Memo

To: Alan Rosiene
From: Chris Frongillo
CC: Marshall Jones
Date: 1/20/2012
Re: COM 1000 and 1001

Proposal for COM 1000 and COM 1001:

For the last two years, CoPLA Online has been looking to increase our online student retention rate and to improve our students' academic success while still maintaining Florida Tech's rigorous college standards. Each year we enroll roughly 3500 students in our composition courses (180 total sections of COM 0110, 1101, 1102, 2224). Unlike traditional Florida Tech students, the majority of our online students are adult learners who are employed, married, and over 30 years old with families. Due to our open enrollment policy, these students enter the university frequently lacking fundamental academic skills either because they have been out of school for a long time or have never attended college previously. Their biggest obstacle to success, we have determined, is a deficiency in the ability to write at a college level. This writing deficiency is then magnified by our compressed 8-week term and by the unique nature of the online environment itself.

We have sought several solutions for this lack of writing aptitude in our online students. For example, we have considered earlier writing placement tests, extending the term by multiple weeks, enacting tougher entrance standards, limiting the number of students per writing class, and other similar solutions. In the end, the consensus emerged: the vast majority of our students would benefit from additional work in reading comprehension and from more writing opportunities. In short, we would like to give them more practice at writing.

We propose an alternative COM sequence based on placement scores in order to increase the writing skills of our students. This solution has the potential to increase retention and to improve student writing proficiency. Our solution to this problem of increasing our retention rate and our student’s writing proficiency does not involve eliminating any of the existing sequence of courses, including COM 1102 Writing about Literature. We support and respect the COM 1101 and 1102 sequence with literature at the core of the second writing course. We do not want our students to write less or to avoid the study of literature; on the contrary, we want them to write more in order to be better prepared for the rigorous work of completing a degree from Florida Tech and for writing on such complex subjects like literature. For those students who begin with adequate writing skills to succeed, there will be no change whatsoever to the writing sequence. It will continue to be the 1101 and 1102 sequence. Our proposal only affects those students who are demonstrably under-prepared to complete major writing assignments at a college level. Our proposal maintains the integrity of the current academic schema, but it also allows CoPLA Online to meet the academic needs of our unique population of adult learners whose writing skills impede their course of study. As a measurable goal, we hope to increase our retention rate by 5% with the suggested modifications to our writing sequence of COM 1101 and COM 1102.

We based our proposal to adjust the writing sequence on data assembled from Communication placement exams and student grade point averages over the last two years. These statistics provided enough information to establish appropriate cut-off scores for students and their proper course placement. The change to the writing sequence would involve extra writing only for students below the predetermined placement score(s). We propose that the COM 1101 course be divided into two, sequential courses: COM 1000 and COM 1001 (see attached proposed content). The division of COM 1101 into 2 sequential courses would be as follows: “composition” in the first, and “rhetoric” and research in the second. Adding an additional 8 weeks of writing through this
division provides sustained exposure to the research process by giving extended focus to researching and composing a research paper from credible sources in proper APA or MLA style.

The first sequence for those students with the lowest scores of 25 or below on placement test would require COM 0105, COM 1000, COM 1001, and COM 1102. The second sequence for those with scores of 26-29 on placement test would include COM 1000, COM 1001, and COM 1102. The third sequence for those with scores of 30 or higher on the placement test would be the traditional COM 1101 and COM 1102 sequence. We plan to track COM placement scores and class success for the new course sequence and will review after six months in order to find the optimal cut off points for student placement.

Due to our 8 week term, an additional benefit of dividing COM 1101 into two parts is that students will be able to receive more graded responses from our instructors on their writing. The feedback on student writing, we believe, is critical and must be timely. Giving timely and sustained feedback is sometimes a challenge in our compressed term for our instructors. An extra term of writing will allow students more opportunities to profit from their instructor's comments.
# ADDING A NEW COURSE TO THE CURRICULUM

This course is available for student registration only after the approval process has been completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>COM</th>
<th>COURSE NO.*</th>
<th>CREDIT HOURS</th>
<th>TERM TO BE ADDED TO THE FILE</th>
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<td>(e.g., CSE)</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>(e.g., 1301)</td>
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Justify level if 1000-level+ and no co- or prerequisites

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<th>CLASS HOURS</th>
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<th>LAB HOURS</th>
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☐ COLLEGE OF AERONAUTICS – 23
☐ NATHAN M. BISK COLLEGE OF BUSINESS – 24
☐ COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING – 1
☐ EXTENDED STUDIES DIVISION / NATHAN M. BISK COLLEGE OF BUSINESS – 90

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<tr>
<td>Restricted to 25 characters, including spaces</td>
<td>First Year Writing 1</td>
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Dual-Prefix, Bi-Level, Full-Load? ☐ Yes ☐ No

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<tr>
<th>CATALOG DESCRIPTION OF COURSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduces rhetorical analysis, critical writing and critical thinking. Includes intensive reading of multiple genres and practice in writing and revising. First of a two-course series. (Requirement: Must be enrolled in Florida Tech University Online.)</td>
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This description has been approved by the catalog office. Catalog Director 1/19/12

In addition, please attach a course syllabus and/or more detailed description.

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<td>☐ A, B, C, D, F, CEU/Audit</td>
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If this course replaces a course currently offered in BANNER, please indicate old course information and the date/term the course may be removed from the system.

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<td>AlphaPrefix (e.g., CSE)</td>
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APPROVALS: Upon completion of appropriate department approvals, submit form to Chair, Graduate Council, or Chair, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for approval below and forward to Catalog Director.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Original Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>SC Frangilele</td>
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OR

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<th>Department Head/Program Chair</th>
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<td>P. Tally</td>
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<th>Dean or Associate Dean</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>M. B.</td>
<td>11/24/12</td>
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DISTRIBUTION

Original – Registrar
Copy – Academic Unit
Florida Institute of Technology • Office of the Registrar
150 West University Boulevard, Melbourne, FL 32901-6975 • (321) 674-8114 • Fax (321) 674-7837
Florida Tech University
COM 1000
3 credit hours

Course Description:
Introduces rhetorical analysis, critical writing and critical thinking. Includes intensive reading of multiple genres and practice in writing and revising. First of a two-course series. (Requirement: must be enrolled in Florida Tech University Online.)

Textbooks:
The Essay Connection, Lynn Bloom and The Bedford Handbook, Diana Hacker

Course Objectives:
1. understand writing process
2. explore various types of essays and rhetorical modes
3. employ the revision process
4. master grammar and punctuation
5. practice critical thinking and analysis

Writing and other Assignments:
Descriptive Essay 15% of grade
Narration Essay 15%
Comparison/Contrast Essay 15%
Cause/Effect Essay 15%
Argument/Persuasion Essay 15%
Quizzes 15%
Final Exam 10%

Grading scale: an A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, F= 59 and below

Sample Schedule for 8 week online course:
Week 1 Descriptive Essay and the writing process
Week 2 Narration Essay and revision strategies
Week 3-4 Cause/Effect Essay and punctuation/mechanics
Week 5-6 Compare/Contrast Essay and sentence style
Week 7-8 Argument Essay and using the library effectively

FINAL EXAMINATION
### Florida Institute of Technology

**ADDITION TO THE CURRICULUM**

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- COLLEGE OF PSYCHOLOGY AND LIBERAL ARTS - 25
- COLLEGE OF BUSINESS - 24
- COLLEGE OF SCIENCE - 26
- COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING - 1
- EXTENDED STUDIES DIVISION / NATHAN M. BISK COLLEGE OF BUSINESS - 90

**COMPUTER TITLE:** Restricted to 25 characters, including spaces

**WRITING 2**

**Dual Prefix, Bi-Level, Full-Load?**

- Yes
- No

**CATALOG TITLE:** Restricted to 350 characters, including spaces

**FIRST YEAR WRITING 2**

**CATALOG DESCRIPTION OF COURSE:** Restricted to 500 characters, including spaces

Continues work begun in COM 1000. Includes study in rhetorical analysis and the conventions of various genres. Also includes intensive instruction in writing and revision of work that incorporates research. Second in two-part series. (Requirement: Must be enrolled in Florida Tech University Online.)

This description has been approved by the catalog office.

**Date:** 1/9/12

**Catalog Director:**

In addition, please attach a course syllabus and/or more detailed description.

**RESTRICTIONS:**

- P | Prerequisite | COM 1000
- C | Corequisite |

**GRADES TO BE ISSUED:**

- A, B, C, D, F
- A, B, C, D, F, CEU/Audit
- CEU
- S, U
- P, F
- Other

**ADDITIONAL RESTRICTION:**

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**Chair, Graduate Council:**

**Date:** 1/20/12

**Chair, Undergraduate Curriculum Committee:**

**Date:** 1/24/12

**Dean or Associate Dean:**

**Date:** 1/24/12

**OR**

**CATALOG DIRECTOR:**

These changes/additions have been made for the University Catalog/Policy management system and entered into the BANNER term named above.

**Registrator's USE ONLY**

- SCACSE
- SCADETL
- SCAPREQ
- SCABASE
- SCABRES
- Operator Ini.

**Florida Institute of Technology • Office of the Registrator**

150 West University Boulevard, Melbourne, FL 32901-6975 • (321) 674-8114 • Fax (321) 674-7827
Florida Tech University
COM 1001
3 credit hours

Course Description:
Continues work begun in COM 1000. Includes study in rhetorical analysis and the conventions of various genres. Also includes intensive instruction in writing and revision of work that incorporates research. Second in two-part series. (Requirement: must be enrolled in Florida Tech University Online.)

Textbooks:
Everything’s an Argument, Andrea Lunsford and The Bedford Handbook, Diana Hacker

Course Objectives:
1. Understand research process
2. Compose MLA/APA Style Research Essay
3. Employ rhetorical analysis
4. Evaluate sources effectively

Writing and other assignments:
Rhetorical analysis of scholarly article 15% of grade
Annotated bibliography 15%
Review of Literature 15%
APA/MLA style Research Essay, including primary and secondary sources, citations, footnotes 25%
Quizzes 20%
Final Examination 10%

Grading scale: an A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, F= 59 and below

Sample Schedule for 8 week course:
Week 1-2 Rhetorical Analysis of article and argument/logic
Week 2-4 Annotated Bibliography and using electronic research
Week 5-6 Review of Literature and APA/ MLA documentation
Week 7-8 APA/MLA Research Essay
Final Examination