

**Minutes
Faculty Senate
24 April 2007**

	Senator		Ex-Officio
A	Bob Tango, ARCH		Zvi Szafran, VPAA
P	Mike Thackston, BCP		Alan Gabriella, Dean A&S
A	Sam Beadles, CET		
A	Dave Pierce, CNST		
P	Abdullah Faruque, CSWE		Visitors
A	Scott Larisch, ECET		
P	Austin Asgill, ECET		
P	Keith Hopper, ETCMA		
P	Walt Thomas, IET		
P	Becky Rutherford, IT		
P	Li Chen, LIB		
P	Larry Wang, MATH		
A	Sid Davis, MGNT		
P	Glenn Allen, MET		
P	Al Churella, SIS		
P	Frank Tsui, CSWE		

1. Quorum

The meeting was called to order by Joel Fowler, Moderator of the Faculty.

2. Discussion of P&P on faculty committee minute circulation and archiving

Members of the body discussed various approaches to handling the flow and archiving of minutes from faculty committee meetings. One suggestion was that an administrative assistant should be responsible for posting minutes to the web, for archiving--- whether or not archives end up in the library---, and for keeping a frequently updated notebook of minutes for ready reference.

3. To Develop a Graduate Degree in Information and Instructional Design.

Keith Hopper asked for an endorsement by the Senate of a program he would like us to offer. There was a motion to approve the degree program in concept, with an understanding that a formal letter of intent would appear before the Senate for approval next academic year. The motion carried. (See below for the proposal advanced by Keith Hopper.)

4. Discussion of Business/Issues to Recommend to the 2007/2008 Faculty Senate

Members of the body suggested the following for consideration by and concerning next year's Senate.

- Establishing a policy and procedure for circulation and archiving of faculty committee minutes should be a priority.
- Continuity in the operation of the Senate should be seen to by a designated individual or individuals. (The Moderator mentioned that this is typically handled by the outgoing Moderator, the VPAA, and the President.)
- Walt Thomas would like to see SPSU establish a center for business, engineering, and research ethics. Dr. Szafran mentioned that this type of project should be considered by the Academic Planning Taskforce.

- The Senate next year should set about revising the P&P on lecturers, in particular, to eliminate conflicts in timing of reviews for people in these positions.

5. Study Days

There was a motion to set aside the Friday of the last week of classes, of every semester, as a study day, that is, a day on which neither classes nor final exams be scheduled. The motion was approved.

Submitted by Meg Dillon, Secretary to the Faculty

Approved by Joel Fowler, Moderator to the Faculty.

A Proposal

To Develop a New SPSU Interdisciplinary Graduate Degree in Information and Instructional Design

Terms

IDC	Information Design and Communication
IT	Instructional Technology
ID	Instructional Design (or ISD—Instructional Systems Design)
IID	Information and Instructional Design

Executive Summary

Where we're going: Build a new and unique graduate program that directly serves both corporate information design and instructional development needs.

Why we're going: IDC graduates often fill cross-over skill positions in instructional development, and vice versa, and graduates with either an IDC or IT-ID degree find themselves unprepared for real world expectations. Many corporate instructional development projects involve a high level of document and electronic information design. This leaves a skill set gap in the workplace that SPSU is uniquely qualified to satisfy.

Who is going: This interdisciplinary program will involve Arts and Sciences courses and faculty from IDC-TCOM and SIS, and possibly others across the SPSU campus.

How we'll get there: Create a new graduate degree offering in Arts and Sciences, leveraging existing expertise and courses within the IDC program and new expertise and courses soon to be at hand related to the engineering psychology degree in SIS. Market the new degree intensively to employers in the Atlanta engineering corridor, and to area public school systems with instructional technology leadership needs.

Background

Located within the Atlanta engineering corridor, Southern Polytechnic State University is uniquely positioned and qualified to develop and deploy graduate programs of singular importance to corporate employers. Emblematic of this role is the unique SPSU graduate program in IDC. Established in 1988 (as TCOM-Technical Communication) and now offering a master's degree and certificate with four specialization tracks, this program has approximately 320 graduates.

There are two USG graduate programs (University of Georgia and Georgia State University) in IT-ID serving the greater Atlanta area, but there is a clear need for a program intentionally serving the corporate sector. Neither existing USG program has the unique mission and existing technology resources and faculty expertise of SPSU, such as our usability lab, and neither is prepared to deliver graduate level courses in document and information design. SPSU could offer this degree quickly, seizing the

moment to create an exciting new graduate program that will be unique in the USG and across the country.

Sister Fields

Technical Communication: The process of conveying usable information about a specific domain to an intended audience¹. (Society for Technical Communication—STC)

Instructional Technology: The theory and practice of design, development, utilization, management, and evaluation of processes and resources for learning. (Association for Educational Communications and Technology--AECT)

Instructional (Systems) Design: Scientifically derived processes which are intended to optimize learning gains in knowledge and performance from precisely engineered instruction². (Wikipedia)

IDC (technical communication) and IT-IDC are closely related but distinct sister fields. The fields share research and literature, employ closely related tools and techniques, and enjoy a high degree of employment crossover. STC has a training SIG. SPSU's IDC graduates often work in instructional development and training roles. IT-ID graduates often work in document and website design roles without an instructional component. Each field has a robust professional organization and discourse community, while sharing influential theorists and authors. This striking similarity between the fields, and the need for technical communication professionals to move toward a more mainstream position intentionally connected to organizational performance, has been convincingly described by theorists known to both fields [1].

But while IDC graduates have found satisfying roles in training and instructional development, and IT-ID graduates frequently produce informational documents and websites, members of both groups find themselves academically poorly prepared for their eventual employment roles. That is, skilled instructional designers find themselves frustrated by a lack of document and information design skills enjoyed by IDC graduates, while IDC graduates find themselves hamstrung by inadequate preparation in instructional development. Effective presentation of information is not teaching; instruction is not equivalent to information design. Employers often expect similar skill sets from both groups, seeing little distinction, but this is fulfilled haphazardly at best and by the determined efforts of employees to satisfy their skill and knowledge gaps by their own efforts and after graduation.

The Opportunity

SPSU is prepared to do better than this. While there is a manifest need for both IDC and IT-ID graduates who will specialize in their careers within these tracks, there is a

¹ Information Design and Communication is the current name of SPSU's graduate program in Technical Communication.

² Leading instructional technology graduate programs are beginning to use variations of instructional technology and instructional design as names of graduate programs related to professional instructional development (e.g., University of Georgia and Syracuse University).

pressing need for graduates holding an amalgam both skill sets. These workers will be highly flexible, capable of fulfilling a wider range of workplace needs, and eminently employable across both fields.

U.S. organizations are spending an estimated \$109.25 billion annually on employee learning and development, at a cost per employee of about \$1,500.00 for about 41 hours of training per employee.[2] Moreover, these investments in learning accrue efficiency gains directly due to technology-infused instruction. This hybrid program proposal is in keeping with current industry trends toward developing more generalized information and training employees focusing on return on investment in the workplace. They are sometimes termed workplace learning and performance (WLP) professionals[2].

“In each year over the past decade, the WLP field has witnessed increasing investment in employee learning and in the technology used to deliver learning.”[2]

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (2007), employment outlook for WLP-related fields is favorable through 2014:

“Opportunities should be best for technical writers and those with training in a specialized field... Rapid growth and change in the high-technology and electronics industries result in a greater need for people to write users’ guides, instruction manuals, and training materials.”

Money Magazine recently ranked the top fifty jobs in America on salary and job prospects (<http://money.cnn.com/magazines/moneymag/bestjobs/top50/index.html>) and technical writer was ranked thirteenth while curriculum developer was ranked eighteenth.

Having established and populated the hybrid Information and Instructional Design (IID) degree, it would be feasible to then create a third graduate program purely in instructional technology-design, thus maximizing resources to provide three attractive graduate programs with a related focus and common core courses.

The Plan

See the attached proposed curriculum, illustrating current IDC master’s degree course offerings and the hybrid IID course plan. The IID curriculum plan includes two courses presently anticipated in the engineering psychology undergraduate degree (in development by SIS), and these would be double-listed as undergraduate-graduate offerings. Alternatively, if student enrollment and course content and expectations justify, they might be offered as purely graduate courses, taught by SIS faculty.

Advantages

This program would accrue a number of important advantages for SPSU, the University System of Georgia, and for the community, including:

1. This program is well aligned with SPSU’s technology focused mission and unique role within the USG.
2. This graduate program, unlike the present IDC program, will **tap SPSU’s own substantial undergraduate student pool**. SPSU baccalaureate graduates in

- TCOM and other disciplines will have an attractive graduate program option that matches and extends their undergraduate studies.
3. No immediate need for additional full-time faculty is anticipated and this proposal will leverage existing resources. Courses in the proposed curriculum are presently offered by SPSU and this program of study will augment student enrollment in existing courses. Adjunct instructors can be employed in a cost effective way to provide the few courses not provided from current offerings.
 4. This program will attract graduate students primarily from the corporate sector, but also from higher education arenas. Graduates will be uniquely qualified to fulfill instructional development, document design, and instructional development roles.
 5. The proposal will dovetail with current and ongoing program development and faculty recruitment within the SPSU School of Arts and Sciences. Specifically, this program will tap the course offerings and expertise of the (anticipated hire) professor of engineering psychology.
 6. This program will attract students for SPSU's existing IDC graduate program, in addition to attracting new graduate students to campus.
 7. Establishing this program will facilitate recruitment for current and future SIS faculty positions related to educational or engineering psychology because this will provide teaching opportunities at the graduate level.

Notes

The following should be considered in planning for this new degree, and for related degrees:

1. Instructional systems design, and other courses related to instructional development such as performance technology, are not appropriate for undergraduates (except at an introductory level). These intensive professional caliber courses rely on previous workplace experience and course work, and workload requirements that are not suitable for undergraduate students. Moreover, this new program will provide an SPSU avenue for our baccalaureate graduates who show aptitude for and interest in instructional development roles.
2. It is imperative that this be a new degree in a discipline clearly within instructional technology, to be attractive to potential students and to employers with instructional technology needs. As a track within the existing IDC program, the degree would not be sufficiently recognizable to succeed. That is, potential students and their employers need to a degree title establishing focus and expertise in instructional development, and not as an incidental part of a degree they are not readily familiar with.

- [1] M. Hughes, "Mapping Technical Communication to a Human Performance Technology Framework," *Technical Communication*, vol. 51, pp. 367-375, 2004.
- [2] R. J. Rivera and A. Paradise, "State of the Industry in Leading Enterprises," American Society for Training and Development, Alexandria, VA 2006.

Information and Instructional Design Proposed Curriculum

Existing IDC Courses:

IDC 6001 Technical Writing and Editing
 IDC 6002 Information Design
 IDC 6030 Foundations of Graphics
 IDC 6040 Applied Graphics I
 IDC 6041 Applied Graphics II
 IDC 6135 Website Design
 IDC 6120 Usability Testing
 IDC 6130 Online Documentation
 IDC 6060 International Technical Communication
 IDC 6165 Writing Across Media
 IDC 6070 User Documentation
 IDC 6080 Professional Oral Presentations
 IDC XXXX Information Architecture

Core	12 IDC + 12 IT-ID
IDC Elective	6
IT-ID Elective	6

Existing IT-ID Courses:

IDC 6145 Performance Technology
 IDC 6140 Instructional Systems Design
 IDC 6110 Communications Project Management
 IDC 6145 Foundations of Multimedia
 IDC 6050 Applied Multimedia

New IT-ID Courses:

Online Instructional Development¹
 PSYC 6011 Theories of Cognition²
 PSYC 6010 Educational Psychology²
 Technology Applications in Teaching and Learning
 Foundations of Instructional Technology
 Corporate Applications of Instructional Technology
 IT-ID Internship

IDC faculty
 SIS faculty (planned)
 SIS faculty (planned)
 adjunct
 IDC faculty or adjunct
 adjunct
 IDC faculty

Options:

- 36 course credits
- 30 to 33 course credits plus internship

Note:

I&ID students will be admitted annually to form cohorts.

¹ Approved by GPC 2006. In development.

² Currently anticipated as an SIS offering.