

University of Puerto Rico
Mayagüez Campus
Arts and Sciences Faculty
Department of English
Proposal for a Curricular Sequence in Writing and Communication
Submitted November 19, 2009
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1. Introduction

Based on Certification 27, which was approved by the Board of Trustees on September 27, 2003, the Writing and Communication sector of the Department of English proposes the creation of a “Curricular Sequence in Writing and Communication.” This curricular sequence will provide all UPRM students with the opportunity to complement and expand their education by enhancing their writing and communication skills in English. The objectives of this curricular sequence support and align with our institution’s general education philosophy, which emphasizes effective oral and written expression, clear thinking, and precise communication in both English and in Spanish.

2. Title of the sequence

Curricular Sequence in Writing and Communication

3. Objectives

- 3.1 Identify and apply a broad knowledge base in writing and communication theories
- 3.2 Analyze and apply the writing process (including various planning, drafting, and revising tasks) in creating written documents that are shaped by the knowledge and needs of their specific fields
- 3.3 Put into practice diverse methods of conducting research to support the writing process
- 3.4 Generate and combine a variety of methods and techniques in the process of writing effective communications for specific and diverse audiences
- 3.5 Identify, apply, and compose writing and communication tasks in diverse genres that are appropriate to their disciplines

4. Justification

- 4.1. Relationship of the curricular sequence to the mission and objectives of the University and the Department:

As stated in the UPRM catalogue (2008-2009), the mission of our institution clearly establishes a strong commitment to “the development of educated, cultured citizens” endowed with a “strong technical and professional background”. The proposed curricular sequence will provide students with a solid intellectual foundation in the theories and applications of diverse writing and communication techniques.” This, in turn, will contribute to meeting the first Institutional Student Learning outcome which states that students should be able to communicate effectively.

4.2. Globally, the mass media are increasingly inundating industry and community alike. At the same time the rapid growth and use of technology has revolutionized the way communication activities are carried out in the contemporary professional world. Because of new technologies in computing and the use of the Internet for communication, traditional methods of literacy for effective communication are no longer sufficient. The need to communicate effectively exists at every level in our mass-mediated, globalized societies and it's locally reflected in Puerto Rico's ever increasing need for bilingual communicators with expertise in English language writing and communication. The study and application of knowledge in writing and communication will satisfy this need and equip our students with the highly coveted skills to write and communicate effectively in personal, academic, and professional settings.

4.3. Academic reasons for the establishment of the curricular sequence

Students need more choices and better preparation for the current global and highly competitive job market. A Writing and Communication Curricular Sequence will offer many more interdisciplinary options for the Bachelor's degree graduate. For example, students from Hispanic Studies can graduate with a stronger background in writing and communication skills in both English and Spanish. A student in Biology or Biotechnology who completes the curricular sequence in Writing and Communication would be able to compose, translate and produce documents for science writing. A sequence in Writing and Communication combined with Business Administration would provide students greater job opportunities in a highly competitive business world where strong communication skills are a priority.

Providing students with more choices fits neatly within the UPRM's mission and its strategic planning document. Moreover, the proposed sequence would address the objectives of the Middle States and other accreditation agencies to continually "revise academic offerings" and "to complement the curriculum with practical experience in areas of specialization."

4.4 Professional reasons for the establishment of the curricular sequence

While all contemporary college students benefit from the opportunity to hone their written communication skills, a Curricular Sequence in Writing and Communication will grant students at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayagüez a competitive edge in their majors, job searches, and careers by facilitating their abilities to engage with, understand, and create a wide variety of written texts. Furthermore, the acquisition of such essential professional expertise will augment both students' studies in their major and their transcripts as they enter the job market. Finally, the study of writing and communications equips students to engage with the world around them as conscientious citizens and future leaders through the fostering of exceptional critical writing, reading, and thinking skills.

Recently, an advisory board (composed of employers) to the UPR-M School of Engineering made a recommendation to improve the writing and communication skills of our engineering graduates. The Engineering School has been considering ways to address this problem and this curricular sequence will offer a unique opportunity to provide writing and communication skills to that group of students. Moreover, the curricular sequence will help expand the marketable skills of our students in the schools of Business Administration and Agriculture as well. In addition, students in any of the multiple fields of study within the Arts and Sciences School will strengthen their academic credentials with a Curricular Sequence in Writing and Communication.

The need for proficient writers and communicators is noticeable in Puerto Rico. With the implementation of the Curricular Sequence in Writing and Communication UPRM graduates would be more qualified to compete with other job candidates.

According to Angel L. Pérez, an engineer and General Manager of Rock Solid Technologies, Inc. “as a business leader in the Puerto Rico software development industry, I see the need every day for professionals with the communication skills to produce technical and user manuals, press releases, advertising, brochures, presentations and many other forms of communication to support business success.” Graduates with a Curricular Sequence in Writing and Communication would help satisfy this growing need in the business sector.

5. Requirements for licensing or certifications

5.1 Not applicable.

6. Sequences courses, (including different curricular routes available to fulfill objectives, if applicable)

6.1 Courses

The curricular sequence consists of 18 credits. Students will take three core courses or 9 credits listed in 1 below and then select 3 courses or 9 credits from the list in number 2 below, **one of which must be at the 4000 level.**

	1. Core Courses	Credits	Pre-requisites
INGL 3231	Expository Writing	3	INGL 3202 or INGL 3104 or INGL 3212
INGL3056	Introduction to the Communication Process	3	INGL 3202 or INGL 3104 or INGL 3212
INGL 3250	Public Speaking	3	INGL 3202 or INGL 3104 or INGL 3212
	2. Writing &Comm Courses		
INGL 3268	Writing for the Communication Media	3	INGL 3202 or INGL 3104 or INGL 3212 or authorization of the Director of the Department
INGL 3236	Technical Report Writing	3	INGL 3202 or 3104 or 3212
INGL3238	Creative Writing	3	INGL 3202 or INGL 3104 or INGL 3212 or authorization of the Director of the Department
INGL 4206	Structure of the English Language	3	INGL 3225 or authorization of the Director of the Department
INGL 4107	Rhetorical Theory	3	INGL 3231 or authorization of the Director of the Department
INGL 4108	Advanced Technical Communication	3	INGL 3236
INGL 4008	Creative Non-Fiction Writing	3	INGL 3231 and INGL 3238
INGL 4066	Research in Writing and Communication	3	INGL 3231 and six credits from (INGL3236, 3238, 3268, 4107, 4108.)
INGL 4059	Persuasive Writing	3	INGL 3231 and INGL 3268
INGL 4XXX	Feature Writing	3	INGL 3268 and INGL 4008
INGL 4XXX	Group Communication	3	INGL 3056
INGL 4XXX	Media Literacy	3	INGL 3056
INGL 4XXX	Professional Editing	3	INGL 4008or INGL 3231 or INGL3238 or INGL 3268

As the department approves new writing courses they will be added as electives to this list, thus expanding the options of students in the curricular sequence.

7. Minimum qualification requirements to declare intention to include sequence in study plan

- 7.1 Students must complete the institutional requirements in English. Courses that count as part of the institutional requirements will not count as part of the curricular sequence. For students who take one or two of the courses in the sequence as part of their institutional requirements, they must take one or two (whichever be the case) additional sequence courses to complete the 18 required credits.
- 7.2. Students should have a GPA higher or equal to 2.75.

- 7.3 Students should not be in probationary status.
- 7.4 Students should not have withdrawn more than one time from any course in the Curricular Sequence in Writing and Communication prior to admission into the sequence.
- 7.5 Students should not have failed a writing and communication course prior to admission into the sequence.
- 7.6 Students should interview with and receive a positive recommendation from the coordinator of the curricular sequence and/or the Director of the Department.

8. Requirement for sequence to be approved satisfactorily and registered in the student academic record

- 8.1 Approve all 18 credits in the sequence as specified in the course offerings for the curricular sequence in Section 5 of this proposal with a GPA of 2.75 or higher.
- 8.2 Students must earn a C or higher grade in each course in the Curricular Sequence.

9. Assessment plan

9.1 The following objectives will be assessed:

9.1.1 General objectives

Objective	Method	Success measure	Assessment schedule
Implementation of curricular sequence by Fall 2010		Schedule sequence courses Recruit first certificate applicant	Fall 2010
Promote the curricular sequence among all university students	Brochures, department and university electronic media. Promotion among orientation committees throughout the university	Demand for sequence Number of students registered for the sequence	Fall 2011 and after that every 3 years.
Assess the knowledge and skills of the students who complete the curricular sequence	A variety of assessment techniques that may include exit interviews, portfolios, surveys, etc.	Positive evaluation by faculty members who conduct the assessment process based on the academic objectives of the curricular sequence.	This will be an individual assessment to be conducted when students complete the sequence.

9.1.2 Budget

This curricular sequence will not have an impact on the Department of English budget because the department already has the human and technological resources to begin and sustain the sequence. The Department will assess this aspect cyclicly after implementation of the sequence at least every three years.

Objectives	Method	Success measure	Assessment schedule
Assess budget impact of the curricular sequence	Evaluate number of students in the sequence Evaluate impact of curricular sequence on number of course sections		The Department will assess this aspect cyclically after implementation of the sequence at least every three years.