

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs
Consent

AGENDA ITEM: 5 – B (4)
DATE: March 29-30, 2023

SUBJECT

New Program Request – USD – Minor in Professional Writing

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[BOR Policy 2:23](#) – New Programs, Program Modifications, Curricular Requests, and Inactivation/Termination

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

The University of South Dakota (USD) requests authorization to offer a minor in Professional Writing. The proposed minor will provide students across the disciplines with broadly applicable and transferrable skills in professional writing. A Professional Writing minor complements degrees in academic fields ranging from business to health sciences to education. Specifically, it trains and credentials students across the disciplines in the skills necessary for effective professional writing in multiple genres and contexts, skills increasingly valued in fields that may not, on the surface, appear to be directly connected to writing. This credential will not only make students more marketable in their chosen fields but will also provide them with broadly applicable skills that will serve them in graduate study or the pursuit of career changes.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

USD plans to offer the minor in Professional Writing on campus. USD does not request new state resources, and no new courses are required. USD estimates 30 students enrolled and 10 graduates by the fourth year of the program.

Board office staff recommends approval.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – New Program Request Form: USD – Minor in Professional Writing

DRAFT MOTION 20230329_5-B(4):

I move to authorize USD to offer a minor in Professional Writing, as presented.



**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS**

New Baccalaureate Degree Minor

UNIVERSITY:	University of South Dakota
TITLE OF PROPOSED MINOR:	Professional Writing
DEGREE(S) IN WHICH MINOR MAY BE EARNED:	Any bachelor's degree except General Studies, BGS
EXISTING RELATED MAJORS OR MINORS:	English
INTENDED DATE OF IMPLEMENTATION:	Fall 2023
PROPOSED CIP CODE:	23.1303
UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT:	English
BANNER DEPARTMENT CODE:	UENG
UNIVERSITY DIVISION:	Arts & Sciences
BANNER DIVISION CODE:	2A

X	<p><u>Please check this box to confirm that</u> (place an "X" in the left box):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The individual preparing this request has read AAC Guideline 2.8, which pertains to new baccalaureate degree minor requests and that this request meets the requirements outlined in the guidelines. This request will not be posted to the university website for review of the Academic Affairs Committee until it is approved by the Executive Director and Chief Academic Officer.
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University Approval

To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this proposal, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.

President of the University

Date

1. Do you have a major in this field? (YES or NO)

No; however, the B.A. / B.S. in English have a Professional Writing specialization available.

2. If you do not have a major in this field, explain how the proposed minor relates to your university mission and strategic plan, and to the current Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2014-2020.

Links to the applicable State statute, Board Policy, and the Board of Regents Strategic Plan are listed below for each campus.

BHSU:	SDCL § 13-59	BOR Policy 1:10:4
DSU:	SDCL § 13-59	BOR Policy 1:10:5
NSU:	SDCL § 13-59	BOR Policy 1:10:6
SDSMT:	SDCL § 13-60	BOR Policy 1:10:3
SDSU:	SDCL § 13-58	BOR Policy 1:10:2
USD:	SDCL § 13-57	BOR Policy 1:10:1

[Board of Regents Strategic Plan 2014-2020](#)

This minor, delivered through the English department, will allow students who acquire skills in applied professional writing to have this qualification appropriately noted on their transcripts. This minor supports the department, college, and university mission of providing educational opportunities that improve students' writing skills and critical thinking capacities and supports the [SDBOR Strategic Plan 2022-2027](#) goals of academic excellence, student success, and educational attainment.

3. What is the nature/purpose of the proposed minor? Please include a brief (1-2 sentence) description of the academic field in this program.

The proposed minor will provide students across the disciplines with broadly applicable and transferrable skills in professional writing. The minor in professional writing will also serve as support for a range of disciplines in which writing represents an important element, although not necessarily the primary focus, of the field.

4. How will the proposed minor benefit students?

A Professional Writing minor complements degrees in academic fields ranging from business to health sciences to education. Specifically, it trains and credentials students across the disciplines in the skills necessary for effective professional writing in multiple genres and contexts, skills increasingly valued in fields that may not, on the surface, appear to be directly connected to writing. This credential will not only make students more marketable in their chosen fields but will also provide them with broadly applicable skills that will serve them in graduate study or the pursuit of career changes.

The 2021 median pay of \$78,068 per year for technical writers represents solid earning potential with a bachelor's degree ("Technical Writers"). Additionally, "employment of technical writers is projected to grow 6 percent from 2021 to 2031, about as fast as the average for all occupations" ("Technical Writers").

5. Describe the workforce demand for graduates in related fields, including national demand and demand within South Dakota. Provide data and examples; data sources may include but are not limited to the South Dakota Department of Labor, the US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Regental system dashboards, etc. Please cite any sources in a footnote.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates that technical writing is a fast-growing field with 55,400 jobs currently in the market. The demand for technical writers is expected to climb by an average of 5,400 jobs each year for the next decade ("Technical Writers"). A 2020 study by the National Association of Colleges and Employers suggested that 77.5% of employers are looking for candidates with strong written communication skills ("Key Attributes"), and on the 2022 GMAC Corporate Recruiters Survey, 73% of employers listed "strong communication skills" as a desired ability, making it the most sought attribute overall ("2022 Corporate Recruiters Survey").

Regionally, the demand for workers with professional writing skills indicate a need for the minor. Lightcast data project the need for "technical writers" and "writers and authors" (2022-2031) to remain solid with projected growth of 4% in each of these occupations. The Lightcast data indicates areas of training in which job seekers lack skills; the Lightcast report shows these gaps

by tracking top specialized skills and correlating disparities between frequency in job postings and frequency in profiles. Many of the specialized skills frequently mentioned in job postings and lacking in job seeker profiles include skills students can gain in this minor, such as: “technical writing,” “content creation,” “style guides,” and “punctuation and capitalization.” Other skills, also developed in the minor, such as “proofreading” show less disparity between frequency in job postings and frequency in profiles. The curriculum developed for the minor in Professional Writing will meet currently unmet needs in the regional labor force.

Works Cited

- “Key Attributes Employers Want to See on Students’ Resumes.” National Association of Colleges and Employers, <https://www.nacweb.org/talent-acquisition/candidate-selection/key-attributes-employers-want-to-see-on-students-resumes/>. Accessed 19 Nov. 2022.
- “Lightcast Program Overview: Professional, Technical, Business, and Scientific Writing,” Lightcast Q\$ 2022 Data Set, South Dakota, www.economicmodeling.com. Report date: November 2022.
- “Technical Writers – Occupational Outlook Handbook.” U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/media-and-communication/technical-writers.htm>. Accessed 19 Nov. 2022.
- “2022 Corporate Recruiters Survey.” Graduate Management Admissions Council, https://www.gmac.com/-/media/files/gmac/research/employment-outlook/2022_gmac_corporate_recruiters_survey_summary_report_final.pdf. Accessed 19 Nov. 2022.

6. Provide estimated enrollments and completions in the table below and explain the methodology used in developing the estimates.

	Fiscal Years*			
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th
<i>Estimates</i>	FY 24	FY 25	FY 26	FY 27
Students enrolled in the minor (fall)	5	15	25	30
Completions by graduates	0	0	5	10

*Do not include current fiscal year.

This estimate is based upon three considerations: 1) the viability of similar degrees at other comparable institutions, 2) clear student interest based on enrollment figures for ENGL 205: Business Writing (Fall 2022 ENGL 205 enrollment of 240 students), and 3) increased national attention to the need for professional writers.

Currently, at USD, English offers a specialization in Professional Writing within the current B.A. and B.S. degrees. The addition of the Professional Writing minor relies on current coursework. Adding the minor will make this expanded credential available to students outside the major, as a more robust experience than the certificate in Professional Writing.

7. What is the rationale for the curriculum? Demonstrate/provide evidence that the curriculum is consistent with current national standards.

The proposed minor, utilizing the particular strengths of the USD English department, provides students with opportunities comparable to those at other institutions with a similarly organized

degree. The required core courses will provide students from all fields with a solid grounding in principles of professional writing, grammar, and rhetorical theory and practice. These core courses are writing classes offered regularly by the English department (every semester or every other semester).

A review of Professional Writing minors at other institutions shows that electives for Professional Writing minors vary widely. Although the minor proposed here includes a relatively small number of electives, this slate of courses makes the minor possible for the broadest range of students, particularly students in the sciences. None of the electives have discipline-specific prerequisites. All prerequisites are either university requirements or part of the required core for the minor. Accordingly, and for example, a health sciences major could complete a Professional Writing minor without additional coursework.

8. Complete the tables below. Explain any exceptions to Board policy requested.

Minors by design are limited in the number of credit hours required for completion. Minors typically consist of eighteen (18) credit hours, including prerequisite courses. In addition, minors typically involve existing courses. If the curriculum consists of more than eighteen (18) credit hours (including prerequisites) or new courses, please provide explanation and justification below.

A. Distribution of Credit Hours

Program Title	Credit Hours	Percent
Requirements in minor	12	67%
Electives in minor	6	33%
Total	18	100%

B. Required Courses in the Minor

Prefix	Number	Course Title	Prerequisites for Course - Include credits for prerequisites in subtotal below.	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
ENGL	203	English Grammar	ENGL 101	3	no
ENGL	205	Business Writing	ENGL 101	3	no
ENGL	378	Professional Writing	ENGL 101	3	no
ENGL	486	Rhetorical Theory & Practice	ENGL 101	3	no
Subtotal				12	

9. Elective Courses in the Minor: List courses available as electives in the program. Indicate any proposed new courses added specifically for the minor.

Select 6 credits from the following list:

Prefix	Number	Course Title	Prerequisites for Course	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
ENGL	379	Technical Communication*	ENGL 101	3	no
ENGL	402	Persuasive Writing	ENGL 101	3	no
ENGL	403	Grant Writing	ENGL 101	3	no

Prefix	Number	Course Title	Prerequisites for Course	Credit Hours	New (yes, no)
ENGL	493	Workshop: Publishing	ENGL 101	3	no
MCOM	210	Basic Newswriting	ENGL 101	3	no
MCOM	330	Writing for Digital Media	ENGL 101	3	no
MCOM	402	Media Law and Ethics	Junior standing	3	no
CMST	410	Organizational Communication	n/a	3	no
CMST	418	Environmental Communication	n/a	3	no
CMST	440	Health Communication	n/a	3	no
CMST	470	Intercultural Communication	n/a	3	no

* This course is not new to the South Dakota BOR system but will need to be activated for USD. The Professional Writing minor will not be available to English majors. This note needs to appear in the catalog listing of the minor (as it does for the Creative Writing minor). English majors may complete the Professional Writing Specialization or Professional Writing Certificate.

A. What are the learning outcomes expected for all students who complete the minor? How will students achieve these outcomes? Complete the table below to list specific learning outcomes—knowledge and competencies—for courses in the proposed program in each row. Label each column heading with a course prefix and number. Indicate required courses with an asterisk (*). Indicate with an X in the corresponding table cell for any student outcomes that will be met by the courses included. All students should acquire the program knowledge and competencies regardless of the electives selected. Modify the table as necessary to provide the requested information for the proposed program.

Individual Student Outcomes	ENGL 203 English Grammar*	ENGL 205 Business Writing*	ENGL 378 Professional Writing*	ENGL 486 Rhetorical Theory and Practice*
Writing Development: Students will produce grammatically, rhetorically, and stylistically sound writing.	X	X	X	X
Inquiry and Analysis: Students will be able to systematically explore issues, objects or works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments and break down complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them.	X	X	X	X
Critical and Creative Thinking: Students will comprehensively explore issues, ideas, artifacts and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion, and combine or synthesize existing ideas, images or expertise in original way reflecting a high degree of innovation, divergent thinking, and risk taking.		X	X	X
Information Literacy: Students will recognize when there is a need for information and identify, locate, evaluate and effectively and responsibly use and convey that information to address the need or problem at hand.		X	X	X

Individual Student Outcomes	ENGL 203 English Grammar*	ENGL 205 Business Writing*	ENGL 378 Professional Writing*	ENGL 486 Rhetorical Theory and Practice*
Professional Writing Knowledge: Students will demonstrate knowledge of professional writing norms, skills, and applications.			X	X

10. What instructional approaches and technologies will instructors use to teach courses in the minor? *This refers to the instructional technologies and approaches used to teach courses and NOT the technology applications and approaches expected of students.*

There are a range of instructional approaches and technologies in the various courses, including discussion/recitation, lecture, and workshop activities. Like most writing courses and programs, this minor will emphasize the revision process, so that students receive extensive feedback on the work they produce and be expected to revise accordingly.

11. Delivery Location

Note: The accreditation requirements of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) require Board approval for a university to offer programs off-campus and through distance delivery.

A. Complete the following charts to indicate if the university seeks authorization to deliver the entire program on campus, at any off-campus location (e.g., USD Community Center for Sioux Falls, Black Hills State University-Rapid City, Capital City Campus, etc.) or deliver the entire program through distance technology (e.g., as an online program)?

	Yes/No	Intended Start Date
On campus	Yes	Fall 2023

	Yes/No	If Yes, list location(s)	Intended Start Date
Off campus	No		

	Yes/No	If Yes, identify delivery methods <i>Delivery methods are defined in AAC Guideline 5.5.</i>	Intended Start Date
Distance Delivery (online/other distance delivery methods)	No		
Does another BOR institution already have authorization to offer the program online?	No	If yes, identify institutions:	

B. Complete the following chart to indicate if the university seeks authorization to deliver more than 50% but less than 100% of the minor through distance learning (e.g., as an online program)? *This question responds to HLC definitions for distance delivery.*

	Yes/No	If Yes, identify delivery methods	Intended Start Date
Distance Delivery (online/other distance delivery methods)	No		

12. Does the University request any exceptions to any Board policy for this minor? Explain any requests for exceptions to Board Policy. *If not requesting any exceptions, enter "None."*

None.

13. Cost, Budget, and Resources: Explain the amount and source(s) of any one-time and continuing investments in personnel, professional development, release time, time redirected from other assignments, instructional technology & software, other operations and maintenance, facilities, etc., needed to implement the proposed minor. *Address off-campus or distance delivery separately.*

The proposed minor will utilize existing faculty members teaching existing courses. Given the existence of the professional writing specialization within the B.A. / B.S. degrees, this minor uses existing resources already dedicated to these purposes.

14. New Course Approval: New courses required to implement the new minor may receive approval in conjunction with program approval or receive approval separately. Please check the appropriate statement. (place an "X" before the correct response)

	YES, the university is seeking approval of new courses related to the proposed program in conjunction with program approval. All New Course Request forms are included as Appendix C and match those described in section 7.
X	NO, the university is not seeking approval of all new courses related to the proposed program in conjunction with program approval; the institution will submit new course approval requests separately or at a later date in accordance with Academic Affairs Guidelines.

15. Additional Information:

The Professional Writing minor will not be available to English majors. This note needs to appear in the catalog listing of the minor (as it does for the Creative Writing minor). English majors may complete the Professional Writing Specialization or Professional Writing Certificate.

In order to enable students to take a variety of classes over the course of their studies toward this minor and to manage department resources, the English Department plans to offer and rotate the courses as follows:

1. ENGL 205 runs in multiple sections every semester.
2. ENGL 203 English Grammar, ENGL 378 Professional Writing, and ENGL 403 are scheduled to run every fall semester.
3. ENGL 402 Persuasive Writing and ENGL 486 Rhetorical Theory & Practice are scheduled to run every spring semester.
4. ENGL 493: Workshop in Publishing exists in multiple versions emphasizing different aspects of publishing practice and is offered on a rotating basis.