

MEMORANDUM

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

TO: William Smith
FROM: Geraldine Forsberg
SUBJECT: Report on English 302 Assessments
DATE: October 17, 2007

This summer I had the opportunity, and responsibility, to compile the information collected from student assessments of the English 302 Technical Writing Course. These assessments were collected from students over the past five years. I believe the results of these assessments will be an encouragement to all of the instructors who teach this course. The student's responses were overwhelmingly positive. This report should not only provide encouragement, but should also provide impetus for the development of additional courses in the area of Technical Writing.

METHOD

I obtained the enclosed summaries by directly transferring student responses into Access. With the help of David Hamiter in the Technology Center, I was able to consolidate the information into the attached report.

EXPLANATION

The report begins with the assessment of Course Goals (CG).

CG1 answers the question: In what ways do you feel you did or did not accomplish the course goals?

The overwhelming majority of students felt as though the course goals were accomplished.

CG1A answers questions a. through j. It is important to note here that the questions a. through j. changed on the questionnaires over the five years. At least one question was added which shifted the alignment of questions. This made it more difficult to get an accurate evaluation of each individual question. However, I think that looking at the averages as depicted in the chart, will still give you an overall understanding of how we are doing.

1 represents the most improvement in writing and 4 the least improvement in writing. As you can see from the chart, the students all viewed their writing as greatly improved after this course.

CG2 answers the question: In what ways was the classroom environment itself conducive or not conducive to mastering the course goals?

The students were very positive about the overall environment established in the class. They view it as a very positive, helpful, encouraging, and supportive

environment. However, a few students expressed some concern about the room design and the uncomfortable chairs.

IG1 pertains to the student's Individual Goals (IG). The question asks the student to: Please explain the academic/professional goals you had for yourself when you registered for this class.

The students come to this class with a wide variety of goals. The majority of students are really eager to learn about technical writing, and writing in general, whereas a few students just want to get the credit in order to graduate.

IG2 answers the question: In what ways has the class helped you or not helped you accomplish your own academic/professional goals?

The course is viewed by the students as very helpful in developing their writing skills, editing skills, document design skills, and collaborative group skills.

IG3 answers the question: How close to graduation are you?

The greatest number of students had one year until graduation. The fewest number had more than a year until graduation.

IG4 answers the question: Would it have been useful to you to have taken this class earlier in your academic career?

The majority of students said no. The timing of the course seems very good for those who are graduating and thinking about a career.

IG5 answers the question: Are you interested in taking more technical writing courses?

The majority of the students said yes/ maybe they would be interested in taking more technical writing courses. A lot seemed to depend on their schedules, date of graduation, etc.

IG6 asks the students to: Comment on anything else you'd like to discuss about English 302 specifically on the Technical Writing program at Western more generally.

The students are overwhelmingly positive about this course. They really love the instruction, professors, and the very practical nature of this class.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the feedback from the students, the following three recommendations can be made:

- The development of additional courses in Technical Writing at an introductory level
- The development of additional courses in Technical Writing at an advanced level
- The exploration of making Technical Writing a GUR

After you have had a chance to read the report, I would be more than willing to discuss any questions you might have.