Program in

Professional Communication and Emerging Media

Dr. Matthew J Livesey, Program Director

Program Director’s Self Study
Fall 2011
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1. Mission and Degree

1.1 Relationship to Mission and Goals

**Mission**

The specific elements of Stout’s mission statement that the program in Professional Communication and Emerging Media contributes to are as follows:

*Diverse students, faculty and staff*

We are often one of the most diverse programs in the university in racial and ethnic terms.

*Applied learning*

All of our students develop a portfolio of actual client work by the time they graduate.

*Scientific theory*

Theory underpins many of our advanced classes, from cultural anthropology in International Technical Communication to quantitative analysis of user behavior in Usability Design and Testing.

*Humanistic understanding*

The humanities are of course central to the program’s curriculum. We offer one of the few undergraduate concentrations in digital humanities available in the United States as of this writing. Further, our inclusion of a foreign language requirement signals our commitment to the liberal arts.

*Creativity*

In their coursework, their service learning, and their portfolio development, our students have ample opportunity to explore and apply their creativity.

*Research*

By establishing a year-long research requirement for digital humanities students, and by encouraging independent research projects built on courses such ENGL-340 Structure of English, we signal our commitment to undergraduate research.

*Solve real-world problems*

Our frequent inclusion of outside client projects gives our students ample opportunity to solve real problems, and incorporate the results into their professional portfolio.
Serve a global society
We encourage all of our students to study abroad; we require them to take a foreign language, and to study how other cultures communicate (ENGL-312 International Technical Communication, SPCOM-312 Intercultural Communication).

Enduring Goals

1. Offer high quality, challenging academic programs that influence and respond to a changing society.
Our frequent revisions (2004, 2006, 2010) were not just touch-ups—each updated the curriculum in response to market forces and the changing needs of the communication workplace. We have made the program more challenging in the most recent revision, adding a foreign language requirement (a first in Stout’s current program array), and advanced courses normally found only in graduate curricula.

2. Preserve and enhance our educational processes through the application of active learning principles.
We provide active learning experiences in all of our upper-level courses, bringing in clients from the university community and beyond. Recent outside clients have included FindLaw (ThomsonReuters), Sears ServiceLive, Positive Alternatives, and the University Registrar, Transfer Office, Learning Communities, and Provost’s Office. These clients act as clients would in a real communication consulting engagement—they present needs, evaluate prototypes, select winning designs, and work through a change process to reach a final design to see through production. In addition, all of our Technical Communication and Applied Journalism students must undertake an internship or practicum.

3. Promote excellence in teaching, research, scholarship and service.
The faculty work together in an unusually collaborative environment. We form conference panels together to present our research, and support each other in service to the program, department, and discipline. We often discuss both course-level concerns and individual students to ensure that our teaching is as strong as possible.

4. Recruit and retain a diverse university population.
The students enrolled in the PCEM program are among the most ethnically and racially diverse in the university, based on recent data. In addition, because we enroll a significant non-traditional student population, there is considerable diversity of age and life experience across the student body. Unlike some programs in which older students are put into a dedicated degree-completion program, our students work together in classes and on projects. Small group work ensures that diversity is part of students’ experience.

Focus 2015 Goals

Develop knowledge, respect and validation of differing values, cultures and beliefs in students, faculty and staff.
With several courses and focus on intercultural and international topics, our commitment to respect and validation is deeply ingrained. In addition, our four-year program plans are specifically designed to show that study abroad can be accomplished without slowing progress toward degree. All students are encouraged, from their arrival in the program, to consider study abroad.

Expand early and ongoing experiential learning opportunities including undergraduate applied research and entrepreneurship.
Because so many of our courses involve significant client work, a spirit of entrepreneurship is established early in our program when students or small groups of students compete to win design selection. In addition, considerable time in the capstone course is spent on developing a freelance career; several of our recent graduates had established profitable independent careers before graduation. Finally, our digital humanities concentration requires a year-long research project, culminating in the production of a thesis-quality research artifact.
2. Description of the Program

2.1 Curriculum Design

2.1.1. Program Objectives

At the time of the last PRC review, the Technical Communication program was operating under its original objectives, established in 2000 at program inception, and unchanged in the 2004 program revision. These objectives were that graduates of the program would be able to:

- Apply appropriate rhetorical/linguistic principles
- Understand interpersonal, organizational, and intercultural communication within discourse communities
- Broad yet in-depth knowledge of technical communication theory and applications
- Understand regional and global implications
- Apply ethical and moral perspectives to presentation situations
- Understand the role and power of mass communications
- Apply imaginative and associational uses of language
- Meet appropriate professional standards for the audience and situation
- Adapt to different situations
- Correctly gauge audience concerns/attitudes
- Apply various formats (written, oral, visual, electronic)
- Use effective writing, design, and production strategies
- Use appropriate research methods
- Evaluate information
- Collaborate effectively
- Oversee collaborative/peer-oriented strategies
- Use appropriate computer technologies: multimedia, online, and desktop
- Understand hardware and software
- Understand the business aspects of freelancing

Subsequent to the PRC review in 2005, and in consultation with the program committee with significant input from industry members, the program was revised in 2006 with the revised objectives that students graduating from the program would be able to:

- Correctly gauge audience concerns and attitudes
- Apply appropriate rhetorical principles
- Understand and apply concepts and strategies of global communication
- Understand interpersonal, organizational, and intercultural communication within discourse communities
- Understand and apply ethical concepts
- Apply visual communication strategies
- Apply information design strategies
- Use genres effectively
- Apply research techniques
- Apply usability strategies
- Apply stylistic strategies
- Use appropriate methods of production
- Apply effective editing strategies
- Oversee collaborative and peer-oriented strategies to develop and refine communications
- Make effective career choices

In early 2009, the program faculty, again in close consultation with the program committee and industry members, undertook a careful, 18-month program revision process that culminated in the Professional Communication and Emerging Media program, which began enrolling students in Fall 2010. The core program objectives were that graduates would be able to:

- Gauge audience concerns and attitudes
- Apply appropriate rhetorical principles
- Understand and apply concepts and strategies of global communication
- Understand interpersonal, organizational, and intercultural communication within discourse communities
- Understand and apply ethical concepts
- Apply visual communication strategies
- Apply user-centered information design strategies
- Apply research techniques
- Demonstrate use of audience-appropriate styles

And that students in the respective concentrations would demonstrate the following competencies:
Technical Communication Concentration:
• Use genres effectively
• Apply usability strategies
• Project management/collaboration
• Design and conduct usability tests, applying appropriate user research methodology
• Understand concepts of content management and use content management systems
• Gain experience with project management and collaborative work environments

Applied Journalism Concentration:
• Write effectively for a variety of audiences, technical and/or generalist, within chosen industry fields
• Produce relevant, timely content in a production environment
• Understand mass communication concepts

Digital Humanities Concentration:
• Write effectively for a variety of audiences, technical and/or generalist, within chosen industry fields
• Produce relevant, timely content in a production environment
• Understand mass communication concepts

2.1.2. Indicators of Need for Revision
In the 2008-9 academic year the Technical Communication program found itself in an odd situation: by enrollment, it was among the smallest programs on campus; however, it was the largest technical communication program in the country in terms of undergraduate enrollment. If the program were going to grow beyond its established average of 60 students, it would need to expand its focus. Research into offerings of similar programs nationally showed that communication programs with a broader focus on professional communication tended to enroll more students than those that were limited to only technical and scientific communication. Therefore, in early 2009, the program faculty undertook a revision process that began with original research: a group of secondary English teachers across the state of Wisconsin and the Twin Cities Metro was surveyed to discover what attitudes their students have toward communication programs. The results showed us that the students these teachers identified as their strongest writers were very interested in a program that provided instruction in “new” journalism and multimedia. The surprising finding was that while these teachers, and their students, seemed to understand that traditional journalism no longer represents a viable career path, they also grasped that journalism itself would survive in new, technologically-mediated forms. It became our goal to develop a program in emerging media with an emphasis on industry- and discipline-specific journalism.

Our retention rates were long influenced by the practice of students declaring the Tech Comm major in lieu of a “real” English degree; these students would take some courses in the major and then transfer to another institution to continue their studies in an English program. Therefore, the concentration in Digital Humanities was conceived to provide students with interests beyond workplace-focused communication a chance to do research in humanities disciplines. The work that these students do will, of course, be rooted in the technology and computing focus that is foundational in the DH realm.

2.1.3. Distance Education Opportunities
Distance education is a unique strength of the PCEM program. In 2007 we committed to offering all of our major courses in a distance format, whether through traditional online (Learn@UW-Stout) or hybrid (lecture capture) media. Since that time, we have continued to provide our full degree to distance students.
The program has not sought to create a designated Customized Instruction (CI) program to this point because we do not enroll large enough cohorts of students with uniform preparation. Students who enroll in the PCEM program may have an Associate’s Degree, they may have junior-level or higher credits in a related or unrelated field, they may have a handful of credits from many years ago. The Program Director meets every year with the Director of Stout Online to discuss adopting the CI model, and the outcome is always that the PCEM program is simply not ready in terms of demographics for such a move.
The PCEM program does not fall under the UWSA “Distance Education Standards for Academic and Student Support Services” because the courses are hybrid, not dedicated distance offerings, and the program is therefore not considered a distance program. However, our distance students receive a curriculum that is identical in quality to that received by students on the Stout campus (UWSA DESASSS 2.A.2, .7, .8). All faculty providing online or hybrid courses in the program receive instruction in the technology available for such instruction, including Learn@UW-Stout, lecture capture, and SMARTBoard (UWSA DESASSS 2.A.3-5), and are required to hold office hours and to interact with distance students in a timely manner (UWSA DESASSS 2.A.6).
2.1.4. Program Committee Contribution

The program committee comprises a steady range of Stout faculty (our committee members rarely ask to leave the board) and a stellar assortment of industry professionals. Most of the industry professionals were recruited by the previous program director, Bruce Maylath, through his extensive connections in the industry; new members have been added in recent years, with an eye toward broadening our industry representation to reflect the new program concentrations. This effort will continue in coming years.

One factor distinguishes our board from most on the Stout campus: as part of our commitment to offering a distance program, we involve industry board members from outside the region. Our annual program committee meeting is held both in person and by web conference.

Some examples of recent program improvements that have been a direct result of program committee involvement:

Foreign Language Requirement
Mary Knatterud, a longtime member of our program committee, remarked in the 2009 meeting that “any resume that does not list foreign language competence or significant study abroad experience will immediately go into the reject pile.” The other committee members were in substantial agreement with this view, as were the program faculty. The 2010 program revision, therefore, contained a foreign language requirement (foreign language had previously been a selective—students could choose to take two foreign language courses [8 credits] or 3 computer science courses [9 credits]).

Digital Humanities Concentration
Craig Yolitz, a VP at Thomson-Reuters who runs the FindLaw division, joined our program committee in 2009. At his first meeting we presented the plan for the Digital Humanities concentration, and his evaluation of the curricular choices was very positive. While we had originally intended the concentration to prepare students for graduate study, Mr. Yolitz said, “Graduates from any tech comm program can help us use the tools of today; graduates of this new concentration will get us where we need to be five years from now.” With this strong endorsement of the value of combining theory with practice in digitally mediated communication, we are confident that our DH graduates will find excellent employment opportunities.

Professional Portfolio Development
Beginning in 2010, we invited the industry members of the program committee to spend the morning of our annual meeting day talking with students who are nearing graduation. Students bring their professional portfolios, which they have developed throughout the curriculum and have completed in the capstone course, as well as their resumes. They meet one-on-one or in small groups with the industry board members, who give valuable feedback on professional presentation and portfolio development. Feedback from both students and board members has been positive; students report receiving invaluable real-world advice, and board members feel they have a better sense of what the students are getting out of the program and what they could use more work on.

2.1.5. Student Research & Scholarship

The PCEM program engages students all aspects of theory, practice, and experimentation. We do this primarily through service learning, student research, and the capstone experience. In addition, there is a strong research component in the DH concentration.

Service Learning
In many of the upper-level courses in the program, students engage in service learning activities. These often take the form of projects that outside clients bring to the class. Students act as a creative agency, listening to the client’s needs, pitching concepts, and finally producing a finished product that meets the client’s expectations. Recent clients include both on-campus (the Registrar, the Learning Communities office, and the Provost) and off-campus (a local community service organization, a children’s theater) entities.

In addition, students in the Technical Communication and the Applied Journalism program are required to take an internship. Many of these internships lead to an offer of permanent employment.

Courses with a significant service learning requirement include ENGL-388 Writing for the Internet, ENGL-385 Document Design, ENGL-425 Usability Design and Testing, ENGL-430 Writing for Content Management, and ENGL-471 Technical Communication and Consulting.

Student Research
Since the inception of the program, the ENGL-340 Structure of English class has afforded students an opportunity to conduct first-hand research in linguistics. Indeed, the first publication from a student in the Technical Communication program to be included in the Journal of Student Research was a study performed during this class.

In addition, Dr. Joleen Hanson, who teaches ENGL-340, has worked with several students on independent research projects. ENGL-425 Usability Design and Testing has likewise always had a significant research component. In it, students design a testing methodology, gain the approval of the Stout IRB, and perform the usability test. Clients of this class have included FindLaw and Sears ServiceLive, as well as the Stout website redesign committee.
Technical Communication and Applied Journalism Capstone

Students in the Capstone course (ENGL-471 Technical Communication and Consulting) are engaged in several aspects of development. First, this class always contains a service learning requirement, as described above. In addition, it requires students to synthesize their learnings across the entire program as they produce a professional portfolio that they will use in their job search. Students select artifacts, write descriptive narrative, and—most importantly—create “value statements” that map their accomplishments in the classroom to the needs of the marketplace. This often requires research into trends in the profession as well as the skills and preparation most sought after by employers.

Digital Humanities Capstone

All students in the DH concentration take ENGL-495, Digital Humanities Capstone, in their final two semesters. The first semester focuses on the preparation and presentation of a research proposal; the second focuses on the performance of the research and the creation of the digital artifact that presents the results. This year-long research experience will provide students with not only a solid preparation in DH research, but also a portfolio piece that will be a compelling centerpiece of a professional portfolio or graduate school application.

2.1.6. Accreditation Status

There is currently no recognized accreditation body for programs in Professional Communication, nor its constituent concentrations.

2.2. Faculty/Staff Expertise

2.2.1. Key Instructors

The “core” program faculty are members of the department of English & Philosophy who teach two or more courses in the program curriculum. This core group meets weekly during the semester for an hour to discuss curricular issues, track students experiencing difficulty, and plan research activities. It is a particular strength of the program that the faculty who have teaching, scholarship, and service interests in the field of Professional Communication and Emerging Media are in regular contact to support the students in the program and collaborate on research initiatives.

- **Dr. Matthew Livesey** (ENGL-121, 471, Co-Op, Practicum)
  - MA in English Literature
  - PhD in 20th Century British and American Literature, UW-Madison
  - Research interests:
    - Strategic communications consulting

- **Dr. Julie Watts** (ENGL-121, 385)
  - PhD in Rhetoric and Professional Communication, Iowa State University
  - Research interests:
    - Learning communities and writing across the curriculum pedagogy and assessment
    - Scholarship of teaching and learning

- **Dr. Quan Zhou** (ENGL-407, 425, 430)
  - MS in Technical Communication, University of Washington
  - PhD in Technical Communication, University of Washington
  - Research interests:
    - Information design
    - Usability
    - Rhetorical dimension of communication technologies
    - Research methods in user experience
    - Text and technology

- **Dr. Daisy Pignetti** (ENGL-371, 495)
  - MA in English (Composition, Rhetoric and Linguistics Focus), Northeastern University
  - PhD in English (Composition and Rhetoric), University of South Florida
  - Research interests:
    - Social media
    - Research methods
    - Autoethnography
    - Lifewriting (specifically in blogs)
    - Technological literacy

- **Dr. Joleen Hanson** (ENGL-312, 340)
  - MS in Environmental Health, University of Minnesota
  - MA in Composition Studies, University of New Hampshire
  - PhD in Composition Studies, in Composition Studies, University of New Hampshire
  - Research interests:
    - Corpus linguistics
    - Written communication in multilingual environments
  - Technologically mediated communication
  - Social media/marketing
• Evaluating the effectiveness of a “writing about writing” approach to composition pedagogy

• Mr. Paul Anheier (ENGL-388, 435)
MS in Scientific and Technical Communication, University of Minnesota
PhD (ABD) in Rhetoric and Scientific and Technical Communication, University of Minnesota
Research interests:
• History of technical writing
• Technical communication pedagogy
• Engineering-specific writing pedagogy
• Visual rhetoric and document design
• Web writing and information design

• Mr. David Tank (ENGL-225, 207, 218, 330)
MA, Journalism and Mass Communications, UW-Madison
Research interests:
• 35 years professional experience in journalism (writer, editor, designer)
• 8 years Stoutonia advisor
• Web developer for 70+ websites for industry, non-profits, and libraries

• Dr. Mitchell Ogden (ENGL-335, 480)
PhD in English Literature (Literacy and Rhetorical Studies Minor), University of Minnesota
Research interests:
• Writing across the curriculum
• Writing in the disciplines
• Practice and theory of translation
• Diaspora studies
• Hmong studies
• Refugee studies
• Film studies
• Digital humanities

• Dr. Andrea Deacon (ENGL-125)
MA in English (Rhetoric and Composition), UW-Milwaukee
PhD in English (Rhetoric and Composition), UW-Milwaukee
Research interests:
• Online teaching
• Visual rhetoric and mass media
• Classical rhetorical approaches to visual design in professional communication
• Writing center theory/practice
• Revision in first-year composition
• Rhetoric of academic scholarly exchange
• Epideictic rhetoric and 19th century American oratory (Frederick Douglass)

2.2.2. Needed Additional Expertise
With the addition of the Applied Journalism concentration in Fall 2010, the number of sections needed in the Journalism area will increase over the next several years. Most of the courses in the Journalism concentration are currently taught by a Senior Lecturer who has been an academic staff member in the department for a number of years. By the 2012-13 academic year, the number of sections needed to support the large number of students who select the Applied Journalism concentration will exceed the available assigned time of this staff member. In addition, the program needs the service and research commitment of a faculty member rather than the teaching-only commitment of academic staff.

The Department of English and Philosophy, with the support of the Interim Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, has launched a search for a Journalism specialist at the PhD level to start in Fall 2012. The PCEM program is grateful for the strong support of both department and college in meeting this commitment to our students.

2.3. Facilities
2.3.1. Special Facilities and Needs
The special facilities that support the program are primarily based around our dedicated lab/classroom, 205 Harvey Hall. This classroom is configured to allow flexible individual and small-group work, and it also houses several pieces of technology that strengthen the program.

First, since 2009 the room has been equipped with a lecture capture system that supports our distance students. With the transition from the ECHO system to the Tegrity system, this
support curricular offerings. At the end of Fall 2010 semester the program had to upgrade the hosting service to support the number of databases and nodes required for course support, resulting in the annual cost increasing from $100 to more than $600. The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences funded this cost for the initial year, and may continue to fund it in the future depending on the availability of funds.

The inability of the campus to support the research computing needs of the program is a frustration, particularly given the campus’s ostensible focus on technology.

2.5. Assessment in the Major

2.5.1. Current Assessment in the Major Report

The following pages reproduce the current Assessment in the Major Report, submitted on October 14, 2011.
October 14, 2011

To Dr. Jacalyn Weissenburger, Associate Vice Chancellor

From Dr. Matthew Livesey, Program Director
Dr. Julie Watts, Assessment Coordinator

RE Assessment in the Major Report, 2010-2011
Technical Communication Program

Attached please find the Assessment in the Major Report for the Bachelor of Science Program in Professional Communication and Emerging Media for the academic year 2010-2011.
Introduction
The Bachelor of Science in Technical Communication (BSTC) was launched in the fall of 2000, having been approved by the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents the previous November. The program was revised twice on the curricular level, in 2004 and 2006, and was comprehensively revised in Fall 2010 as the Bachelor of Science in Professional Communication and Emerging Media. As of September 2011, approximately 90 students were enrolled in the program. Through August 2011, 118 BSTC/PCEM majors have been graduated.

For the next several years, the assessment in the major report will cover both students in the program in Technical Communication as well as the program in Professional Communication and Emerging Media, which began enrolling students in Fall 2010, but has not yet graduated any students.
Portfolio Assessment
The PCEM program has engaged in portfolio assessment on an annual basis since 2007. Portfolio development has been gradually incorporated into program courses beginning with the introductory course, ENGL-121.

Our program comprises the following elements:

1. An electronic archive (an ongoing D2L course) was created to house students’ portfolio materials. Each student enrolled in the major is given access to the site until the graduate.

2. The concept of performance and assessment e-portfolios is introduced to students in ENGL-121 Intro to Professional Communication. Students begin building their portfolios in ENGL-121, resulting in us being able to assess even freshmen in the program. This allows us, for the first time, a longitudinal view of student achievement.

3. Four to five core Technical Communication courses are identified each semester and these are targeted for portfolio assessment; instructors are asked to embed a portfolio requirement into their course (as a final exam or assignment). Students in these classes upload their portfolio artifact to the D2L ongoing course site.

4. Students enrolled in the ENGL-471 Capstone course are required to complete a performance e-portfolio to use in their upcoming job hunts. Artifacts from the D2L ongoing course are used to help populate this performance e-portfolio. The assignment to complete a professional portfolio in ENGL-471 resulted in a large body of work being assembled by each student in the class, enabling a much broader assessment of student learning outcomes.

For this assessment cycle, the following courses were identified as courses that incorporated portfolio artifacts into the syllabus:

a. ENGL-121 Introduction to Technical Communication (Fall)

b. ENGL-340 Structure of English (Fall)

c. ENGL-371 Strategies of Argumentation (Spring)

d. ENGL-385 Document Design (Fall)

e. ENGL-388 Writing for the Internet (Fall)

In all, we evaluated 30 portfolios, representing students from freshmen to graduating seniors.

Portfolio Assessment Methods and Administration
To perform the assessment, the Program Assistant gathered materials from the D2L portfolio development site, which were then organized by student. A rubric (comprising the 2006 program objectives) was provided for evaluation, and distributed to faculty for their assessment. Each student’s work was evaluated by two faculty members, and the Coordinator for Assessment provided a third rating where the ratings of the first two reviewers were significantly different. The ratings were then compiled by the Program Director for this report.

The work of 30 students was reviewed for this assessment; this represents approximately 50% of the total program enrollment during the 2010-2011 academic year.

Assessment Results and Discussion
Table 1 shows the results of the assessment process. Each portfolio was read and assessed by two faculty members separately, and then by a third reader (the Program Director or the Coordinator for Assessment) if any rubric category showed a significant difference in evaluation. The numbers in the table represent the percentage of reviewers who gave each portfolio the rating indicated.
There are only two outcomes in which “Middling” has a higher percentage than both “Strong” and “Not Apparent”: “Apply research techniques” and “Apply stylistic strategies.” In these two areas we seem to be gathering adequate data from students, but their achievement is not as strong as we would like it to be. Our response to this as a program will be to:

1. Encourage students to include at least one formal research paper in their portfolio so that we may see clearly their level of accomplishment in this competency area.

2. Require reflective writing focusing on stylistic concerns with the submission of portfolio artifacts, particularly those from ENGL-225 Editing Processes and Practices, and ENGL-385 Document Design.

A pattern that was evident in previous assessment reports holds here: in years when ENGL-312 International Technical Communication is offered, the percentage of students who show “Strong” outcomes in related areas is significantly higher. This course was offered in Spring 2008 and Spring 2010. These offerings correspond to a 30-40% difference in “Strong” outcomes. By the same mechanism, outcomes relating to usability strategies track along with the offerings of ENGL-425 Usability Design and ENGL-471 Usability Testing.

One area in which we made significant progress in this year’s assessment is in the measurement of the outcome “Make effective career choices.” Over the past three assessment cycles the “Not Apparent” rating was very high on this measure. In this year’s assessment that measure was lowered to 65.6%. This is still far higher than we would like it to be, but we are pleased that the focus on building a professional portfolio in ENGL-471 seems to be providing greater evidence in this area. Figure 2 shows these results.
The program needs to do a better job at gathering data in the areas where a majority of reviewers see no evidence of achievement. These areas are, most notably, “Understand and apply ethical concepts” and “Oversee collaborative and peer-oriented strategies to develop and refine communications.” We continue to work as a faculty to find additional ways to gather evidence in these areas.

Portfolio Assessment Plan for 2011-12

For the next assessment cycle, and for several that follow it, we will once again need to manage several overlapping catalog years and curricula in the assessment process. With a core-and-concentration model for the BS in Professional Communication and Emerging Media program, we will need to apply three separate rubrics for the concentration objectives in addition to the single professional core objectives. We will continue to assess student portfolios under the objectives for the major that they have declared; thus we expect to continue to assess students against the 2006 program objectives for at least the next three years.

Appendix 1: Previous Assessment Results

The tables below present portfolio assessment results for previous years.

In 2010 the sample size was 47 portfolios.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Objective</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Middling</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>N.A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correctly gauge audience concerns and attitudes</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply appropriate rhetorical principles</td>
<td>72.2%</td>
<td>25.3%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and apply concepts and strategies of global communication</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand interpersonal, organizational, and intercultural communication within discourse communities</td>
<td>42.6%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>27.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and apply ethical concepts</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>13.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>79.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply visual communication strategies</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply information design strategies</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use genres effectively</td>
<td>58.5%</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply research techniques</td>
<td>59.6%</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply usability strategies</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>61.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply stylistic strategies</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
<td>51.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate methods of production</td>
<td>54.3%</td>
<td>35.1%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply effective editing strategies</td>
<td>36.2%</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversee collaborative and peer-oriented strategies to develop and refine communications</td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>57.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make effective career choices</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>83.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2009 the sample size was 7 portfolios.

**Table 3: Portfolio assessment results, 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Objective</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Middling</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correctly gauge audience concerns and attitudes</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply appropriate rhetorical principles</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and apply concepts and strategies of global communication</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand interpersonal, organizational, and intercultural communication within discourse communities</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and apply ethical concepts</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply visual communication strategies</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply information design strategies</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use genres effectively</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply research techniques</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply usability strategies</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply stylistic strategies</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate methods of production</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply effective editing strategies</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversee collaborative and peer-oriented strategies to develop and refine communications</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>71.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make effective career choices</td>
<td>14.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 2008 the sample size was 17 portfolios.

**Table 4: Portfolio assessment results, 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Objective</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Middling</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correctly gauge audience concerns and attitudes</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply appropriate rhetorical principles</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and apply concepts and strategies of global communication</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand interpersonal, organizational, and intercultural communication within discourse communities</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and apply ethical concepts</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply visual communication strategies</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply information design strategies</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use genres effectively</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply research techniques</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply usability strategies</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply stylistic strategies</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
<td>61.8%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate methods of production</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply effective editing strategies</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversee collaborative and peer-oriented strategies to develop and refine communications</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make effective career choices</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In 2007 the sample size was 6 portfolios.

Table 5: Portfolio assessment results, 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Objective</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>Middling</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correctly gauge audience concerns and attitudes</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply appropriate rhetorical principles</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and apply concepts and strategies of global communication</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand interpersonal, organizational, and intercultural communication within discourse communities</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand and apply ethical concepts</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply visual communication strategies</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply information design strategies</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use genres effectively</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply research techniques</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply usability strategies</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply stylistic strategies</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use appropriate methods of production</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply effective editing strategies</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oversee collaborative and peer-oriented strategies to develop and refine communications</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make effective career choices</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Evidence of Graduate Quality

3.1. Demand for Graduates

We have seen a 100% placement rate in both of the two most recent surveys published by the Career Services office. In order to maintain this level of employment, the program faculty monitor the job market constantly, and we take every opportunity to gain information from our industry contacts about how the market is changing.

Here are some trends we see developing in the near to mid-term (1-5 years out):

Social media

As noted above, there is significant and growing demand for skills in the area of social media. Even decidedly low-tech sectors such as manufacturing and agriculture are hiring social media professionals in order to take advantage of new marketing opportunities. We see the skill array offered in our 2010 curriculum as solid preparation for these careers, and in fact several of our alumni have already established themselves in this field.

Convergence of platforms

Employers are increasingly searching for communication professionals who can work in all relevant media. That is, writers may be expected to also record a podcast, write a blog entry, and shoot supporting video. The breadth of our curriculum works to our students’ advantage here, as does our focus not on teaching tools but on teaching strategies for effective communication. Whatever tomorrow’s communication platform is, our students will be ready for it.

Use of content management tools

Content management systems (CMS) have been in place for a number of years, but their presence has become pervasive only recently. Our students will not likely create web “pages,” but rather units of content that will be aggregated, targeted, and delivered in a variety of media. This shift fundamentally changes content creation and audience analysis strategies, and we will continue to evolve our curriculum to address these challenges.

3.2. Interpret Follow-Up Studies

Alumni Survey (2008)

The information gathered from alumni follow-up studies shows very strong endorsement of the PCEM (and before it, the TCOM) curriculum and our students’ experiences in it. As one would expect, our students reported a 5 out of 5 rating for how our program helped them develop skills in writing effectively. But there are many other strengths noted by our grads,
including “Speaking or presenting ideas effectively” (4.6/5.0) and “Utilization of technologies” (4.4/5.0).

Our small size helps our faculty be more available to students, which is most likely why our graduates rated the availability of program faculty at 4.6/5.0, as opposed to general faculty, rated at 3.4/5.0.

Our program effectiveness ratings are also strong, with 100% of students rating the effectiveness at 4 or 5 out of 5, and 60% giving it the highest rating. One interesting data point is the number of people who report that their career is directly related to their major. None indicated that it was directly related, and 20% indicated that it was not related. Looking at the job titles reported in that survey, however, one sees that each would require strong communication skills. Specifically, the careers listed were:

- Human Resource Specialist
- Records Clerk
- Project Manager
- Web Producer
- Web Communications Specialist

Clearly, all of these careers require communication skills, but none is a traditional “technical writer” job. This factor is largely what led to the most recent program revision. We expanded our offering in order to address the expanded role of communication in the workplace. We followed where our alumni have led.

**Student Survey (current Juniors and Seniors) 2011**

The numbers here are encouraging indeed. In the summary view of all programs up for review in the current PRC cycle, PCEM has the highest rating in 15 out of 20 categories. The narrative responses are consistent in their praise for program faculty—their professionalism, their availability, their focus. Where students would like additional resources dedicated is in the realm of facilities and support. It is true that we have struggled at times to update equipment and obtain needed software, but with two recent lab mods (which were still in process when the survey was taken) we have made significant progress in this area.

**Program Advisory Committee**

Industry members of the advisory committee are on the whole satisfied with their interactions with program faculty. One area I would like to improve is in the “Were you adequately informed” section. Most of the members indicated that they were informed of most areas of concern, but I would like those numbers to be higher. I’ll be working on new ways to enhance communication with the committee members throughout the year.

**Key Faculty A (inside department)**

The departmental faculty who regularly teach in the program gather once a week for a programs-specific meeting (both BS in PCEM and MS in TPC). Therefore, the numbers in this survey are not surprising—the faculty are consistently involved in improving the program, and when asked how the program is meeting their expectations they have positive responses. The lowest numbers here are reserved for facilities issues (technology, room, library), as is consistent with the student responses.

**Key Faculty B (outside department)**

Again, the responses of outside faculty are heartening in their support of the program. And again, the majority of the commentary has to do with facilities and technology support, which I have discussed elsewhere in the document.
4. EVIDENCE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

4.1. Strengths and Unique Features, Weaknesses

Our program is unique nationally. In a forthcoming study of professional and technical communication programs to be published by researcher Lisa Melancon, we are the only program in the country that has broadened its offerings to include Emerging Media. Because of the strong DH focus of our faculty, the incorporation of new media across the curriculum is a real strength, and a great benefit to our students. In a recent survey published by Eduventures, “social media” is the seventh most sought skill on major job boards. There are currently very few programs focusing on this aspect of communication, and our program is uniquely positioned to serve a growing market need.

Another strength of our program is its hybrid availability. Students may take one or all of their classes online; this flexibility allows us to support students who live at a distance, who secure a semester-long co-op in another state, who study abroad, or who experience health-related absences. A byproduct of our instructional model is that students get experience working in geographically distributed work teams. This new way of working is a reality in the workplace, and our students have a head-start in managing the challenges that come with it.

A weakness of our program has been our inability, due to low numbers of students enrolled, to offer required classes every semester. In fact, in the period immediately following the 2006 program revision, some of our required courses were only offered once every two years. This required extensive and careful long-range planning and advisement, and several times resulting in faculty taking overloads to allow students the chance to take a required course out of sequence in order to graduate on time. As of this writing, however, we have sufficient enrollment to offer all required courses at least once a year. As program enrollment grows, we may find the opposite problem, with more students than we can fit in the sections we are able, given FTE limits, to offer.

4.2. Response to Previous PRC Review

PRC-05 made the following recommendations. After each recommendation appears the action(s) taken by the program in response.

To the Program Director

1. Work with department members; continue to review the curriculum in an effort to avoid unnecessary overlap.

There are two issues here: the lack of cooperation between department faculty and the program director, and a curriculum in which the same concepts seemed to be taught in several courses.

It would be difficult to overstate the level of tension and discord that characterized the relationship between the program director and rest of the department faculty. In a recent article in a peer-reviewed journal in the technical communication discipline, Dr. Maylath characterized this relationship as one of “interdisciplinary civil war.” With Dr. Maylath’s departure for another institution in the Fall of 2007, the present program director viewed improving the relationship between program and department as a critical priority. Through improved communication, identification of shared priorities, and advocacy for greater resources to avoid the zero-sum dilemmas of course staffing, the tension has resolved. The program and the department now work together, and view disciplinary tensions as a thing of the past.

The program revision in 2006 addressed some of the issues that PRC-05 identified, in that the curriculum was usefully diversified, but the specific course overlaps identified in the report were not addressed by the program in the 2006 revision. As course descriptions are departmental, program faculty, in preparation for the 2010 revision, worked within the departmental curriculum process to revise ENGL-371, Advanced Rhetoric, to make it function as a course in the history of rhetoric and strategies of argumentation, not simply as a follow-on writing course that seemed to overlap with ENGL-247, Critical Writing. The new ENGL-371, Strategies of Argumentation, was revised in Fall 2010. The second set of courses that were named in PRC-05 as overlapping were ENGL-385, Document Design, ENG-361 Writing Hypertext, and ENGL-435, Writing Technical Manuals. Of these, only ENGL-385 has remained unchanged. ENGL-361 was eliminated from the curriculum in Fall 2010, and replaced with ENGL-388, Writing for the Internet. This course takes up all aspects of content development and information architecture, and avoids rehearsing the design strategies covered in ENGL-385. Beginning in Spring 2010, ENGL-435 has been more subtly redirected, maintaining the same objectives as before but now focusing more explicitly on the creation of long print documents rather than on hypertext documents. This focus on long-document management, using industry-standard FrameMaker software, has eliminated the overlap with the previous Writing Hypertext’s content.
2. In cooperation with the department chair and the college dean, continue work to develop and implement a solid program marketing plan.

Marketing the technical communication program has always been challenging. Most students who come to the program either change from another major at Stout or transfer in from another institution. In the years since PRC-05, the program has attracted between 3 and 7 freshmen a year. While changes of major and transfers serve to keep the enrollment numbers steady overall, the program needed to attract more incoming freshmen. The creation of a marketing plan in 2008, in conjunction with the University Marketing office, led to the implementation of a new program and other marketing activities. This marketing plan was summarized and delivered in early 2010 to the Dean’s office, and is attached to this document. This plan has resulted in 25 freshmen entering the program in the Fall of 2011, a number many times higher than we have seen in recent years.

To the English and Philosophy Department Chair

1. Be supportive of the program director and his efforts to purchase adequate software needed to better serve the students.

The department has on several occasions stepped forward to support the software needs of the program. In recent years the department has funded operating system upgrades for program faculty, purchased software for unique demands of program courses (e.g., VMWare for running PC software on Mac computers, and ScreenFlow for creating instructional movies for online students).

In addition, the department has always been supportive of lab mod efforts and classroom updates; the department chair personally advocated for the purchase and installation of the SMARTboard in 205 Harvey.

2. Be supportive of the program director and his efforts to seek department faculty support and participation.

The department chair has supported the program strongly, while also working to balance the needs of the entire department.

3. Be supportive of the need to develop and implement a solid marketing plan designed to increase student enrollment and retention.

The department chair has no official role in helping to market the program, but has always assisted in informal ways by promoting the program across campus and with administration.

4. Be supportive of the program’s need to recruit and retain faculty qualified to teach in the program.

The department chair has been a tremendous support in this area, as the effective recruitment and retention of program faculty requires paying a significantly higher salary when compared to literature or composition specialists, due to market conditions. The chair has been critical in managing this obviously fraught situation.

To the Dean of the College

1. Be supportive of the program director and the chair in their efforts to identify and fund the purchase of software for the program.

The current administration of the college has been very supportive of the program, including funding special purchases such as Internet hosting services for program needs, and paying the maintenance costs of the lecture capture system.

2. Be supportive of the need to develop and implement a solid marketing plan designed to increase student enrollment and retention.

The current administration of the college has dedicated money and staff time to helping revise marketing materials that support the program.

3. Be supportive of the program’s need to recruit and retain faculty qualified to teach in the program.

As noted above with regard to the department chair, the college has been supportive of the need of the program to recruit and retain qualified faculty. The ability to pay near-market rates for faculty has assisted us in attracting qualified faculty necessary for program growth.

4.3 Seven-Year Plan for Improved Quality

Like all programs on the Stout campus, we will need to revise our program in the coming (2012-13) year to reflect the new GE requirement array and to reduce credits required to 120 total. This will be an ideal opportunity to revise the program curriculum, and we are already gathering ideas about the form that the revision might take. We will, however, wait until the 2010 curriculum has been taught in its entirety before undertaking a comprehensive revision; several courses (ENGL-335, 407, 495) have not yet been taught, which makes revising the curriculum at this point an exercise without sufficient data.

Once we have a journalism specialist on faculty, we will evaluate the AJ concentration for scope and coverage, as well as alignment with the new media requirements of the job market. When we created the AJ concentration, we designed it with any eye toward efficiency; the courses in it are largely the courses we were already teaching in the journalism minor,
and they therefore represented a known curriculum. However, with the program’s focus on emerging media, some redirection of the curriculum will likely be needed to ensure relevance and currency.

5. ATTACHMENTS

5.1. Any Other Information

In Spring 2010 I created a recruitment plan for the Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. That plan has guided our work over the last two years as we have attempted to increase program enrollment. That document is included at the end of this report.

5.2 Links to Program Information

- Program Plan Sheet
- Program Advisory Committee
Recruitment Plan for Technical Communication

In the Fall of 2008, the Technical Communication program began working on a recruitment plan to increase the number of freshman entrants and transfer enrollees. We prepared to launch this effort in the Spring of 2009, but the development of the Master’s program obligated us to put the undergraduate marketing plan on hold. With the MS-TPC now live, we have returned to the recruitment effort. This document is a brief summary of our work so far, and what we have planned for the coming year.

Program Renaming

In meetings with the University Marketing Committee, headed by Dave Williams, we identified the name of the program as a significant obstacle to effective recruiting. Changing the name of the program is a significant undertaking, and we first surveyed one of our primary target populations: English teachers across the state and metro areas. The survey results showed us clearly that “Technical Writing” and “Technical Communication” were significantly less attractive to prospective freshmen than program names containing terms such as “Journalism” and “Multimedia.”

In addition, we surveyed the names of competitive programs to ours at other institutions, and found that the only Technical Communication programs larger than Stout’s included “Professional” or “Corporate” in their titles. Given these results, the program faculty decided in Fall 2009 to propose the name “Professional Communication and Emerging Media.” We believe that this title will make our program much more attractive to potential students.

Program Revision

The Fall 2010 program in Professional Communication and Emerging Media will comprise a Professional Core and 3 new Concentrations:

• Technical Communication
• Applied Journalism
• Digital Humanities

These concentrations will help us market the program more effectively. The Technical Communication concentration will retain the current major intact; as the largest Technical Communication program in the country, this concentration represents our commitment to the discipline.

The Applied Journalism concentration is aimed squarely at prospective freshmen, who often seek Journalism programs as they consider potential majors. Having a Journalism-related concentration formalizes our commitment to the field (our Journalism minor has long been a popular offering) and makes the program more marketable.

The Digital Humanities concentration will attract students who would like to learn how to effectively communicate and collaborate in a variety of emerging media, blending traditional Humanities research with cutting-edge technology. We expect this to attract and retain students who currently seek Humanities programs at Eau Claire and La Crosse.

New Marketing Plan

The marketing plan developed in concert with the University Marketing Committee includes several initiatives that we will undertake once the program revision is final. These include using social media, updating the program website, and initiating new activities to attract prospective freshmen.

Ongoing Freshman Recruitment Efforts

Permission Marketing to English Teachers Statewide

We maintain a mailing list of 2,000 high school English teachers across Wisconsin and the Twin Cities Metro, and send a mailing several times a semester promoting the program. The payoff of this effort will be on the order of years rather than months, but we believe that English teachers are trusted advisers in the lives of prospective students, and can influence them positively toward Stout.

Articulation Agreements with Tech Colleges

We currently have articulation agreements with the Wisconsin Technical Colleges with programs in Technical Communication: Fox Valley, Gateway, and Western. The Western agreement was revised in Fall 2009, and will be formalized once the program revision is complete. We will then revise the remaining articulation agreements to provide a clear path for transfer students, which should increase our ability to attract transfer and degree completion students.

Online Courses

Since Fall of 2007 all major courses have been available to online students through the use of lecture capture technology, which we piloted on this campus. This online availability helps us to recruit non-traditional students, who tend to be place-bound. We will continue to publicize our distance education capability to potential transfer students.