Creating Collaborations: An Interdisciplinary Pedagogy for Professional and Technical Writing Students

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TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL WRITING PROGRAM
MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

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Introduction to MSU
Our Program and Our Students
Scientific and Technical Editing Course

• Emphasis on audience adaptation; professional ethics; and document organization, style, and mechanics through a client-based editing project. Focus on building author-editor relationships while managing the editing cycle.
Community Partner

- 60 Page Booklet to Edit
- Audience Research
- Style Sheet
- Editing cycle, contracts, and final submittals
Student Experience

• I really enjoyed working with a service-learning client. It provided me with a real document that will be used by real people, which was a major source of motivation for me while I was working on it. I had an actual audience that I could think about while I was working and I had an actual client to communicate with if I had any questions.
Foundations in Technical Writing

• Graduate students who are in our program.
• Some may have just finished a four-year degree in professional writing.
• Some students may have received a four-year degree in a different program, like communication or education.
Interdisciplinary Project

• The project was a report for the City of Springfield.
• How can elderly people stay in their own homes rather than move to a care facility? Aging in Place
• Issues we needed to investigate: food availability, social concerns, transportation, and safety.
The Students

- Undergraduate students served as subject matter experts and were from Dietetics and Gerontology

- Graduate students from Technical Writing learned about the audiences and wrote the report
The Deliverable

• The report to the City of Springfield was the deliverable.
• Students had to analyze audience, determine what information was important to include, the design of the document, and page layout and design.
Interdisciplinary Benefits

• Students learned about people who are one and two generations older than they are.
• Dietetics students taught about dietary needs, food availability, and simple, safe recipes.
• Gerontology students taught about needs of older generations, both social needs and exercise needs.
Service Learning

• In addition to the benefit of students being involved with students in other disciplines, because it was a service-learning course, they completed a real project for a real client, instead of something for just the teacher.
Questions

WHAT QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?

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