Colorado State University-Pueblo Undergraduate & Graduate Program Assessment Report for AY 2012-2013   **Due:** June 3, 2013

Program: Professional Writing Minor   **Date:** June 3, 2013

Completed by: Scott Gage

Please complete this form for each undergraduate, minor, certificate, and graduate program (e.g., B.A., B.S., M.S.) in your department and return it to Erin Frew, erin.frew@colostate-pueblo.edu as an email attachment before June 3, 2013. You'll also find the form at the assessment website at http://www.colostate-pueblo.edu/Assessment/Resources/Pages/default.aspx. Thank you.

A. Program student learning outcomes (SLOs) assessed in this cycle, processes, results, and recommendations.

A. Which of the program SLOs were assessed during this cycle? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.	B. When was this SLO last assessed?	C. What method was used for assessing the SLO? Please attach a copy of any rubrics used in the assessment process.	D. Who was assessed? Please fully describe the student group.	E. What is the expected achievement level and how many students should be at it?	F. What were the results of the assessment?	G. What were the department's conclusions about student performance?	H. What changes/improvements to the program are planned based on this assessment?
Create rhetorically-effective documents that demonstrate the standards	The professional writing minor's SLOs were newly developed in Spring 2013.	Two faculty members who do not teach in the professional writing minor evaluated	All students enrolled in ENG 326 Writing for the Web in Spring 2013 were assessed. The class was	The professional writing minor's expectation is that 75% of assignments	ENG 326 aggregate score (4 collaborative web sites evaluated from 1	The assignments evaluated from ENG 326 Writing for the Web fulfilled program	The professional writing minor's assessment plan and curriculum development will continue as currently planned in AY 2013-

and expectations for documents employed in professional settings	As such, the AY 2012-2013 assessment report represents the first time this SLO has been assessed.	four collaborative web sites created in ENG 326 Writing for the Web based on a rubric keyed to this SLO (please find the rubric included below). The web sites were intended to create a revised professional online presence for a private company, non-profit organization, or university-based program.	comprised of junior- and senior-level students majoring in either English or mass communications. A significant portion of the student body was also enrolled as professional writing minors.	will register an aggregate score 2.5 or above. Not meeting that benchmark will trigger a revision of the professional writing minor's curriculum to address the deficiency.	course) = 3.0 Percentage of ENG 326 assignments registering an aggregate score of 2.5 or higher: 75%	expectations for performance as outlined in the professional writing minor's assessment plan.	2014.

B. Follow-up (closing the loop) on results and activities from previous assessment cycles. In this section, please describe actions taken during this cycle that were based on, or implemented to address, the results of assessment from previous cycles.

A. What SLO(s) did you address? Please include the outcome(s) verbatim from the assessment plan.	B. When was this SLO last assessed?	C. What were the recommendations for change from the previous assessment?	D. Were the recommendations for change acted upon? If not, why?	E. What were the results of the changes? If the changes were not effective, what are the next steps for the new recommendations?
We addressed the first of the newly-developed SLOs for the professional writing minor, which reads as follows: Create rhetorically-effective documents that demonstrate the standards and expectations for documents employed in professional settings.	The professional writing minor's SLOs were newly developed in Spring 2013. As such, the AY 2012-2013 assessment report represents the first time this SLO has been assessed.	The significant curricular revisions made to the professional writing minor in AY 2011-2012 did not yet include the creation of fully-developed SLOs and assessment standards. As such, our previous assessment report did not include recommendations for change.	Because the previous assessment report did not include recommendations for change, we did not act upon any changes in AY 2012-2013. We did, however, use AY 2012-2013 to implement a new professional writing curriculum keyed to faculty expertise and market expectations.	Because the professional writing minor did not include assessment-based changes in AY 2012-2013, we are unable to report on the results of the changes.

Professional Writing Minor Assessment Rubric
Outcome #1

Please use the following rubric to assess the professional writing minor's first program outcome: **to create rhetorically-effective documents that demonstrate the standards and expectations for documents employed in professional settings**. To assess this outcome, score the text you have been given per each of the criteria below using a scale of 1-4 (1 = the text fulfills the criterion poorly; 4 = the text fulfills the criterion excellently). Please highlight in yellow the score you are awarding to each criterion. For a description of each criterion, please see the second page.

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Seeks to resolve an identifiable exigence	1	2	3	4
Communicates to an identifiable rhetorical audience	1	2	3	4
Invites appropriate identification with the rhetorical audience	1	2	3	4
Fulfills the standards and expectations of genre	1	2	3	4

Total Score:

<u>**Description of Criteria**</u>

1) <u>**Seeks to resolve an identifiable exigence**</u>: According to Lloyd Bitzer (1968), an exigence is an urgent problem or need that may only be resolved through discourse. An exigence, Bitzer contends, arises as a result of some event or occurrence. From this perspective, rhetorical discourse is always a response to an exigence. According to Richard Vatz (1973), however, an exigence does not exist externally to discourse but is, instead, created by discourse. To that end, a rhetorically-effective text is one that signals to the audience the problem or need the text seeks to resolve; readers should have a clear understanding of what the text is trying to accomplish by having a clear understanding of its exigence.

- A score of 1 means the text leaves readers with no understanding of the need or problem it seeks to resolve
- A score of 2 means the text provides readers with only a confused understanding of the exigence, leaving readers to guess at possibilities
- A score of 3 means the text offers readers a clearer indication of the exigence but may still feature ambiguities, leaving readers to guess at a more limited range of possibilities
- A score of 4 means the text clearly and explicitly identifies the exigence for the audience (even if the text addresses multiple exigencies, it will indicate each one so that the reader understands what it seeks to accomplish)

2) <u>**Communicates to an identifiable rhetorical audience**</u>: While a text may address multiple audiences (Park 1982), it may only resolve a given exigence if it addresses what Bitzer termed a "rhetorical audience," individuals who have the means and capacity to resolve an exigence. According to Bitzer, a rhetorical audience may include one of the following types of individuals: (1) individuals with the ability to resolve an exigence directly or (2) individuals who may pressure those in the previous category to act. Rhetorically-effective texts, therefore, communicate directly to either category of individuals capable of resolving a given exigence.

- A score of 1 means the text leaves readers with no understanding of the audience to whom the text is directed
- A score of 2 means the text provides readers with some indication of the audience but also features significant ambiguity, leaving readers to guess at multiple possibilities
- A score of 3 means the text clearly identifies and communicates to an audience, but the audience may not be a rhetorical audience (i.e., may not be able to resolve the exigence)
- A score of 4 means the text identifies and communicates directly to a rhetorical audience as defined above

3) <u>**Invites appropriate identification with the rhetorical audience**</u>: To be rhetorically-effective, a text must not only communicate to a clearly identifiable rhetorical audience, it must also make appropriate appeals to the audience in order to induce the audience's "cooperation" (Burke 1969). These appeals are traditionally treated in terms of ethos (character/credibility), logos (reason), and pathos (emotion) (Aristotle); however, any instance of persuasion must be preceded by identification (Ratcliffe 2005). From that perspective, then, a rhetorically-effective text will first and foremost invite identification with the rhetorical audience. In general, a text will invite identification in any of the following ways: (1) by advancing attitudes and perspectives with which the audience may agree or toward which the audience may feel

sympathy, (2) by using language and imagery (if applicable) that may be relatable to the audience, and/or (3) by fulfilling the expectations an audience may have toward a given genre.

- A score of 1 means the text makes no effort to invite identification with the rhetorical audience
- A score of 2 means the text makes an effort to invite identification with the audience but does so inappropriately (e.g., the text advances an attitude toward which the audience is likely to feel unsympathetic)
- A score of 3 means the text invites identification with the audience but fails to do so consistently or effectively (e.g., the language used in a given text shifts from an appropriate to an inappropriate degree of formality)
- A score of 4 means the text invites identification with the audience in a way that is appropriate, consistent, and effective

4) **Fulfills the standards and expectations of genre**: Because genres are "typified rhetorical actions based in recurrent situations" (Miller 1984), they create expectations for audience members both in terms of formal characteristics and in terms of rhetorical strategy (e.g., a genre will typically employ common methods of identification). While writers certainly possess the agency to defy the standards and expectations of a given genre, commonplace assumptions hold that texts are more effective rhetorically when they fulfill such standards and expectations. As such, a rhetorically-effective text should fulfill the standards and expectations of the genre it represents.

- A score of 1 means the text defies or neglects the standards and expectations of the genre it represents
- A score of 2 means the text fulfills some of the standards and expectations of the genre it represents while defying or neglecting others (e.g., a formal letter has included an inside address but has neglected to include a salutation and has been written in informal language)
- A score of 3 means the text fulfills all of the standards and expectations of the genre it represents but has not always done so effectively (e.g., a web site features some pages lacking effective contrast)
- A score of 4 means the text fulfills all of the standards and expectations of the genre it represents consistently and effectively