

One of the most beneficial assets to have is the ability to communicate by the written word. It is a powerful tool to have and is ultimately the only way to communicate. The first step in taking advantage of this tool is to first learn how to use it. Unfortunately, there are a good number of students who are unaware of the resources and programs available from the Rhetoric and Writing Department (R&W) that offer enrichment in writing skills. Many students do not know the extent of their own writing skills and therefore shy away from it. As a result from the unawareness of the resources such as the University Writing Center and programs such as the Professional and Technical Writing Major, the enrollment in the writing classes become fewer and fewer. Even as the writer of this proposal, I was please to find out in my third year of college at UALR about the Professional and Technical Writing Major your department has available. I have recently enrolled in this program last spring; however, I have found much of the information and resources your department has available through my own research of the department during the creation of this proposal rather than during my freshman and sophomore years at UALR.

While examining the enrollment sheet from your Departments Fall 99'/Spring 00' Annual Report, it was brought to our attention that the R&W Department has already established efforts in providing more awareness of your BA and MA programs. Communication is the key to letting the "secret" out to the students and your future students. In addition to those efforts, we would like to reinforce the idea of the R&W Department conducting an open house.

You may recall a proposal for an open house being mentioned as a future project for Betty Freeland's Writing for the Workplace students in the questionnaire that was recently circulated in your department. As part of our research, we also administered a survey to approximately 700 UALR students asking each of them to share their ideas and suggestions on an open house being conducted by a UALR department. Those results revealed to us that there is a strong interest from the students in open houses being held by UALR Departments.

The purpose of this proposal is to make a recommendation to the R&W Department that they consider conducting an open house as part of their mission to provide more information about the department and its resources. Getting the word out through an open house will offer an excellent and convenient way for your department to provide information to a large group of people in a timely manner.

Within this proposal you will find in detail an organized plan for conducting an open house as well as how an open house would benefit the R&W. Lastly, we will discuss the budget for conducting an open house.

## **Proposed Plan**

### **I. *Advertising***

#### **A. Flyers**

1. Posted On Campus
2. Posted Outside Campus
  - a. Libraries

- b. High Schools
- c. Mail-Outs to Enrolled R&W Students

## **B. Press Release**

1. UALR Forum
2. *The Write Stuff*
3. Metropolitan High Schools
4. UALR Web Site

We have proposed that an open house be conducted during the spring semester. During this time are when high school students and other future students really begin looking at colleges so they can enroll the next fall. If a student or future student knows ahead of time what is offered and already has an interest in a certain field of study, he or she is more likely to enroll the next fall for those particular courses.

## **Flyers**

Getting the word out is the second step in organizing an open house. This can be done in several ways. Posting flyers on the UALR campus as well as outside the campus will serve as a good way to advertise an open house. Most students seem to notice flyers when they are waiting on their next class to begin or on their way to class.

Posting flyers in each building on the campus as well as outside each building will be a good way to get students attention. In the Donaghey Student

Center (DSC) and on the bulletin boards that are directly outside the Library and Physics Building are also places where students usually notice flyers.

In order to reach a wide variety of people, flyers could also be posted outside the campus in places like the Main Library that is located downtown, and throughout metropolitan high schools. Both of these places are good areas to find students and future college students.

## **Press Release**

Another way to advertise is to send a Press Release to Senior High School English Teachers around metropolitan high schools. Educating future freshman with all of the information regarding a University and its departments is the first step in sparking an interest for them to decide on a college. In the case of the UALR R&W Department, the University is one of two colleges in the state that provides the Professional and Technical Writing Degree. Providing awareness to students who have an enormous interest in writing will appreciate knowing that there are programs available to them where they can work towards something that will not only satisfy their interest but will also result in a degree.

An informational release published in the UALR *Forum* will advertise the open house to the students at UALR. . The *Forum* is widely distributed all over campus in places that are easily accessible for students to pick one up. The publication is one of the most read newspapers on campus. Within a week of distribution, they have disappeared. Advertising the open house in your newsletter, *The Write Stuff*, will also get the word out.

## **UALR Web Site**

The UALR Web Site already has a lot of information about the University including the R&W Department. It serves as one of the most easily accessed places where students can find information in a short period of time. Placing an informational release on the web site will attract not only students in state, but also people who are out of state that may be thinking about choosing UALR as the college of their choice.

### II. *Making the Arrangements*

#### **A. Finding Volunteers**

#### **B. Reserve Meeting Room A in DSC**

#### **C. Arrangements for Tables/Chairs**

1. Head Table and Podium With Microphone
2. Table to Place Literature
3. Table to Place Food
4. Table for the Entry

#### **D. Arrangements for Food/Drinks**

1. Pizza Restaurant
2. Cooler/Ice/Canned Drinks

After advertising the open house, the R&W could find volunteers to help post flyers across campus as well as off campus. They will also be of good help when it comes time to set up and take down everything on the day of the open

house. The volunteers will be able to run any additional errands such as bringing the ice for the cooler, handing out programs, and making needed calls to a pizza restaurant and arrange for an order to be catered to the University. The R&W Department can advertise for volunteers through their newsletter, *The Write Stuff* and the UALR *Forum*.

Once volunteers have been found, the R&W Department can begin making the arrangements to obtain everything that is needed for the open house.

## **Reservations**

Reserving the Meeting Room A in the DSC will provide an open and convenient place for an open house. The DSC is a popular place for many students and can also be easily found by those who are not familiar with the UALR campus.

Since there will be food and drinks served at the open house, making arrangements to have tables and chairs set up will provide everyone a place to sit and eat. Having tables set up will also give everyone a better opportunity to talk with one another. To separate the faculty from everyone else, there could be a head table in the front of the room. On this table can be a podium with a microphone for the speaker(s).

There will be plenty of literature available for everyone to have at the open house. Having a table for all the literature will save someone from having

to handout each brochure to each student. This set up will also give students the chance to choose the brochures that interest them the most.

Because there will be a fairly large group of people attending the open house, making arrangements with a pizza restaurant will give them a heads up on the order and allow time for the food to be prepared and delivered. Pizza is generally very easy as far as satisfaction and quickness goes. Most people like pizza, and for a large group, having pizza is a quick way to serve everyone in a short period of time. The drinks could be canned drinks since those are easier to transport and serve. To keep them cool, they all could be placed in a cooler full of ice. Napkins and a place to dispose the trash will also be handy to have at the open house.

### III. *Gathering the Information*

#### **A. Brochures**

1. "Professional and Technical Writing at UALR"
2. "Pledge of Professionalism"
3. "A Guide for Clients in the University Writing Center"
4. "Studies in Technical and Expository Writing"
5. "Department of Rhetoric and Writing Awards"
6. Samples of *The Write Stuff* Newsletter
7. Other... (Faculty Profiles)

#### **B. Program Agenda**

1. (See Sample Program in Appendices A)

## **C. Sign In Sheet**

### **Brochures**

One of the main goals of the open house is to provide everyone all of the information from the R&W Department that is presently available. The brochures will allow for a large group of people to be given a large amount of information very quickly. Having brochures at the open house will also be a good place for the open house guests to obtain the information more easily without the hassle of having to find them.

Above is a list of the current brochures that are available from your department that can be utilized during the open house. Each brochure will give valuable information about each program for everyone to take home with them.

Additional brochures or handouts might include example works of previous winners from the Department of R&W Awards. Students interested in entering this type of a contest will also be interested in the different types of writing styles students possess and how each particular style led to an award for the individual writer.

Having samples of the R&W newsletter, *The Write Stuff* will be of interest to some and will also provide an overview of what goes on within the department. This type of information is great for an open house because it gives future new comers a sense of what life is like on the inside of the R&W.

Samples of the student publication, *Quills and Pixels* should be available for everyone to those who might be interested in having their work published.

Perhaps an entry form of some type could be provided for those who are interested in this particular program.

## **Faculty Profiles**

The brochure, "Studies in Technical and Expository Writings" has a great deal of information about certain careers students may have after obtaining a major in Professional and Technical Writing. There is also a good discussion on the different degree programs as well as brief profiles of the faculty members. One of the main desires the students expressed through the open house surveys were to learn more about the teachers themselves rather than merely their name, what they teach, and their contact numbers. We have incorporated some of the interesting questions students wanted to have answered regarding the instructors. Below is a list of those questions.

- Where and when were they educated and how did it take to obtain their degree(s)?
- What degree(s) do they have?
- What is their tenure at UALR?
- Have they ever taught anywhere else?
- What other job experiences do they have?

Creating a brochure specifically for instructor profiles would satisfy a lot of students and even give the instructor the opportunity to set a prime example that all the hard work college throws at students is indeed very worthwhile and will pay off in the long run.

A well-organized event will usually always have a program agenda for everyone to look at during the course of the event. This will keep everyone from being confused or puzzled about what is going to go on next during the open house. The program agenda could be handed out to everyone as they walk in. Along with the program agenda, the instructor profiles could also be handed out. Instead of going through the trouble of making sure each person who walks in is handed these two brochures, a table could be set up at the entrance with two people on each end of the table handing them out. This set up will also allow for a sign up sheet to be filled out by those who attend the open house. The information that could be asked for on the sign up sheet is the name of the person, their address, and their status as a student. This will give the R&W Department a chance to see how many people came to the open house, and to review the names that next fall to see if any one enrolled in any of the programs provided by the Department. The R&W might even want to consider sending Thank You cards to the those who left their addresses on the sign up sheet.

#### IV. *The Main Event*

##### **A. Room Set Up**

1. Tables/Chairs/Podium
  - a. Brochures
  - b. Suggestion box
2. Food/Drinks

##### **B. The Beginning of the Open House**

1. Handout of Programs/Instructor Profiles
2. Sign-in Sheet
3. Lunch

### **C. During the Open House**

1. Introduction of Chairman
2. Brief Introduction of Faculty
3. Discussion of BA/MA Programs
4. Discussion of Available Resources
5. Presentation

### **D. The Closing**

1. Mingling Between Students and Faculty
2. Room Clean Up

After everything has been arranged and organized, it then becomes time for the main event. The students of the Writing for the Workplace have envisioned how everything will proceed throughout the open house.

### **The Event**

The first step is to set everything up prior to the open house. This should be done within 2 hours of the actual event. The tables for the open house guests should be set towards the middle of the room. Having them set up this way will give more room for the tables that will be set up for the food and brochures that will be set up to the right and left of everyone.

After the tables are set up, the podium and microphone will be set up. The microphone should be checked to make sure the right amount of sound will be coming from it. The programs, instructor profiles and the sign up sheet will be placed on the table at the entrance. There will be two chairs here for the two people that will be working the table. All of the other brochures will be on a table in the Meeting Room near towards the right of the entrance. The table will have a banner hanging below it that says, "BROCHURES." This will make it apparent to everyone walking in what will already be available to him or her. Before the exit will be a table with a suggestion box, paper, and a pen for students to provide input on their experience at the open house. This table will be fairly small and will have a banner hanging below it that reads, "Suggestion Box." During the course of the open house, one of the speakers will mention the suggestion box so everyone will know that it is available to them.

The food and drinks will be catered in and set up 15 minutes before the open house begins. This will give the volunteers and faculty who are helping with the room set up just enough time to get everything prepared before everyone shows up and still be able to give away food that has not gone cold. The cooler and ice will be brought in along with two trashcans during this time as well.

As the time gets closer to the open house, the faculty will be in the Meeting Room mingling with each other as they wait for everyone to appear. Once people begin to arrive the faculty will join in on the lunch that is being

served. Lunch will continue from the start of the open house until about 30 minutes has passed. After 30 minutes, a speaker will announce that the open house is about to begin and ask that everyone be seated. That same speaker will then introduce the Chairman of the R&W Department who will welcome everyone to the open house and then will briefly introduce the faculty to everyone. After the Chairman has introduced everyone, he will introduce a speaker of his choice to discuss the BA/MA programs available from the R&W. This same speaker will also discuss the other resources available from the R&W and remind everyone about the brochures that are set up on the table to the right of them. He or she will then introduce a faculty member who will give a brief presentation on the types of experiences he or she has had with R&W Department as a career and as an instructor. After the presentation, the speaker will mention to everyone that the faculty will be "hanging" around for a while for those who would like to ask any questions concerning what was discussed or about the programs or resources the R&W provides. He or she will also mention the suggestion box that is on the table near the exit. Soon after this, the open house will begin to close down and the faculty will stay for those who have any questions. After everyone has left, the volunteers will then begin to clean up the room.

One of the main objectives for the R&W conducting an open house will be to provide valuable information to a group of students who otherwise may not

have had the information exposed to them before. In return, the R&W will find that they, too, will also benefit in several different ways from the open house.

## **Benefits**

### **Student/Professor Advantages**

Giving students an opportunity to interact and talk with the faculty in the Rhetorical and Writing Department will give the professors an opportunity to leave some type of impression for the students to look back on. This is a good way for a professor to gain more students in his/her class each semester. The more students that are enrolled in each course the more feedback that is given when it comes time to "grade" the instructor at the end of each semester. Compliments and constructional criticism are always a good way for an instructor to see where he/she is doing well, and where they might need improvement.

### **Student/Department Advantages**

Conducting an open house will clearly benefit the students, but it will also benefit the Rhetorical and Writing Department. Because an open house will deliver obvious as well as "behind the scenes" information to students, this will also eliminate much of the confusion students may have in relation to what major they should choose, what courses to take, or even what professor they would like to have instruct them.

An open house conducted by the Rhetorical and Writing Department will serve as an easy way to reach a large group of students in a timely manner.

Having a less confused campus will cut down on the volume of calls and visits to the department by puzzled students.

### **Department/University Advantages**

From ideas and suggestions to praises and complaints, the department will be able to see the perspective of the students when conducting an open house. This could bring about the opportunity for the department to improve in areas where improvement may be needed.

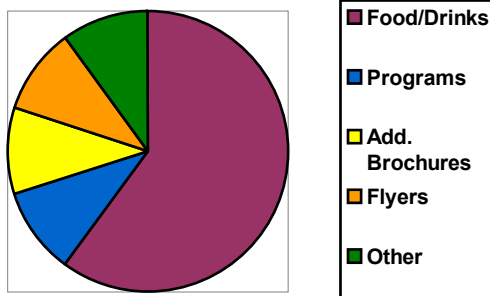
Having an open house is also free advertisement. It has the potential to renew or generate interest in the department and increase enrollments. It is also good way to recruit students into a particular field of study. If information is advertised out in the community, the department may be able to peak potential new students' interests. The more students enrolled at the University, the more monetary value it will have. In all, the main goal is to make the University become genuine and valuable place where students can acquire the best possible education offered to them.

### **Budget**

The budget we have determined is based on our estimate on the costs for the following items:

- Food/Drinks/Ice 60%
- Program Agenda 10%
- Additional Brochures 10%
- Flyers 10%

➤ Other 10%



Most of the costs to the open house will go towards the food and drinks and to the additional brochures, such as the instructor profiles. The flyers expense rate will depend on how many copies are made and how much each copy has cost. The usual cost for a copy is normally 5 to 10 cents. Additional items as the ice and the banners for the tables will take up 10% of the whole product itself.

## **Appendix A. Sample Program**

**12:00-12:30:** Lunch Served

**12:30-12:40:** Introduction of Chairman, Richard Raymond

**12:40-12:50:** Introduction of Faculty

**12:50-1:15:** Presentation of R&W Programs/Resources

**1:15-1:30:** Presentation by ...

**1:30-:** Faculty will take questions from the open house guests at this time.