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In a 1985 article in *College English*, Jay L. Robinson calls for English professors to "rethink what we mean by reading and by writing" (489). He offers advice to those who would design or administer writing programs:

A proper aim for writing programs . . . might well be to invite and help students to develop as ethnographers of thought—as careful and reflective participant-observers, critical thinkers of their own thoughts, . . . able to assert and make a place for themselves as makers of meanings that are personally satisfying . . . (492).

Ideally, writing programs offer students the means of making such meanings, of obtaining such satisfactions, both in the world of literature and in the world of work. However, many writing programs fall short of these ideals because they simply overlay a traditional curriculum of literary studies with a few specialized courses, typically in technical writing and traditional grammar, and assume that students will develop professional writing skills from their experiences analyzing literary texts. Rethinking the complementary skills of reading and writing demands a new curriculum, one that does not diminish the importance of either literary analysis or the mastery of applied skills. An innovative writing program should encourage this process of curricular redefinition. At the University of New Mexico (UNM), we feel we have created such a writing program—the concentration in professional writing.

The undergraduate English curriculum at UNM has evolved over the last seven years from a single curriculum concentrating on literary study to an array of several curricula, each with its own concentration. The traditional concentration remains to prepare students for graduate study of literature. The other concentrations emphasize pre-law, pre-business, public school teaching, creative writing, and, most recently, professional writing.

Recognizing that most of our undergraduate majors enter non-academic, professional careers, the Department approved the newest concentration in the fall of 1984. The professional writing curriculum attempts to integrate the study of writing practice, language theory, and literary criticism into a single curriculum that will prepare students for the diverse employment opportunities they will find after they graduate.

The professional writing concentration teaches the analytical, research, and writing skills needed for non-academic, professional careers in

technical writing and editing, public relations, and many other positions in business and government. In that sense, the concentration is vocational. But it also asks students to question what it means to be a professional writer. To the uninitiated, writers in the world of work are quasi-professionals, support staff who merely transmit the information they communicate. In fact, professional writers are responsible for the rhetorical effectiveness of their work. For the most part they do not originate information, but they create the documents whose contexts turn information into knowledge, and knowledge into action.

To be more than skilled technicians, more than hacks or propagandists, professional writers must critically examine their roles as communicators. The messenger is no longer removed from the morality of the message. Recognizing and reconciling the moral dilemmas of life is the great theme of the humanities in general and of literature study in particular. Our professional writing concentration anticipated Robinson's call for new curricula: it offers students vocational and humanistic preparation by teaching skills and critically examining the contexts in which those skills will be employed.

Curriculum Description

The curriculum requires thirty-four hours of coursework in English beyond the six hours of freshman composition required of all UNM students. Twelve of these hours are in writing courses, and twenty-one hours are in literature and language seminars and surveys. One hour of credit is granted for a required internship in writing, completing the thirty-four hours of required English courses. In addition to their English study, students complete a professional complement that requires nine hours of upper division coursework in a technical, professional, or scientific field. Finally, students must demonstrate minimal computer competency by demonstrating proficiency in the use of a word processor. The complete sequence of courses is presented at the end of the article, along with descriptions of the writing courses, a listing of some recent internship placements, and the titles of some representative senior projects.

Of the twelve hours of required writing courses, nine are upper division, which balance exactly with the nine hours of upper division work required in literature and criticism. The concentration is similar to an English honors curriculum designed for students whose special interests are in writing rather than in literature, and in non-academic, professional employment rather than in graduate English study. The similarity to an honors program is strongest in the senior year when all students complete an internship and most complete an optional senior project. Students may elect to substitute an additional upper division writing seminar for the senior project, but most choose to do a project. Instead of

the traditional curriculum's honors seminar and senior thesis, professional writing students undertake an internship and then an extensive writing project that culminates in a written report of undergraduate thesis length and quality. The project report is reviewed by the Professional Writing Committee, and the student must give a public, oral presentation in a manner similar to the defense of an honors thesis.

The curriculum does not require English 219, our department's service course in technical writing. We decided it would not be wise to mix English majors preparing for careers as professional writers with engineering and business majors seeking skills to complement their professional careers. We require technical writing in the 18-hour professional writing minor, where 219's focus on the writing needs of students who are not English majors is appropriate. For majors, the course is optional. This makes the technical writing course analogous to the 100 and 200-level literature courses the Department offers that do not satisfy requirements in the traditional literature concentration. Students take such courses to fulfill the requirements of other departments, the college, the university, or simply to satisfy their own curiosity.

We do offer a course devoted to technical writing in the major concentration. It is taught in rotation with other topics in the junior-level workshop in advanced expository writing, English 320. In different semesters, the 320 workshop and its companion course, the senior-level 411 special topics course, focus on different genres, such as technical writing, non-fiction writing, science writing, and writing for visual presentation. Technical writing is only one of many careers open to professional writing graduates. Excluding the service course in technical writing from the required courses in the professional writing curriculum emphasizes that the concentration is an English degree, that it is concerned with literacy in a broad sense, that it is not simply an expansion of the Department's service offerings in technical writing.

Literacy as a Professional Skill

The English department is the appropriate academic address for a curriculum that promotes literacy as a generalized professional credential. Professional writers must possess an analytical and critical intelligence coupled with a synthetic, expressive power—they must be insightful readers as well as efficient writers. The critical reading of literature promotes research and analytical skills, and the practice of writing skills encourages the critical reading of all types of writing, literary and non-literary alike. Together with a basic knowledge of the grammatical structure of our language and familiarity with professional practices acquired in the professional complement coursework, the professional writing

curriculum offers a rigorous preparation for a professional career based on proficient writing skills.

That the traditional literature curriculum is a decent preparation for a professional career has been argued in several articles and pamphlets (see Orange 1972, rev. 1979; Evans 1978; Clayton 1981) and is the sole topic of Dorothy K. Bestor's well-known book *Aside from Teaching English, What in the World Can You Do?* These authors answer the central question about English studies, that Bestor candidly acknowledges in her title, by citing non-academic careers that English graduates have successfully pursued. But none of them calls for fundamental changes in the English curriculum.

Linwood E. Orange's pamphlet, *English: The Pre-Professional Major*, is the classic source for statistics indicating the employment market value of an English degree. Orange surveyed "fifty-three law schools and thirty-seven medical schools . . . nearly four hundred industrial organizations of the 'blue chip' variety, and forty-three governmental agencies" (2). He discovered English majors working everywhere he looked, from aircraft industries to rubber manufacturers. These former literature majors held an equally wide variety of positions (see Orange, Table 2, p. 9). Orange's immediate point is important and utterly convincing: the jobs are there for English majors who will actively seek them.

But Orange's larger argument that the traditional English curriculum adequately prepares students for those jobs is not so convincing. Orange notes that some of the more successful job seekers had academic preparations quite different from the typical English major's. He cites a "straight A 'double major' (English and Business Administration)" as "the most successful of these graduates," and also notes that "several . . . graduates who included advanced composition, creative writing, and technical writing in their undergraduate curricula" found satisfying work as technical writers (19). Orange mentions these students in passing without assessing how much their extra-literary studies might have influenced their success in the job market or reflecting that these students' experiences might indicate a need for changes in the English curriculum.

William H. Evans takes an historical approach, citing studies from the 1930s to document first that today's poor job market for college professors of literature is not an aberration and second that English majors have always entered careers outside of academe. Evans summarizes the advice of the authors he researched, and he asserts that their advice remains valid: "Stress at all times the practical skills of reading, writing, and speaking. Give practice, practice, practice in writing . . . better information about alternative careers . . . [and] participate actively in non-teaching internships" (205). Like Orange, Evans does not discuss the problems students would encounter trying to accomplish these goals

while meeting the survey and seminar requirements of the traditional literature curriculum.

John J. Clayton writes that majoring in English "leads naturally to careers in many areas" (122) because students learn how to learn: "They . . . become creative, aware, critical learners" (123), which makes them "people who think for themselves, communicate well, and operate with a complex humanity," who are thereby "more competent in new learning, [and] better professionals in any field" (125). This is attractive stuff for all humanists, but the practical recommendation that Clayton offers is only that English departments should provide their majors with better counseling about non-academic careers. He recommends against changing the traditional curriculum to include courses that explicitly teach non-academic skills.

Evans writes that the "B.A. in English is a viable degree, provided the student . . . adds non-English courses and work experience in a field in which that student has interests and skills" (204). And Clayton tells us that "one theme asserted itself again and again: the necessity for training *outside* English—through coursework, job experience, and advanced degrees" (130) [Clayton's emphasis]. The obvious question that is neither asked nor answered is this: What is really viable and relevant? The English degree? Or is it the "non-English courses," the "training *outside* English"?

UNM's professional writing concentration responds to this question by clearly identifying the acquisition of language skills, analytical skills, and writing skills as the three goals of a pre-professional approach to English studies. The integrative theory behind the concentration is evident in the three courses students must take before beginning upper division work: English 240, "Traditional Grammar"; English 250, "The Analysis of Literature"; and English 298, "Writing and the Professions."

Sophomore-level courses provide the foundation of basic knowledge and skills that allows for more intensive study in upper division courses. In the teaching concentration, English 240's curricular role is to ensure that future public school teachers thoroughly understand the structure of English as it is described by traditional grammar. In the pre-graduate, traditional literature concentration, English 250 introduces students to methods of literary criticism. In the professional writing concentration, 240 and 250 become parallel courses that prepare students to take English 298, the pivotal sophomore course. The study of traditional grammar in 240 introduces students to basic analytical techniques for working with sentences; English 250 does the same for whole texts. Then, in English 298, students see how the knowledge gained in the two earlier courses may be used in the world of professional writing. For example, copyediting uses some of the analytical skills learned in the study of

traditional grammar; substantive editing, audience analysis, and rhetorical analysis use some of the analytical skills learned in the study of criticism.

Students in "Writing and the Professions" explore the range of careers open to college graduates with strong writing abilities. They write two papers each in the context of three scenarios that reflect the genres that roughly describe the employment opportunities for writing professionals: technical writing, public information and public relations writing, and freelance non-fiction writing. Some limited library research into the concept of professionalism itself is augmented by the presentations of professional writers who appear as guest speakers to discuss their experiences and respond to students' questions. The course combines the identification and practice of professional writing skills with reflection on the ethos that must accompany the application of those skills if a practitioner is to be recognized as a true professional.

Literacy and Literature

We agree with E. D. Hirsch, Jr. that as English professors "our recent experiment of being exclusively professors of literature has been a rather short-lived and unsuccessful one, with unfortunate practical consequences" (64). One of the most unfortunate of those consequences is the vitiating schism in English departments between literature and writing professors. Maxine Hairston, in her keynote speech at the 1985 CCCC, expressed the frustration of many writing professors when she called for "a psychological break with the literary critics who today dominate the profession of English studies" (1). UNM's professional writing concentration is our attempt to avert this break, to replace Hairston's call for separation with a call for reunion. Our professional writing concentration recalls an older time when the mission of English departments was defined by commitment to a more broadly defined literacy—to reading and to writing, in more equal measures.

Today, literature and writing professors and the curricula they teach in need each other in a single, united department for very practical, unromantic reasons. Academics have always been challenged to articulate to society outside of the university the relevance of our studies and of our teaching. But recently the nature of this challenge has profoundly changed. Corporations are spending billions of dollars annually to train students, not all of them employees. In more and more cases, the corporate classroom is part of an accredited, degree granting program. These huge expenditures would not threaten academia if training meant no more than teaching the application of specific skills to specific jobs. However, corporations now train students in everything from remedial

education to sophisticated graduate research. In a recent Carnegie Foundation Special Report, Nell Eurich documents how instruction in corporate classrooms is encroaching upon the traditional domain of colleges and universities:

Beyond basics, more and more companies are teaching analytic skills and critical thinking, conceptual bases for transferable knowledge, foreign language, psychology and sociology, economics, college algebra, physics, and other courses in science and technology (77).

Eurich's statement is chilling: no department in any college or university goes unchallenged. Those of us in English, whether we teach Romantic poetry or advanced composition, should be especially sensitive to the implications of the corporations' need to offer instruction in "analytic skills and critical thinking." Cultivating precisely those habits of mind has been the traditional province of the University, the special charge of the colleges of liberal arts, and the specific concern of the traditional English curriculum. The syllabi being distributed in these new corporate classrooms should tell us that English curricula designed to teach "analytic skills and critical thinking" predominantly in the context of literary criticism do not adequately prepare students to analyze and criticize outside of academe. The remedy to this deficiency, however, is not to create separate writing departments with heavily skills-based curricula. That would challenge the corporate trainers on their own vocational ground—and lose. Let the corporations have the vocational ground. But keep them there.

English department faculty and students need not choose between avoiding or embracing either vocationalism or humanism. Hairston pointed to this conclusion when she noted that nothing is "more central to English studies than teaching people to write" (2) and that writing courses teach "the exercise of a primary intellectual activity" (4). UNM's professional writing curriculum defines a sequence of courses designed to show students how that "primary intellectual activity" is relevant to both writing and literature courses, to both the academic and the non-academic interests in our society.

Conclusion

We believe that the most promising future of specialized writing study is as one part of a generalized English curriculum that accepts the complementary importance of writing and literature. Similarly, the most promising future for specialized literature study is as another part of that same curriculum. We want writing across the English department.

Works Cited

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Concentration in Professional Writing: Sequence of Courses

Core of Required Courses (19 hours)

Eng 240	Traditional Grammar
Eng 250	Analysis of Literature
Eng 298	Writing and the Professions
Eng 320**	Advanced Expository Writing
Eng 411**	Special Topics in Professional Writing
Eng 497	Professional Writing Internship (One Credit Hour)
Eng 498##	Senior Project in Professional Writing

Lower Division Electives (6 hours)

Eng 219 OR 220	Technical Writing OR Expository Writing
Eng 294-95	British Literature Surveys
Eng 296	American Literature Survey
Eng 375-76	World Literature Surveys

Upper Division Electives (9 hours)

Eng 351-410	Authors: Chaucer, Shakespeare, Milton, and so on
Eng 440, 441, 445	Rhetoric, English Grammars, History of the Language
Eng 449-470; 485-86	Genres, Historical Periods, Criticism

Professional Complement: 9 upper division hours in one or a combination of professional/technical/scientific courses.

Computer Competency: Demonstrate proficiency using any word processor.

**Students may substitute appropriate courses in other departments or take either 320 or 411 twice when it is offered with different topics.

##Students may substitute an additional 320 or 411 for 498.

Professional Writing Course Descriptions

298 Writing and the Professions

The introductory course to the upper division curriculum. Students learn PC-Write, a shareware word processor; write proposals and reports, brochures and newsletter articles, query letters and a non-fiction article while studying technical writing, public information and public relations writing, and freelance writing; prepare a portfolio of their writing.

320 Advanced Expository Writing

Offered with different emphases in different semesters, the course focuses on practical applications of writing. Some recent course titles include "Writing for America's Media," "Rhetoric of Practical Writing," "Writing Academic Discourse," "Advanced Technical Writing," "Public Information/Public Relations Writing," "Writing for Visual Presentation," and "Rhetoric of Political Writing."

411 Special Topics in Professional Writing

Approaches writing topics with greater emphasis on theory than on practice. Recent course titles include "Language Theory and Editing Practice," "Writing Biography and Autobiography," "Varieties of Audience Analysis."

497 Internship in Professional Writing

Students receive one hour of credit for the proposals, progress reports, and final reports they write that document their experiences as writers and editors in non-academic, professional settings. The on-the-job internship placements vary greatly. Students have written and supervised the publication of pamphlets and booklets ranging from one to one hundred pages in length; they have written and edited software documentation and technical spec sheets; they have written and produced videotapes for corporate training and promotions; they have researched, written, and proposed public relations materials ranging from brochures announcing single events to a proposal for an entire year's campaign; they have written and edited for newsletters and journals; they have contributed freelance non-fiction articles to magazines. Students have worked as volunteers and in paid positions with private companies ranging from local small businesses to Fortune 500 corporations, with professional and non-profit organizations, with the state government, with Los Alamos National Laboratory, and with several publication organizations at UNM.

498 Senior Project

An independent study project leading to a research paper or a report that documents and critiques non-academic work in professional writing. Titles include "Starting a Software Documentation Department: Problems and Solutions," "A Field Guide to Poisonous Plants of the Sandia Mountains," "Writing for Non-Broadcast Video: A Case Study," "The Rhetoric of Visual Design," "The Importance of the Employee Newsletter: A Case Study," and "Persuasion and Proposal Writing: One Company's Experience."

