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OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

MEMORANDUM NO. OVCAA-BMP 15-088

TO : ALL DEANS, DIRECTORS, HEADS OF ACADEMIC UNITS

FROM : BENITO M. PACHECO, Ph.D. ✕
Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT : UPD 2015 GE Pre-Conference Symposium on the Number of Units

DATE : 11 August 2015

As part of the preparations for the UP Diliman 2015 General Education Conference to be held on 28-29 September (details about the GE Conference will be released in a separate memorandum), we are holding a symposium to discuss the number of GE units that the different academic units are recommending for their respective degree programs. This GE Pre-Conference Symposium on the Number of Units will be held on Monday, 24 August, 1-5 PM, at the College of Engineering Theater. All deans, directors, and chairs of units with undergraduate degree programs are invited to participate in this symposium.

To organize the Symposium discussions more efficiently, we request each college/unit to submit ahead of said event information on the following:

1. The number of GE units that you recommend for your degree program/s
2. The types of GE courses recommended – academic units may specify any combination of GE courses, e.g., based on the initial 11 categories of GE courses that are mentioned in the proposed new GE framework by the UP System Task Force (2015), the current GE domains, the academic clusters, or any combination of these
3. Courses from the University Writing and Communication Program (UWCP; please see an early version of the CAL proposal as annexed hereto) – please indicate how many courses are recommended to be taken, and if the UCWP courses are to be considered part of the GE curriculum or considered complementary
4. Other relevant information regarding your recommended number of GE units for your degree programs

Your submissions will be considered as inputs to our discussions during the Pre-Conference Symposium on 24 August; they are in no way considered as the final design of your GE curriculum yet. We are collating the abovementioned information to help us identify what issues need to be deliberated on before and during the UPD GE Conference in September.

Please submit the requested information by Monday, 17 August, via email to the OVCAA (ovcaa@ovcaa.upd.edu.ph) with the SUBJECT: NUMBER OF GE UNITS. The detailed program of the Symposium on 24 August will depend on your submissions.

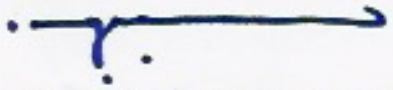
Thank you.

**UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
DILIMAN QUEZON CITY**

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**OFFICE OF THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

MEMORANDUM NO. OVCAA-BMP 15-088-A

TO : ALL DEANS, DIRECTORS, HEADS OF ACADEMIC UNITS

FROM : BENITO M. PACHECO, Ph.D. &
Vice-Chancellor for Academic Affairs
SUBJECT : UPD 2015 GE Pre-Conference Symposium on the Number of Units: Update
DATE : 17 August 2015

In relation to Memorandum No. OVCAA-BMP 15-088, kindly disregard the 3-page attachment regarding the proposed UWCP and instead replace with the attached version dated 13 August 2015.

The CAL Dean and VCAA apologize for having caused the circulation of an outdated version of the UWCP proposal.

Please encourage all to read about UWCP, which may be a complement to the new proposed GE if not part of GE itself.

See you all at the UPD GE Pre-Conference Symposium on the Number of Units to be held on Monday, 24 August, 1-5 PM, at the College of Engineering Theater.

Thank you.

The University Writing and Communication Program
(College of Arts and Letters Proposal)
August 13, 2015

Of what use is learning if it cannot be effectively communicated? How will knowledge be passed on, added to, evolve, or develop if not wielded or preserved in the written word? Can the refinement of language really be separated from the clarity and depth of thought?

These are the questions that prompt the proposal of a comprehensive University Writing and Communication Program as a key feature of the General Education program for the University of the Philippines in Diliman. The UWCP aims to train students in modes of advanced writing and communication to prepare them for active participation in their academic and future professional lives. The Program is grounded on an understanding of writing and communication in keeping with the paradigm shifts in composition theory and rhetoric studies in recent history. It regards writing and communication not as mere conveyors of knowledge through impeccable grammar or rhetorical flourish but as the very means to knowledge itself, as inherent acts of critical thinking directed to/for specific discourse communities that are deeply implicated in systems of knowledge and power.

The UWCP takes the view that oral and written communication are not merely instrumental tasks, that language is not a simple or unproblematic medium, and that rhetoric is not a mere adornment or packaging for a preconfigured truth. Instead it views language, primarily in the form of written and oral communication, as a means of inquiry and investigation, a method of arriving at truth, or as the very shaper of knowledge. Language is the very medium of knowledge. The mastery of spoken and written language is therefore the key to learning itself.

The UWCP is structured in such way that after going through the 33-unit program, a student should be able to:

1. create new knowledges formed from understanding, interpreting, and questioning what s/he has learned and to communicate it to the world;
2. wield language primarily in the form of oral and written communication as a means of inquiry and investigation, a method of arriving at truths or as the very shaper of knowledge; and
3. take a reasoned position primarily in oral and written language and claim a responsible voice in a community in order to contribute to social transformation.

The UWCP will ensure that university students acquire the necessary facility and confidence in oral and written communication and the capacity for advanced critical thinking through oral and written language. The UWCP will consist of four courses: two general writing courses (one each in English and Filipino) and an oral communication course in either English or Filipino to be ideally taken in the

student's first year in the University and an advanced writing course allied to the student's major to be taken in the student's junior year.

More than a set of skills, the general writing courses (in both English and Filipino) will introduce students to the concept of writing as critical thinking. Founded on the assumptions that writing and critical thinking are inextricably linked and that effective writing must be mastered as a process, these courses will train students not only in prewriting and research techniques for generating topics and exploring/developing ideas but, more importantly, in the higher order processes of review and revision to more adequately prepare them for writing and communication in the academe and real world. The emphasis on written and oral communication as process incorporating both review and revision demands a crucial awareness of audiences and contexts of communicative acts. It takes a more holistic and critical view of language where writing and public speech are both conceived as acts of critical thinking. It assumes no fundamental distinction between thought and expression. Or put simply, there is (or ought to be) no writing or speaking apart from thinking.

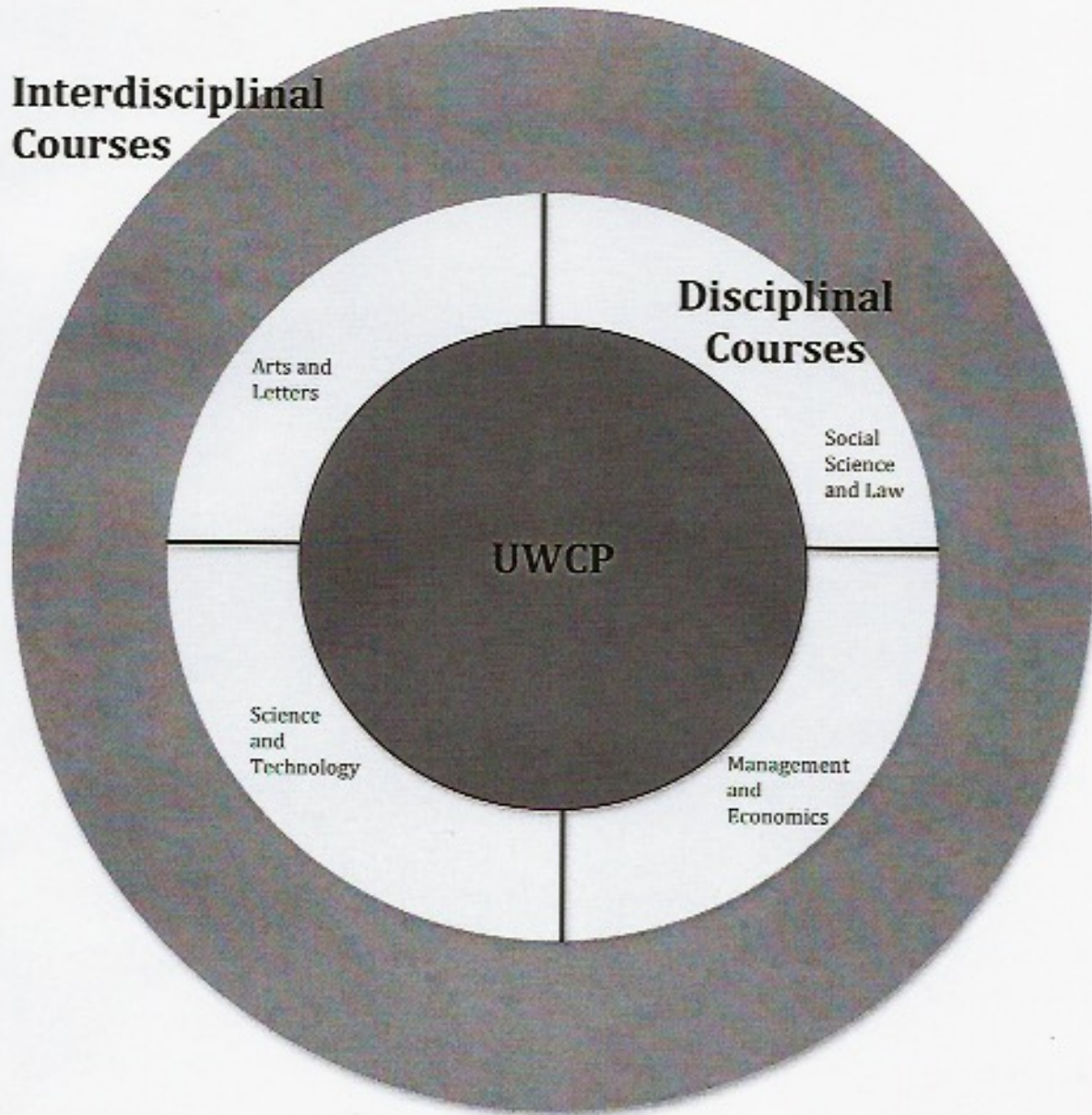
Significantly, the program requires this course in both Filipino and English. As UP students who speak to and for the nation to the world, facility in both the national and international language is deemed essential. Aside from training and the expected facility in two languages, the UWCP is also a two-tiered program where the basic course in freshman year is supplemented by a more targeted junior year writing course in line with the students major. These courses immerse students in the practices of writing and communication within their particular discourse communities. Courses like Science Writing, Technical Writing, Business and Corporate Communication, Critical Writing for the Arts, Writing for the Social Sciences, etc will be developed by the English and/or Filipino departments in tandem with relevant academic units.

While it can be argued that the principles of writing and communication have been ingrained in students by basic education, the approach to writing and communication of the UWCP guarantees an entirely different level of performance and practice. For example, being process-oriented it is not genre or output-based -- it does not merely teach students the parts of a research paper or different citation formats but hones evaluative faculties involved in discerning between potential sources or calibrating the extent to which quotation is necessary in a given piece of writing. It teaches not only principles of writing well but instills in the students the idea that forming an opinion or making an argument happens in the context of other opinions and arguments that have been made before them. It teaches students to claim a voice within the context of a larger discourse community.

In short, the UWCP is envisioned to raise the level of incoming students to the expectations of the University. It is founded on the belief that the best and brightest of the land must demonstrably think, write, and speak like the best and brightest of the land.

Proposed GE Program


**Interdisciplinary
Courses**



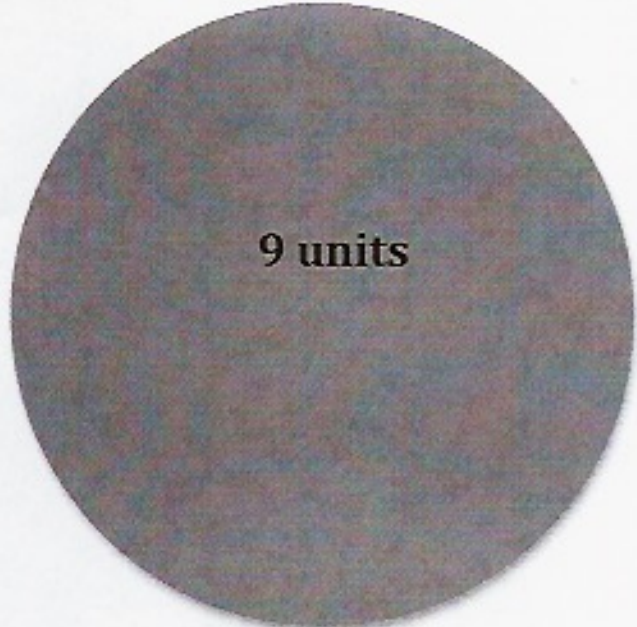
LEGEND



12 units



12 units



9 units

UNIVERSITY WRITING & COMMUNICATION PROGRAM

- 6 units writing courses in Filipino AND English
- 3 units Oral Communication course in Filipino OR English
- 3 units Junior-year writing requirement

DISCIPLINAL ELECTIVES

- a 3-unit course from EACH of the following disciplinary clusters: Arts and Letters; Social Science and Law; Science and Technology; Management and Economics
- may be existing GE courses (modified to adjust to K12) or introductory, survey, or entry-level courses in any of the disciplines

INTERDISCIPLINAL COURSES

- any 3 courses from the proposed System GE courses and existing Science, Technology and Society (STS)