- Conference on College Composition and Communication, 1997–Present
- Association of Teachers of Technical Writing, 1997–Present
- Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters, 1999–Present

Douglas L. Haneline

Education

- Ph.D. The Ohio State University, English, 1978
M.A. University of Delaware, English, 1972
A.B. Middlebury College, Political Science, 1970

Dissertation: "The Swing of the Pendulum: Naturalism in Contemporary American Literature" (1978)

Additional Study: University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Northern State University, University of Kansas, Ferris State University, American Medical Writers Association

Teaching Experience

- Ferris State University, Big Rapids, Michigan—Professor of English, 1984-present
- Dakota State University, Madison, South Dakota—Associate Professor of English, 1979–1984
- The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio—GTA, Lecturer in English, 1972–1979
- University of Delaware, Newark, Delaware—GTA in English, 1971–1972

Areas of Specialization

- American Literature; Cemetery Art; Freshman, Sophomore, and Advanced Composition; Biomedical Writing
- Introductory Latin; Regional Accreditation; General Education; Outcomes Assessment; Program Review

Administrative Experience

Ferris State University—Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, 1999–2001

Consulting

North Central Association, Higher Learning Commission—Peer Reviewer, 2000–2008

Publications

In College English, American Medical Writers Association Journal, ERIC Digest, Studies in Technical Communication

Text and Photo Display

"Cemetery Art in Western Michigan: A Celebration"

Presentations and Program Appearances

American Medical Writers Association, National Council of Teachers of English, American Association for Higher Education, Conference on College Composition and Communication, American Medical Record Association, Michigan College English Association, Michigan Medical Record Association, Michigan Society of Radiologic Technologists, Michigan Association of Departments of English, Michigan Council of Teachers of English, West Michigan Regional Planning Consortium

Honors and Awards

Fellow of the American Medical Writers Association, Ferris State University Academic Excellence Award

Professional Affiliations

- Dakota Writing Project (1982–1984), Humanities Council of West Central Michigan, Michigan Humanities
- Council (1996–2000), American Medical Writers Association, Association of Teachers of Technical Writing
- National Council of Teachers of English, Conference on College Composition and Communication

Current Projects

- American cemetery art, a scholarly and photographic project
- On-line graduate course in medical writing and editing for Ferris State University

John Jablonski

Education

Doctor of Philosophy. Wayne State University. 1992.
Master of Science in Business Administration. Boston University. 1980.
Master of Arts. Wayne State University. 1975.
German. Defense Language Institute, West Coast.
Bachelor of Arts. University of Michigan. 1969.

Other Education

Computer Science, FORTRAN. Hungarian.

Employment

Present Professor. Department of Languages and Literature. Ferris State University. Big Rapids, MI.

2002–03 Senior Fulbright Lecturer. Institute for English and American Studies, University of Debrecen, Hungary.

1988–91 English Instructor (Graduate Assistant). Wayne State University, Detroit, MI. Taught classes in composition, technical writing.

1987–88 Chair, Department of English. The Collegiate Schools, Richmond, VA.

1984–87 Cultural Affairs Officer, Assistant Public Affairs Officer. U.S. Embassy Budapest, Hungary.

1982–84 Teacher. John F. Kennedy Schule. Berlin, Germany.

1981–82 International Marketing Representative. IMSL, Inc. Houston, TX.

1978–80 Teacher. John F. Kennedy Schule.

1969–77 Teacher. South Redford Schools. Redford, Michigan.

Military

1971–74 Intelligence translator and analyst. United States Army Security Agency, Field Station Berlin, West Berlin, Germany. Honorably discharged 1977.

Languages

Fluent German, Hungarian.
Reading knowledge of Old and Middle English, Middle High German.

Teaching

Intermediate and Advanced Composition, Composition Theory and Rhetoric, Technical and Professional Writing, Proposal Writing, English as a Second Language, International Studies, American and British Literatures, Introductory Linguistics, Structure and History of English, History of Rhetoric and Style.

Publications

Topics include technical communication, international communication, American-Hungarian cultural relations, lexicography, applied linguistics, Old English in such journals as *Technical Communication*, *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies*, and *Dictionaries*.

Reviews

Reviews for textbooks about composition, English as a Second Language, and argumentation.

Presentations

Topics include technical communication, international communication, American-Hungarian cultural relations, lexicography, applied linguistics at National Council of Teachers of English, Conference for College Composition and Communication, Hungarian-American Fulbright Commission, Michigan Council of Teachers of English.

Memberships

- National Council of Teachers of English
- Conference for College Composition and Communication,
- Michigan College English Association
- Dictionary Society of North America

Erin M. Weber

Education and Professional Training

Master of Technical and Scientific Communication (MTSC), emphasis in medical and computer documentation • Miami University, Oxford, Ohio • May 1997 • Thesis: "A Report on a Technical Communications Internship at Keane, Inc."

Bachelor of Science in Technical Communication, emphasis in medical writing • Ferris State University, Big Rapids, Michigan • May 1993

Center for Teaching, Learning, and Faculty Development • First-year teacher program • 2001

Certified Instructional Designer/Developer • Langevin Learning Services • A specialty area based on professional competencies recommended by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) and the International Board of Standards for Training, Performance and Instruction • October 1999

Teaching and Professional Experience

- Assistant Professor, Department of Languages and Literature • Ferris State University, Big Rapids, Michigan • August 2001–Present
- Senior Project Manager • MYCOM Group, Inc., Cincinnati, Ohio • July 1997–July 2001 • Managed all aspects of various communications projects including training and instructional design, technical communications, business process definition, website development and maintenance, and graphic design.
- Technical/Business Writer • IBM Global Services, Middletown, Ohio (located at AK Steel Corporation) • January 1997–July 1997 • Developed documentation for the QS-9000 certification initiative
- Consultant • Keane, Inc., Blue Ash, Ohio • January 1995–December 1996 • Located at AK Steel Corporation • February 1995–December 1996 • Developed documentation for the QS-9000 certification initiative
- Freelance Writer • May 1993–December 1995 • Worked on technical documentation projects
- Graduate Assistant • Department of English, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio • August 1993–December 1994 • Created supplemental course work for technical and business writing courses
- Medical Writing Intern/Copyeditor • Jeanne Fitzgerald (Communication Consultants for Health Care & Business), Ann Arbor, Michigan • March 1993–December 1995

Affiliations

- Society for Technical Communication (STC) • Senior Member • 1993–Present
- Association of Teachers of Technical Writing (ATTW) • Member • 2002–Present
- National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) • Member • 2002–Present
- Phi Sigma Sigma (ΦΣΣ) Fraternity • Member and Alumna Volunteer • 1990–Present

Appendix G: Technical and Professional Communication Bibliography

Paul Kammerdiner, Librarian / Assistant Professor, compiled the following bibliography related to the technical and professional communication holdings at FLITE.

Technical Communication Bibliography
Materials Available Through FLITE (September 3, 2004)
Compiled by Paul Kammerdiner

Technical Communication

General Sources

- Anderson, W. S., & Cox, D. R. (1980). *The technical reader: Readings in technical, business, and scientific communication*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Barnum, C. M., & Carlner, S. (1993). *Techniques for technical communicators*. New York: Macmillan.
- Borowick, J. N. (2000). *Technical communication and its applications* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Burnett, R. E. (2001). *Technical communication* (5th ed.). Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt.
- Burnett, R. E. (1990). *Technical communication* (2nd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Collins, C. E. , & Bosley, D. S. (1995). *Technical communication at work*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.
- Committee on Scientific and Technical Communication. (1969). *Scientific and technical communication, a pressing national problem and recommendations for its solution: A report*. Washington, DC: National Academy of Sciences.
- D'Arcy, J. (1998). *Technically speaking: A guide for communicating complex information*. Columbus, OH: Battelle Press.
- Dutton, J. E. (2003). *Energize your workplace: How to create and sustain high-quality connections at work*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Eisenberg, A. (1979). *Job talk: Communicating effectively on the job*. New York: Macmillan.
- Eisenberg, A. (1982). *Effective technical communication*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Farquharson, A. (1995). *Teaching in practice: How professionals can work effectively with clients, patients, and colleagues*. San Francisco: Jossey- Bass.
- Gould, J. R. (Ed.). (1978). *Directions in technical writing and communication*. Farmingdale, NY: Baywood.
- Gurak, L. J. (2001). *A concise guide to technical communication*. New York: Longman.
- Gurak, L. J. (2004). *A concise guide to technical communication* (2nd ed.). New York: Pearson/Longman.
- Johnson-Eilola, J., & Selber, S. A. (Eds.). (2004). *Central works in technical communication*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Jones, D. (2000). *The technical communicator's handbook*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Jones, D. (2002). *Technical communication: Strategies for colleges and the workplace*. New York: Longman.
- Lannon, J. M. (2000). *Technical communication* (8th ed.). New York: Longman.
- Perkins, J., & Blyler, N. (Eds.). (1999). *Narrative and professional communication*. Stamford, CT: Ablex.
- Roze, M. (1997). *Technical communication: The practical craft* (3rd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Searles, G. J. (1999). *Workplace communication—the basics*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

- Sherlock, J. (1985). *A guide to technical communication*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Zimmerman, D. E., & Clark, D. G. (1987). *The Random House guide to technical and scientific communication*. New York: Random House.

Bibliography

- Carter, R. M. (1972). *Communication in organizations: An annotated bibliography*. Detroit: Gale.

In the Building Trades

- Barrett, P., & Stanley, C. (1999). *Better construction briefing*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Emmitt, S., & Gorse, C. A. (2003). *Construction communication*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

In Business and Industry

- Aldred, B. K. (1996). *Desktop conferencing: A complete guide to its applications and technology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Allen, J. A., & Lientz, B. P. (1979). *Effective business communication: A practical guide*. Santa Monica, CA: Goodyear.
- Andrews, P. H., & Baird, J. E., Jr. (1983). *Communication for business and the professions*. Dubuque, IA: W. C. Brown.
- Bennie, M. (1998). *Mastering business English: How to improve your business communication skills* (4th ed.). Plymouth: How to Books. [ebook from netLibrary].
- Bovee, C. L., & Thill, J. (1986). *Business communication today*. New York: Random House.
- Bowden, J. (1998). *Making effective speeches: How to motivate and persuade in every business situation*. Oxford, UK: How to Books. [ebook from netLibrary].
- Brown, L. (1970). *Communicating facts and ideas in business* (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Brown, L. (1982). *Communicating facts and ideas in business* (3rd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Casperson, D. M. (1999). *Power etiquette: What you don't know can kill your career*. New York: AMACOM.
- Christen, W., Stoll, R., & Goodsell, K. F. (1981). *Strategies in business communication*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Cline, C. G. (1986). *The velvet ghetto: The impact of the increasing percentage of women in public relations and business communication*. San Francisco: International Association of Business Communicators.
- Cullinan, M. (1993). *Business communication: Principles and processes*. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- D'Aprix, R. M. (1996). *Communicating for change: Connecting the workplace with the marketplace*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Diebold, J. (1985). *Business in the age of information*. New York: American Management Association.
- Douglas, G. H. (1978). *The teaching of business communication*. Champaign, IL: American Business Communication Association.

- Dumont, R. A., & Lannon, J. M. (1985). *Business communications*. Boston: Little, Brown.
- Eisenberg, A. M. (1978). *Understanding communication in business and the professions*. New York: Macmillan.
- Flynn, N. (2004). *Instant messaging rules: A business guide to managing policies, security, and legal issues for safe IM communication*. New York: AMACOM.
- Gaulke, S. (1997). *One hundred and one ways to captivate a business audience*. New York: American Management Association.
- Genua, R. L. (1992). *Managing your mouth: An owner's guide to your most important business asset*. New York: AMACOM.
- Gibson, J. W., Hodgetts, R. M. (1990). *Business communication: Skills and strategies*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Glantz, B. A. (1993). *The creative communicator: 399 tools to communicate commitment without boring people to death*. Homewood, IL: Irwin.
- Golen, S. (1981). *Effective business communication*. Washington, DC: U. S. Small Business Administration.
- Golen, S. (1989). *Effective business communication*. Washington, DC: U. S. Small Business Administration.
- Grant, A. (1998). *Presentation perfect: How to excel at business presentations, meetings, and public speaking*. London: Industrial Society.
- Green, T. B., & Knippen, J. T. (1999). *Breaking the barrier to upward communication: Strategies and skills for employees, managers, and HR specialists*. Westport, CT: Quorum Books.
- Grey, B. (1980). *Modern business communication*. Chicago: In-Plant Printing Management Association.
- Guffey, M. E. (1991). *Essentials of business communication* (2nd ed., instructor's ed.). Boston: PWS-Kent.
- Hamilton, C. H., & Parker, C. (1990). *Communicating for results: A guide for business and the professions* (3rd ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Harcourt, J., Krizan, A. C., & Merrier, P. *Business communication*. Cincinnati, OH: South-Western.
- Harrington, F. (1992). *Study guide for Ober: Contemporary business communication*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
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- Hatch, R. A., & Myers, R. J. (1989). *Business communication: Principles and practice* (2nd ed.). Chicago: Science Research Associates.
- Hemphill, P. D., & McCormick, D. W. (1991). *Business communications with writing improvement exercises* (4th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Himstreet, W. C., & Baty, W. M. (1990). *Business Communications* (9th ed.). Boston: PWS-Kent.
- Himstreet, W. C., Baty, W. M., & Lehman, C. M. (1993). *Business communications* (10th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Holm, J. N. (1967). *Productive speaking for business and the professions*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Holtz, S. (2004). *Corporate conversations: A guide to crafting effective and appropriate internal communications*. New York: AMACOM.

- Horton, J. L. (1995). *Integrating corporate communications: The cost-effective use of message and medium*. Westport, CT: Quorum Books.
- Howard, C. J., & Tracz, R. F. (1990). *Contact: A textbook in applied communications* (5th ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hugenberg, L. W., Sr., Owens, A. W., II, & Robinson, D. J. (1985). *Structures for business and professional speech* (2nd ed.). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.
- IABC. (1984). *Excellence in communication*. San Francisco. International Association of Business Communicators.
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- IABC. (1993). *Crisis communication*. San Francisco: International Association of Business Communicators.
- Jacobi, E., & Christensen, G. J. (1990). *On-the-job communications for business, the professions, government, and industry*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Janal, D. S. (1999). *Business speak: Using speech technology to streamline your business*. New York: Wiley. [also ebook from netLibrary].
- Johnson, L., & Phillips, B. (2003). *Absolute honesty: Building a corporate culture that values straight talk and rewards integrity*. New York: American Management Association.
- Kenna, P., & Lacy, S. (1995). *Business Italy: A practical guide to understanding Italian business culture*. Chicago: Passport Books.
- Lesikar, R. V. (1976). *Business communication: Theory and application* (3rd ed.). Homewood, IL: R. D. Irwin.
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- Levine, M. (1999). *Lifescrpts for the self-employed*. New York: Macmillan.
- Linver, S., & Mengret, J. (1994). *The leader's edge: How to use communication to grow your business and yourself*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Linver, S., & Mengret, J. (1994). *Speak and get results: The complete guide to speeches and presentations that work in any business situation*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Lissack, M., & Roos, J. (1999). *The next common sense: Mastering corporate complexity through coherence*. Naperville, IL: Nicholas Brealey. [ebook from netLibrary].
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