SPECIAL REPORT

of the

ACADEMIC PRIORITIES, GRADUATE AND
PROGRAM AND BUDGET COUNCILS

concerning a

CERTIFICATE IN THE TEACHING OF WRITING
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND
THE DIVISION OF CONTINUING AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Presented at the
754th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
January 28, 2016

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

ACADEMIC PRIORITIES COUNCIL

Faune Albert, Richard Bogartz (Chair), Nicholas Bromell, Elizabeth Chilton, Suzanne Daly, Kathleen Debevec, Piper Gaubatz, Bryan Harvey, Masoud Hashemi, Deborah Henson, A Yemisi Jimoh, Ernest May, Katherine Newman, MJ Peterson, Monroe Rabin, James Rinderle, Barbara Stanley, Peter Stern, Jack Wileden, Donna Zucker

GRADUATE COUNCIL


PROGRAM AND BUDGET COUNCIL

Proposal #1558 submits the longstanding Certificate in the Teaching of Writing, sponsored by the Western Massachusetts Writing Project, a professional development program within the Department of English, and the Division of Continuing and Professional Education for re-approval with minor revisions. Participants complete courses totaling 15 graduate credits in writing and literacy pedagogy courses to develop their capacity as teachers and teacher-leaders in the field. The APC, at its meeting on November 19, 2015, recommended approval of this Certificate.

GRADUATE COUNCIL

The Academic Standards and Curriculum Committee (ASCC) of the Graduate Council met on October 7, 2015 and reviewed the proposal for a Certificate in the Teaching of Writing in the Department of English and the Division of Continuing and Professional Education, proposal #1558 in the Course and Curriculum Management System.

On Wednesday, October 14, 2015, the Graduate Council unanimously approved the Certificate in the Teaching of Writing in the Department of English and the Division of Continuing and Professional Education.

PROGRAM AND BUDGET COUNCIL

The Program Subcommittee of the Program and Budget Council met on October 14, 2015, reviewed the Certificate in the Teaching of Writing, and recommended it for approval.

At its meeting on Wednesday, October 21, 2015, the Program and Budget Council voted to unanimously approve the Certificate in the Teaching of Writing. It was submitted as proposal #1558 in the Course and Curriculum Management System.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Certificate in the Teaching of Writing in the Department of English and the Division of Continuing and Professional Education, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 16-033.
Briefly describe the Certificate.

The Certificate in the Teaching of Writing is sponsored by the Western Massachusetts Writing Project, a professional development program within the Department of English, and the Division of Continuing and Professional Education. Participants complete courses totaling 15 graduate credits in writing and literacy pedagogy courses to develop their capacity as teachers and teacher-leaders in the field.

Provide a brief overview of the process for developing this Certificate.

The certificate program was actually developed in the 1990s by Professor Charles Moran, then director of the Western Massachusetts Writing Project, in collaboration with WMWP co-directors and the Continuing and Professional Education. The program has been in operation since then, but last year Donna LeCourt, then director of WMWP, was informed by Bryan Beck that the program should be submitted for approval through the new process.

Describe the Certificate’s purpose and the particular knowledge and skills that will be acquired by participating students.

K-12 Educators enrolled in the Certificate in the Teaching of Writing program will receive a strong grounding in writing and reflective teaching, while developing a framework for teaching writing and literacy across the curriculum.

Participants will gain a deep understanding of literacy learning through a combination of working on their own writing, reflecting on their teaching practices, and reading current research in composition, literacy, and writing pedagogy.

Following the National Writing Project model of "Teachers teaching teachers," participants will share successful writing activities and develop and implement curriculum. They will formulate research questions about their teaching practices and document the effects of their instruction by collecting and analyzing student work.

If this proposal requires no additional resources, say so and briefly explain why. If this proposal requires additional resources, explain how they will be paid for. For proposals involving instruction, indicate how many new enrollments are expected and whether the courses have room to accommodate them.

No additional resources are required. All of the courses included in the certificate are either existing programs offered by the Western Massachusetts Writing Project or professional development courses paid for by area school districts. The certificate program will not add to enrollments, only provide an opportunity to "package" courses into a coherent program of study.

Please describe the curriculum for this certificate, listing all required courses and possible electives, any prerequisites or GPA requirements, the recommended order or coursework and any other pertinent information. You may attach additional materials related to the curriculum at the end of this section.

There are three required courses totaling 9 credits, usually taken in this order:

- English 591AA. WMWP: Summer Institute (3 credits)
- English 591AB. WMWP: Summer Institute Inquiry (3 credits) (Prerequisite: 591AA)
- English 712. Writing and the Teaching of Writing (3 credits)

There are several electives that can fulfill the remaining 6 credits:

- English 591C. Writing Teachers Writing (1 credit)
- English 591T. Teaching with Technology (3 credits)
- English 591LL. Literacy Leadership Institute (3 credits)
- English 591P. ELL Leadership Institute (3 credits)
English 592B. Teaching Expository and Persuasive Writing (3 credits)
English 592D. Principles and Practices of Effective Content-Area Literacy Curriculum Design (3 credits)
English 592R. Reading and Teaching Literary Nonfiction and Informational Texts (3 credits)
English 592T. Topics in Literacy Education (1 credit)
English 891LL. Composition Theory (3 credits)
English 891Z. Introduction to Research on Writing (3 credits)
English 891I. Writing and Emerging Technologies (3 credits)

Other courses offered through the WMWP professional development program and the English Department Composition and Rhetoric Program are also eligible as electives, and relevant courses from other departments or institutions may be counted by permission of the WMWP director.

Explain how these courses represent a coherent course of study.

The Summer Institute (591AA), which is normally the starting point of the Certificate in the Teaching of Writing program, is open by application to teachers at all levels of education and in all subjects. Admission to the Summer Institute includes acceptance into the certificate program, which is an optional extension.

The Summer Institute engages participants in three key activities: personal writing and peer response, reflection on and sharing of literacy teaching practices, and inquiry into pedagogical questions in the educational literature. Participants develop from this experience an inquiry stance and an inquiry question to be examined in action research in their classrooms the following year (591AB). Having completed these two steps, they are deemed WMWP teacher-consultants, eligible to lead professional development programs.

Those who wish to go deeper may pursue the remaining requirements for the certificate. Writing and the Teaching of Writing (712) offers a theoretical foundation and explores practical questions in the teaching of writing, and the electives enable participants to develop particular areas of expertise while building their leadership skills in literacy education and their capacity to have an impact on colleagues in their schools, districts, and region.

Describe how there is a clear educational objective that can be achieved in an efficient and well-defined manner.

The primary objective of the program is to develop teacher-leaders who not only demonstrate effective teaching practices in their own classrooms but also influence other teachers and administrators through leadership of professional development programs and peer-to-peer interactions. The certificate program can be completed in as little as two years, depending on course availability and participants' own schedules. The Summer Institute and Inquiry courses are a full-year sequence, and the remaining courses can be taken beginning the following year.

Explain how the course sequence offers a clear objective at the appropriate educational level.

While the sequence outlined above is typical, it is not the only possibility. Sometimes teachers are introduced to WMWP through professional development courses offered in their schools, in which case, they might complete an elective before enrolling in the Summer Institute. The exact sequence of courses is less important than the overall objective of teacher leadership.

Describe the perceived need for this Certificate.

High-quality professional development in the field of literacy (including literacy in the disciplines) is in high demand in the area. Many schools and districts in western Massachusetts - along with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - look to WMWP to provide courses and workshops for teachers. All of WMWP's programs for teachers are led by teachers, and the certificate program is an avenue by which teacher-consultants can develop expertise, confidence, and flexibility as teacher-leaders in their schools and in WMWP programs.
If the courses that comprise the Certificate have been or currently are being offered, describe their schedule of availability. If the Certificate is comprised of new courses, describe their planned availability.

The Summer Institute and Inquiry courses (591AA and 591AB) are offered annually. Writing and the Teaching of Writing (712) are offered every other year. Elective courses are offered regularly (2-3 per year) through the sponsorship of school districts and/or Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or by open enrollment through Continuing and Professional Education.

If the Certificate requires or includes courses from outside the sponsoring department, provide evidence of agreement(s) with the unit(s) offering those courses. You may attach any memoranda of understanding below.

If the requirements for this Certificate overlap with those of another certificate or a degree or a degree program, describe that overlap.
(Note that if a student who has completed a certificate seeks clearance for a degree program that overlaps with that certificate program, the Registrar will note on the transcript that the certificate has been superseded by the degree.)

Students who complete the certificate might seek to apply some of the credits earned to an M.A. or M.Ed. degree.

What type of student is allowed to participate in this certificate program? (E.g., matriculated UMass students, non-matriculated CPE students, Five College students, graduate students, students in a specific degree program, etc.)

K-college teachers who are affiliated with the Western Massachusetts Writing Project.

What role will this Certificate play in relation to other departments or degree programs on campus? Certificates vary widely across campus and may represent a subset of an existing degree program, a multidisciplinary program, or an entirely free-standing area of focus.

This is a free-standing program.

Is this a transitional certificate program?
(Transitional certificate programs are comprised of core courses from specific degree programs and may act as stepping stones into those programs. If a student who has completed a transitional certificate matriculates to the University and completes the degree program associated with that certificate, the transcript will note that the certificate has been superseded by the degree.)

No