**Hybrid and Online Program Development Proposal: Quality Standards for WE Online Courses**

**Kevin Kain (Principal Investigator)**

**Jenny Young (Content Expert)**

**Project Description**

## **Describe the program or common thread you propose. What is it? How did it develop? What students does it serve? Describe its position in the College? How will your college benefit from this project?**

This project will revise and enrich a group of five online courses (ENG COMP 100, HUM STUD 360, HUM STUD 383 and HUM STUD 385) bound by the common thread of “Writing Emphasis” (WE) designation. It will fulfill the objectives of the Hybrid and Online Program Development Grant by enhancing the quality of established online courses, linked by a curricular function. The new standards created in our community of practice will achieve the goals of refurbishing existing individual courses though quality design which bind them together as a program and align them with the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences requirements and outcomes prescribed in the “Writing Emphasis Requirement Policies,” including “faculty responsibilities” and “required assignments.” Focus on “faculty responsibilities” will increase instructors’ abilities to design high quality courses as part of an integrated program with shared criteria. Reassessment of the “required assignments” and the means to achieve them in specific context of the online environment will produce innovations which enrich student experiences by creating a common/shared structured.

Enhancing the quality of online WE courses is a priority because they are a central component of the College and University curriculum. According to Policy, “Students must complete four WE courses prior to graduation; at least two of the courses must be on the upper level.” WE is also crucial to the promotion and fulfill UWGB Learning Outcome #4 requiring that graduates “Have the ability to communicate effectively through listening, speaking, reading, and writing.”

## Our project derives from the need to define the nature and quality of “writing emphasis” courses in the online format. Currently what constitutes a Writing Emphasis course at UWGB is determined by the number of words and type of documents students need to complete. No consideration is given to the teaching environment or method of instructional delivery. Thus, a course designated “writing emphasis” in the traditional face-to-face environment will fulfill the “writing emphasis” requirement when taught online as long as the same writing expectations for a face-to-face class are met. However, the modes of teaching and learning online are significantly different when it comes to writing. How can these important nuances be captured in course designs? Online courses are inherently writing intensive because communication between peers, such as group discussions, and instructor and student interactions in the online courses happen mostly in the written form. How can these otherwise unaccounted for components of online WE courses (and online course in general) be integrated into and aligned with existing policy and outcomes?

The project will address these issues though the creation and implementation of unified criteria aimed at insuring excellence in course design and the student experience. To meet the first challenge, we will produce a community generated “**Quality Standards for WE online courses.”** Based on the Quality Matters model, the Standard will serve throughout the project pathway guiding course development and peer review and, ultimately, quality assurance. In the second case, the group will create an “**Online WE Core Rubric”** which will meet (and exceeding) current curriculum requirements, promoting student success and retention (through an embedded early warning system and follow-up plan). Together, these innovations will exemplify the College Writing Emphasis (WE) requirement, which is “to provide all students with structured opportunities to practice their writing skills across the curriculum.” Once established and refined the Rubric and/or Standard will offer models of cohesion and (systems of) quality assurance ready for adoption by instructors of other WE online courses in the future. In the meanwhile, the project will result in the introduction of five newly revised and peer reviewed online WE courses in Fall 2019. The common themed thread of the project and its focused scope charts a direct Pathway of action within a realistic timeline and budget.

**Pathway**

**Professional development**

## **Please indicate the intellectual and practical skills that instructors will want to work on to design and deliver courses in your program or common thread. How will instructors acquire those skills?**

The faculty involved in this project all currently teaching upper and/or lower level writing emphasis courses (described in Scope section below). Members gained Quality Matters certification of courses (Ortiz, Coury, Hicks and Kain) and certification as a QM reviewer (Kain). Since the group is composed of already seasoned instructors, we will hone our intellectual and practical skills through workshops targeting issues specific to teaching online writing emphasis courses. As this is a common thread project, we intend to achieve our goals by creating an active community of practice. On the most fundamental level, professional development will be conducted in connection with **“**Faculty Responsibilities” for WE courses:

* “Rather than teaching writing skills, instructors are responsible for providing a series of writing assignments and refer students with weak writing skills to the Writing Center for help.”
* “Instructors must evaluate the quality of the writing in addition to the content. This means considering such things as organization, thesis statement, clarity of expression, etc.”

Moving beyond the basic expectations, our community will investigate the nature of WE courses in the online environment and the challenges it poses to course design. These new explorations will offer instructors opportunities to intellectually evolve their teaching. The project training will also involve the acquisition of practical technological skill to be included in course design discussed below, such as “learning outcomes” "unlock to proceed with course," “rubric,” functions in Canvas (course delivery platform) and the creation of video content. In sum, our community of practice will foster professional development for all instructors by involving them in the creation of assessment criteria (“Quality Standards for WE Online Courses” and “Online WE Core Rubric”) and its implementation in the enhancement of their course as well as in the peer reviewing of the revised courses. We expect that the success of the project will result in the broadening of our community of practice to include other instructors of online WE courses and the integration of the “Quality Standards for WE online courses” and “Online WE Core Rubric” into their courses.

**Course Planning**

**Please articulate how instructors will develop their courses and why this strategy makes sense.**

All of the instructors in our common thread project are experienced in teaching WE in the online environment. We share the goal of creating a quality program of courses, which meet the same curricular requirements through consistency in theory, design and practice and which links, but does not limit individual instructors. Therefore, we will take a community of practice approach to course planning. Considering the nature WE online course will involve drawing upon and synthesizing experiences of the group. The creation of a Core rubric to be included in all of courses and formulation of a Standard used to assess each other’s courses in the peer review/quality assurance stage of the project will require intellectual teamwork. This effort will be conducted in a series community meetings and themed workshops coordinated by CATL. The pathway makes sense because it will guide instructors not only building and evolving with courses individually, but also in fostering a community of (learning) practice.

**Course Design**

**To what extent will courses have a similar look and feel? Will the courses in this grouping have similar elements? What will those elements be? How will your students benefit from the type of design you envision?**

The College Writing Emphasis policy is meant “to provide all students with structured opportunities to practice their writing skills across the curriculum.” It requires that

* “Three or more “public discourse” writing assignments must be included as part of the course requirements. “Public discourse” means the work is written for someone other than the writer. (Thus, journals and diaries are excluded.) These assignments may include in-class work including essay exams.”
* “These writing assignments must total a minimum of 2000 words.”
* “Writing assignments must constitute at least 25% of the grade for the course.”
* “One public discourse assignment must be evaluated and returned to the student before the end of the 4th week of class.”

While these requirements alone would insure that students have a unified experience in the proposed program, our project moves further introducing a more specific “Online WE Core Rubric.” Individual instructors will align their course and module objectives and learning activities with the Core Rubric, making explicit connections between the program/course expectations, and clarifying why they are important and how they can be achieved.

This Core Rubric will be based on and aligned with Policy “faculty expectations” (i.e. “Instructors must evaluate the quality of the writing in addition to the content. This means considering such things as organization, thesis statement, clarity of expression, etc.”) and the College requirements and learning outcomes. Planned media enrichment includes the creation of a companion video to the “Online WE Core Rubric.”

Course designs will include an exercise/quiz to assess student understanding of the expectations and requirements detailed in Online WE Core Rubric. Success on the exercise will be a condition for release of the initial written assignments. Used in this way, "unlock to proceed" function in D2L is proven extremely useful in assisting students to start a writing class tuned in and on track, as students who fall off at the beginning never get back, because the in-person relationship that's generally required to effect that is not present in the online environment. Thus, this course design feature will help to ensure some level of success for most students right off the bat, which helps to retain them for the duration of the course.

The Online WE Core Rubric will be used to assess initial written assignments in order to determine whether students will be lead to online e-tutoring service of the UWGB Writing Center (to be embedded in all courses). This plan introduces inventive internal “early alert” mechanism which covers “faculty responsibility” that: “Rather than teaching writing skills, instructors are responsible for providing a series of writing assignments and refer students with weak writing skills to the Writing Center for help.” It also safeguards the College requirement that “One public discourse assignment must be evaluated and returned to the student before the end of the 4th week of class.”

**Quality Assurance**

**How will you ensure that courses in your program will encourage the student experiences you are after in a sustainable way? Generally, programs will wish to use: checklists, peer review, or community of practice.**

The implementation of our community of practice-generated Core Rubric and Standard will ensure that our revised common thread courses will encourage the student experiencewe aim to promote by establishing durable criteria for assessing the overall quality of online WE courses and the student learning activities they comprise. We see quality assurance as an essential feature of all phases of our pathway, not just the final stage of the project. We, like our students, need to understand exactly what, why and how we are doing it relation to university and program requirements early on if we are to excel in out charge. Therefore, project will begin with the production of quality assurance mechanisms for the common thread (to be achieved through creation and implementation of core rubric), continue with the revision of individual courses (guided the community generated Standard) and conclude with peer review certification of courses in accordance with the community generated Standard. Every course in the program will be reviewed by two members of the community other than the instructor. Quality assurance is repeatedly linked with professional development as instructors are actively involved in all phases in the project. The establishment of criteria for teaching and learning excellence produced during the grant period will not only promote the sustainability of the course enhanced during the grant and maintenance stage, but will also will facilitate a course of action for other instructors of WE courses to follow.

**Scope**

**Please articulate who will work on this project and what role(s) they will play. For example, how many instructors will participate? What experience do they have in designing and delivering the types of courses this project envisions? Who else is an important stakeholder (advisors, for example)? Who else on campus will be part of this project – outside of CATL – and what roles will they play?**

The project will involve five experienced instructors of online WE courses.

[Short bios and online courses we teach}

**David N. Coury** has been teaching on-line courses for five years. He was selected as an Advanced On-Line Teaching scholar and his course, HUM STUD 360, was certified for Quality Matters. Additionally he has taught English Comp courses as well as German composition courses and was asked to chair the task force to examine our writing curriculum at UW-Green Bay.

Prof. Coury will be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric” and “Quality Standards for WE Online Courses” He will revise her course HUM STUD 360 according to those new criteria and serve as peer reviewer.

**Patricia Hicks** has nine years experience teaching online classes at UWGB. She designed and teaches three online WE courses: ILS 198 (first year seminar), ILS 300, and ILS 400 (capstone). She has earned QM certification for ILS 198.

Prof. Hicks will be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric” and “Quality Standards for WE Online Courses” She will revise her course ILS 400 according to those new criteria and serve as peer reviewer.

**Kevin Kain (PI)** has over thirteen years experience teaching in the online environment with a record of over 75 courses offered. AT UWGB, Kain designed and taught five online courses (HUM STUD 101, HUM STUD 102, HUM STUD 201, HUM STUD 202 and HUM STUD 385), one of which (HUM STUD 385) is WE. Kain gained Quality Matters certification for three of the course he designed (101, 102 and 202) as well as certification as a QM reviewer. He was a UWGB Advanced Online Teaching Fellow. He is the co-author SoTL book chapter on engaging students in online courses (“What are the best ways to build community and foster engagement in online courses?” in David Voelker and Regan Gurung Eds. *The Big Picture Pedagogy: Finding Interdisciplinary Solutions to Common Learning Problems,* 2017). His current UWGB Teaching Scholars project investigates student engagement with visual sources in online courses.

As the project’s “Primary Investigator,” Prof. Kain took the lead in drafting the grant proposal. In this same capacity, he serve as liaison with the administration and coordinate with CATL in the organization professional development activities, including Workshops on online course design and practical technical issues related to the Canvas course delivery system, and other community meetings and communications. Kain will also serve as mentor in course design and planning. In addition to serving as PI, Kain be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric” and “Quality Standards for WE Online Courses.” He will revise HUM STUD 385 according to the new criteria and serve as a peer reviewer.

**Cristina Ortiz** Cristina Ortiz has been teaching on line courses for seven years. Currently, she teaches online HUM STUD 383 Contemporary Cultural Issues (Writing Emphasis), HUM STUD 483 Selected Topics: Latino/a Civilization and Culture, SPAN 329 Representative Authors (Writing Emphasis) and SPAN 328 Introduction to Cultural Studies. She was selected to be an On-Line Teaching scholar and her course, HUM STUD 383, was certified for Quality Matters.

Prof. Ortiz will be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric” and “Quality Standards for WE Online Courses” She will revise her course HUM STUD 383 according to those new criteria and serve as peer reviewer.

**Jennie Young (Content Expert)** Director of UWGB Writing Center, has taught first year composition full time since 2007, so WE courses are her specialty.   She has developed and taught online writing courses at the undergraduate and graduate level since 2015.  Previously, she served as Chair of the Fully Online Master of Humanities program at Tiffin University, in Tiffin, Ohio.

Prof. Young will serve as Content Expert. Given her expertise as Director of UWGB Writing Center and experience as Chair of an online Master of Humanities program, she will take a leading role in mentoring other members of the community in the theory and practice of writing instruction and course design. In addition to serving as Content Expert Young be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric” and “Quality Standards for WE Online Courses.” She will revise EGN COMP 100 according to the new criteria and serve as a peer reviewer.

**Budget**

The proposed budget reflects the common thread of the project and its pathway guided by the community of practice approach. Given the unique nature of teaching WE courses online the project will involve a High level of instruction design centered on the development of community generated **“**Quality Standards for WE online courses” and “Online WE Core Rubric.” It will involve a Medium level of media richness involving the creation of companion video for “Online WE Core Rubric.” All of the requested funds will provide incentives for the project participants who will pioneer, build and implement the new UWGB WE online program.

Our community met to determine the equitability of incentive distribution, agreeing that it should be equal ($3000 or roughly 50% of a course overload compensation) with two exceptions. The community agreed that Kain, as PI, and Young, as Content Expert, should be allotted $1000 extra each in accordance with their additional responsibilities (described in the Scope section of the this proposal). **Our total proposed budget is $18,500** to be divided and distributed at the completion of two sets of stages of our pathway.

**Set 1 conducted Fall 2018 (with completion in early December)**

* **Professional development** 20 hours x 5 community members = 100 hours
* **Course planning** 115 hours x 5 community members =575 hours
* **= $7500** community incentives + **$1000** PI and Content Expert incentives **= $8,500**.

**Set 2 conducted in Spring (with completion in late April)**

* **Course design** 135 hours x 5= 675 hours
* **Quality Assurance** double peer review of newly enhanced courses $150 x 10 = $1500
* **= $7500** community incentives + **$1000** PI and Content Expert incentives + **$1500** for peer reviews **= $10,00**0

In sum

$1500 x 5= $7500.

$1500 x 5= $7500.

$150 x 10 = $1500.

$1000 x 2 = $2000.

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$18, 500.

**Anticipated Timeline**

Event Date

Project Plan Complete………………………………………….. September 2018

Professional Development Complete……………………………. December 2018

Course Plans Finalized…………………………………………… December 2018

* (Create “Online WE Core Rubric” by Early October 2018)
* (Create “Quality Standards for WE online courses” by late November 2018)

Course Design Set…………………………………………………….. April 2019

* (December-March individual course revisions)

Quality Assurance Set…………………………………………………… April 2019

* (March 2019- peer review courses for quality assurance)
* (April 2019 - additional course revisions (if necessary))

First Courses Launch…………………………………………………September 2019

**Summary of Scope**

**Kevin Kain**

**Experience** Prof. Kain has over thirteen years experience teaching in the online environment with a record of over 75 courses offered. AT UWGB, Kain designed and taught five online courses (HUM STUD 101, HUM STUD 102, HUM STUD 201, HUM STUD 202 and HUM STUD 385), one of which (HUM STUD 385) is WE. Kain gained Quality Matters certification for three of the course he designed (101, 102 and 202) as well as certification as a QM reviewer. He was a UWGB Advanced Online Teaching Fellow. He is the co-author SoTL book chapter on engaging students in online courses (“What are the best ways to build community and foster engagement in online courses?” in David Voelker and Regan Gurung Eds. The Big Picture Pedagogy: Finding Interdisciplinary Solutions to Common Learning Problems, 2017). His current UWGB Teaching Scholars project investigates student engagement with visual sources in online courses.

**Duties** As the project’s “Principal Investigator,” Prof. Kain took the lead in drafting the grant proposal. In this same capacity, he will serve as liaison with the administration and coordinate with CATL in the organization professional development activities, including Workshops on online course design and practical technical issues related to the Canvas course delivery system, and other community meetings and communications. Kain will also serve as mentor in course design and planning. In addition to serving as PI, Kain will be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric”

**Jenny Young**

**Experience** Prof. Young, Director of UWGB Writing Center, has taught first year composition full time since 2007, so WE courses are her specialty. She has developed and taught online writing courses at the undergraduate and graduate level since 2015. Previously, she served as Chair of the Fully Online Master of Humanities program at Tiffin University, in Tiffin, Ohio.

**Duties** Prof. Young will serve as Content Expert. Given her expertise as Director of UWGB Writing Center and experience as Chair of an online Master of Humanities program, she will take a leading role in mentoring other members of the community in the theory and practice of writing instruction and course design. In addition to serving as Content Expert Young will be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric” and “Quality Standards for WE Online Courses.” She will revise EGN COMP 100 according to the new criteria and serve as a peer reviewer.

**David Coury**

**Experience** David Coury has been teaching on-line courses for five years. He was selected as an Advanced On-Line Teaching scholar and his course, HUM STUD 360, was certified for Quality Matters. Additionally he has taught English Comp courses as well as German composition courses and was asked to chair the task force to examine our writing curriculum at UW-Green Bay

**Duties** Prof. Coury will be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric” and “Quality Standards for WE Online Courses” He will revise his course HUM STUD 360 according to those new criteria and serve as peer reviewer.

**Cristina Ortiz**

**Experience** Cristina Ortiz has been teaching on line courses for seven years. Currently, she teaches online HUM STUD 383 Contemporary Cultural Issues (Writing Emphasis), HUM STUD 483 Selected Topics: Latino/a Civilization and Culture, SPAN 329 Representative Authors (Writing Emphasis) and SPAN 328 Introduction to Cultural Studies. She was selected to be an On-Line Teaching scholar and her course, HUM STUD 383, was certified for Quality Matters.

**Duties** Prof. Ortiz will be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric” and “Quality Standards for WE Online Courses” She will revise her course HUM STUD 383 according to those new criteria and serve as peer reviewer.

**Patricia Hicks**

**Experience** Patricia Hicks has nine years experience teaching online classes at UWGB. She designed and teaches three online WE courses: ILS 198 (first year seminar), ILS 300, and ILS 400 (capstone). She has earned QM certification for ILS 198.

**Duties** Prof. Hicks will be a member of our community of practice contributing to the creation of the “Online WE Core Rubric” and “Quality Standards for WE Online Courses” She will revise her course ILS 400 according to those new criteria and serve as peer reviewer.

**Dean**

**Chuck Rybak** interim Dean College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences

* Dean Rybakwill provide for administrative support

**Unit Chair**

**Chris Martin (Humanities)**

* The Chair of Humanities will allow the department support staff to help the project.

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| Summary of Scope | | |
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| Chuck Rybak interim Dean College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences |  | This person will provide for administrative support |
| Chris Martin |  | The Chair of Humanities will allow the department support staff to help as 4 members of the project are in the unit |
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