**Academic Programs Subcommittee Meeting Minutes**

**August 27, 2019**

**Voting members present:** Fabian Alfie, Molly Bolger, Wendy Davis, Melissa Goldsmith, Kelly Leslie, Todd Lutes, Madison Smith, Suzie Weisband

**Non-voting members present:** Martin Marquez, Stephanie Carlson

**Voting members absent:** Louise Roth

1. Chair Fabian Alfie called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM.
2. Introductions
3. Committee Roles and Responsibilities
4. Consent Agenda Items

A. Modification: BA in Applied Humanities

**A motion was made to approve consent agenda, seconded, and approved with seven votes and one abstention.**

1. New Action Items
2. **Minor in Population Health Data Science** presented by Kacey Ernst and Paul Hsu

This undergraduate minor is proposed by the College of Public Health, in the department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics. It aligns with UA strategic plan of data science initiatives. There’s a need for people to be informed of where data comes from, along with biases and collection methods. The proposed minor goes beyond analysis to critically assess the content of the data source. The minor consists of four new courses (two currently offered and the other two have been approved and are rolling out in the upcoming year) that build upon basic Epidemiology and Biostatistics courses that are also required. The coursework aligns with the new Quantitative subplan in the Public Health major.

Discussion:

* *Who would be the target student?* Will be marketed fairly widely. Public Health majors will also be in these classes, from the Quantitative subplan. This could be an attractive minor for Data Science majors, Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, or other science majors with an interest in informatics and data science.
* *How is this distinct from comparable majors/minors outside UA?* It was a struggle to find undergraduate level minors in health data science. It’s not yet a common offering. Existing programs are more analysis-heavy, less on the data collection and bias identification, so this approach is unique. Each of the four courses are taught by both an epidemiologist and a biostatistician, for a comprehensive view.

**A motion was made to approve the proposal, seconded, and approved with eight votes.**

1. **BA and Minor in Professional and Technical Writing** presented by Paul Hurh and Ann Shivers-McNair

The department has been interested in building curriculum in Professional and Technical Writing (PTW) for some time, now have faculty hired. The department currently offers an undergraduate certificate in PTW; this would serve a different population but would build on the coursework and strengths of the faculty already teaching the certificate. One of the unique aspects of this major is the focus on cultural and linguistic diversity, which positions UA to be a leader in the field. Differs from ASU’s BS in Technical Communication in embracing a humanistic approach and drawing upon strengths across the English department, in rhetoric, composition, linguistics, cultural literary analysis, etc. The department is open to collaborations with other units, as this major or minor can be a strong complement to students in a number of majors.

Discussion:

* *Can you give an example of how the linguistics aspect of the degree would be applied?* Someone working as a technical writer at a company, in charge of creating style guides for how communication functions within the organization or externally, there’s a whole tradition of editing expertise grounded in an intimate knowledge of language. You need not have an advanced degree in linguistics, but people going into those roles should have a solid grounding in how language works and sociolinguistics, how that’s tied to cultural practices.
* *How does a standalone major make more sense than a track or emphasis?* Market research shows technical writing as a growing field, and many current professionals expressed a wish for a dedicated degree. Technical communication is also supporting the growing field of user experience writing. There is some overlap between the English major and the PTW major (this degree could give an English major an applied skillset) but many PTW students may not be interested in the traditional English literature study. We do expect there may be some English/PTW double-majors.
* *In the list of elective courses, there are a lot of options (poetry, non-fiction, etc.) – does this water down the major?* We’re trying to build possible paths in PTW, one of which is in traditional English studies which does give some cultural, historical perspective. Students having experience writing in specific genres and forms is valuable experience for a technical writer to have. We want some flexibility; students could fill those elective units with all PTW-specific coursework, but students interested in exploring various genres and forms of writing can do that as well.
* *How different would this be from an English major completing the PTW certificate?* The major or minor would be a larger commitment with more disciplinary content, including writing for diverse audiences, and research methods. We have placed certificate grads in technical writing jobs, but for students who truly want to market themselves as technical writers, the major offers some important distinctions.
* *Were certificate students surveyed for interest in this major?* Yes, all current certificate students and all students in PTW classes were surveyed. These are reported in the proposal attachments.

**A motion was made to approve the proposal, seconded, and approved with eight votes.**

1. Meeting Adjournment