

World, Community Engagement

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Professional Writing As Real-World, Community Engagement --

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Writing and the ability to be an effective communicator are essential professional skills. Learning professional writing will advance a student long-term, post graduation. Students should recognize the importance of communication and engagement with their community; furthermore, how to write professionally and understand the importance of service-learning through community engagement.

If you are looking for a way to set yourself apart from others in your field, the Professional Writing Program may be calling your name. No matter your major, the program displays how professional writing is incorporated. Not only will you learn professional communication skills, but you will have community service-learning hours recorded, which will have employers giving your resume a second glance.

Associate Professor, Dr. Adrienne P. Lamberti, of the Languages and Literatures (L&L) department is passionate about workplace communication. She teaches various classes offered through this Professional Writing Program and truly embraces community engagement work for her students.



Natalie Peterson, Jamie Ver Steegh, and Carlos Elizalde with their press releases for the Iowa Insurance Division

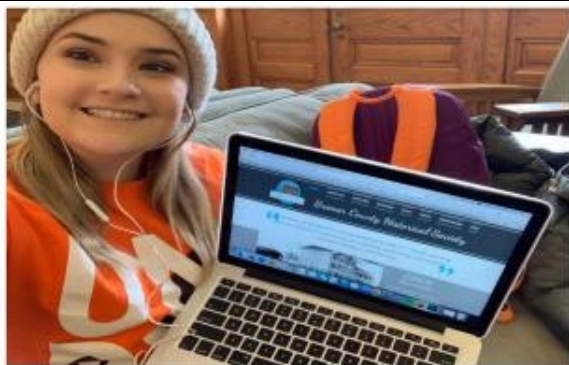
In the junior- and senior-level courses, students do not perform hypothetical assignments; rather, they perform applied, service-learning experiences. Dr. Lamberti stated, "On the first day of classes, I tell students, 'If you

plan to work, then you're going to be a workplace communicator.' In other words, these courses are for everyone. Students across UNI's departments and programs take the classes."

She also went on to say, “Students collaborate with individual and organizational clients to produce or revise workplace communications that clients need.” Students are able to create real-life projects as well as network with community partners by way of the service-learning model Dr. Lamberti uses.

Students involved with this program are offered various community-based, writing opportunities. Dr. Lamberti shared, “Each course performs that customization [service-learning for her students through community engagement] differently. For example, the Professional Writing Program offers a class called, ‘Projects, Grants, and Careers,’ which includes client-based community engagement projects such as proposal writing, but we work from a project management perspective.”

Client-based projects are what make this program so special, as mutual benefits are incorporated. Communication efforts are created for the community partners, and real-world experiences are learned for students. Community engagement is all about creating mutually beneficial relationships.



Team member Hannah Stater with the website created for Bremer County Historical Society & Museum

Furthermore, these projects have been done for various organizations and businesses in the Cedar Valley community. Bremer County Historical Society & Museum, Cedar Falls Community Main Street, Iowa Insurance Division, and Kate & Co. Salon and Spa are all community partners that have received work done by UNI students. Website content and press releases are two major communication pieces this program has helped local businesses create.

You can view projects by clicking on these two links:

<https://www.facebook.com/738975656/videos/10161869501865657/>

and

<https://www.facebook.com/738975656/videos/10163985459155657/>.

Lastly, Dr. Lamberti says as long as she is part of the program, community engagement will be embedded into the forefront of the professional writing experience. She also noticed some collaborations have led community partners to realize their need for communication professionals as employees. “Some clients have even created communication jobs after working with us, because they realized that their organizations need a permanent expert on-site. That’s such a “fist pump” moment, because the program isn’t just helping students to get jobs, it’s helping to create jobs,” said Dr. Lamberti.

Bringing a forthcoming approach, understanding the field’s specialized

knowledge, and promoting community engagement is what the Professional Writing Program is all about. Learning these professional situations and particular work-place communications are vital for any entry level position. Students come out ahead with this program and take away real-world experiences that develop the skills and abilities needed in the workplace.

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