

UMBC UGC PROGRAM CHANGES & OTHER REQUESTS: Department of English

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Date Revised Proposal Submitted: 12/6

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Director (proposed)

Specifics: Proposed Minor in Science Writing

To earn the minor in Science Writing, students must complete 18 credits of coursework, divided as follows:

CORE (15 credits)

ENGL317 Literature and the Sciences

ENGL383 Writing about Science

HIST100 Human Context of Science or HIST446 History of Science Since 1700

AND

FOR CNMS/COEIT Majors:

ENGL291 Introduction to Writing Creative Essays

ENGL384: Topics in Journalism

FOR CAHHS Majors: One of the following sequences

BIOL109 Life: Introduction to Modern Biology

BIOL123 Human Genetics

OR

PHYS101 Ideas in Modern Physics

PHYS105 Ideas in Astronomy or PHYS106 Introduction to Astrobiology

OR

GES111 Principles of Geology

GES120 Environmental Science and Conservation

* CAHSS Students who have taken one or more of the above to fulfill GEP requirements should choose a higher-level science or statistics course (STAT 121, or 350 or 351) to fulfill the requirements for the minor.

SUGGESTED ELECTIVES

ANTH312 Medical Anthropology

ENES251 Ethical Issues in Science, Engineering and Information Technology

ENGL220 Composing Disability

ENGL384 Topics in Journalism

ENGL379 Principles and Practices of Technical Communication

ENGL385 New Media and Digital Literacies

ENGL387 Web Design and Multi-Media Authoring

ENGL419 Seminar in Literature and the Sciences

ENGL483 Writing in the Sciences

ENGL495 Internship

GWST378 Women, Gender and Science

HAPP329 Geography of Disease and Health

HIST350 History of Medicine

PHIL358 Bioethics

PHIL372 Philosophy of Science

PSYC230 Psych and Culture

PSYC285 Abnormal Psychology

STAT121 Introduction to Statistics for the Social Sciences

STAT350 Statistics with Applications in the Biological Sciences

STAT351 Introduction to Probability and Statistics for Scientists and Engineers

*A maximum of three courses may count toward both the student's major and this minor in consultation with minor advisor.

*AP credits may NOT be used toward the minor.

*Upper level courses often have a prerequisite of one introductory course in that discipline with a grade of C or better. Students should check department requirements.

*Students may petition the Director to accept a relevant course not listed here as an elective. Any proposed electives not on the above list must be 300 level courses or above.

Rationale for the proposed minor:

The proposed minor in science writing is a program of study that approaches the sciences by viewing them from a humanities perspective. Students will read literature that illustrates the role of science in helping to shape culture, and will analyze the ethical and social dimensions of scientific achievement. Writing and media courses offer a core designed to develop and polish students' ability to understand and communicate scientific information. Science sequences provide a foundation of basic knowledge to inform students' reporting. Electives from a variety of scientific and humanities fields allow students to pursue specific areas of interest. In total, these courses will prepare students to cover research as journalists or public information officers for universities, government agencies, scientific societies or non-profit foundations. More broadly, the minor will foster an understanding of the symbiotic relationship between the sciences and the humanities in defining what it means to be human. By engaging students in the study of scientific endeavor as a human activity, we address the fact that neither the sciences nor the humanities alone are sufficient to approach the challenges we face as a species and as stewards of the natural world.

Specific objectives include the following:

1. To fulfill university goals of more interdisciplinary research and teaching & interaction between STEM and humanities majors.
2. To expand career options & prepare students for graduate studies.
3. To increase enrollment in ENGL (particularly CT track) courses by stimulating interest in students from other departments.
4. To create a niche for UMBC as the only local university offering a science writing minor (and perhaps some day, a science writing major).

We recognize that changes may occur in various departmental curricula. For this reason we have provided a rich selection of proposed electives and confirmed via department chairs that science writing minors will be welcome in those courses and that they are offered regularly. In the case of the English department, with the addition of new faculty who are equipped to teach courses in the minor, we feel that despite any departmental changes in faculty or course offerings, science writing minors will still have sufficient support and choice. Also, our by-laws (see attached) ensure a multi-departmental faculty board and slate of advisors who can assist students meet requirements and also monitor changes in course offerings.