

Resolution 2014-15.G
Resolution to Approve Major, Professional and Technical Writing, in
Bachelor of Arts in English

Recommended by the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies

First Reading: September 22, 2014

Second Reading:

Approved by University Council:

Approved by the President:

First Effective Date to Declare Major: Spring 2015

First Effective Date to Graduate: Spring 2016

WHEREAS, the current Professional Writing Option teaches skills that employers find desirable, such as the ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing; to edit, revise, and design professional documents; to analyze, interpret, and present data; to present information clearly and creatively; and to understand how people use writing to persuade; and

WHEREAS, the skills taught in the Professional Writing Option prepare students for careers in fields such as technical writing, proposal writing, editing, copywriting, corporate blogger, public relations, web content development, and social media management, as well as the non-profit sector; and

WHEREAS, “employment of technical writers is projected to grow 15 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than the average for all occupations. Employment growth will be driven by the continuing expansion of scientific and technical products and by growth in Web-based product support” (2012 Bureau of Labor Statistics report); and

WHEREAS, with a major instead of an option, students will be able to claim, quite accurately, that they majored in their area of emphasis, an area that will be displayed on their diplomas; and

WHEREAS, a major offers both institutional validation of students’ field of study and helps them market themselves; and

WHEREAS, the name of the current option, Professional Writing, does not accurately reflect the kind of work and scholarship produced by students and faculty in this area due to developments in multimedia composing and broadband connectivity that facilitate the production and delivery of different types of documentation that move beyond the written word; and

WHEREAS, the expertise and interests of current faculty in the Professional Writing option are situated in an intersection of information technology and user-oriented research and genres that surpass the definition of professional writing and enter a clearly more technical spectrum;

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED THAT the Major in Professional and Technical Writing be approved for addition to the Bachelor of Arts in English effective Spring 2015 and the proposal forwarded to the President for approval.