

INTERESTED IN JOINING THE PROFESSIONAL WRITING MINOR?

Take an inside look at UCSB's Professional Writing Minor



WHAT IS THE PROFESSIONAL WRITING MINOR?

Written by Isabelle Rodriguez and Morgan Wittala

The UCSB Professional Writing Minor (PWM) is composed of two capstone courses and a writing internship intended to expose students to the world of professional writing. PWM Students are selected carefully based on the submission of their own, unique writing portfolio.

Once admitted to the program, students expand upon their communication skills with a focus in one of five tracks: Professional Editing, Writing and Civic Engagement, Multimedia Communication, Business Communication, or Science Communication. The PWM is a competitive program, but students that demonstrate strong writing skills are usually accepted into their first or second choice track.

TIPS FROM PW MINORS

The minor is an asset at this school as one of only a few practical degrees/certifications available at UCSB. It is highly valuable and relevant for career growth and success.

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This newsletter is a collaborative writing project from students in the 2019 PWM Business Communication track.

ALUMNI SOARS IN LOCAL TECH COMPANY

Written by Alexandria Suebert

UCSB Professional Writing Minor Alum, Jasmine Salamat-Amoli majored in Economics and minored in the Business Communication track. As an undergrad, she took the writing classes 105S, 107EP, and 107G as prerequisites to the minor. During her time in the minor, she states she “became a concise, articulate, and thoughtful writer.” She owes her ability to be a valuable team player and a strong leader to the extensive amount of group projects you complete during your minor courses. Additionally, the minor’s website project helped her create a strong portfolio that “proved invaluable” when searching for jobs. Now she has moved on to become a Content Specialist at a local tech firm, Honey. She owes her great interview and public speaking skills to the minor’s projects and invaluable network. Although she wears many hats at her job at Honey, currently she is working on creating content for joinhoney.com. In this role, she utilizes a variety of skills from the minor, including concise writing techniques and the ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously. cont. on page 3

MOST COMMONLY PAIRED MAJORS

- Communication
- English
- Sociology
- Econ/Econ & Acc
- Political Science
- Environmental Studies
- Global Studies
- Biology
- Psychology
- Philosophy



TIPS FROM PW MINORS

Plan out your courses in advance. Take a class in at least three different tracks to see which one you prefer the most.

POTENTIAL CAREERS

Professional Editing

Magazine Editor, News, Publishing

Writing and Civic Engagement

Grant Proposal Writer, Government & Law, Non-profits, , Activism

Multimedia Communication

Graphic Designer, Marketing, Videography, Outreach

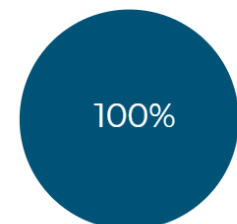
Business Communication

Public Relations, Publishing, Technical Writer, Sustainability, Workplace Communication Consultant, Investor Relations

Science Communication

Grant Proposals, Researcher, Professor, Environmental Science Writer, Science Content Writer, Medical Field

Would you recommend this minor to undergraduate students?



■ Yes (100%) ■ No (0%)

Based on findings in the survey of current PWM students in Spring 2019



JASMINE SALAMAT-AMOLI
Business Communication Track Alumni

ALUMNI SOARS IN LOCAL TECH COMPANY (CONT.)

Jasmine encourages anyone who is thinking about applying for the minor to do it. "I can't even explain how happy I am to have put in the work to create a portfolio for the application. The minor has given me so many skills that I've used in my personal and professional life." Her other favorite part about the minor is the network you gain with other alumni. The alumni and the Professors have all helped her think about her personal and professional development on a deeper level. For her, the minor has been "a gift that keeps on giving." The most important skill she learned, and tells future students in the minor to focus on, is how to always network and be open to learning new skills. She also recommends learning how to make many new friends during all the group projects.

FIRST GEN STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Written by Miranda Lee

First generation college students are thriving in the professional writing minor; about 40% of current writing minor students identify as first generation. According to UCSB, a first generation student is defined as the first in their immediate family to graduate with a bachelor's degree from a 4-year university. The writing minor program celebrates the success and skills of first-generation students by offering the First Generation scholarship award for the first time in Winter 2019. We had the honor of interviewing one of the winners of the award, Alexandria Suebert, who is a fourth-year majoring in political science and minoring in the PWM Business Communication track.

Alexandria was able to give us insight into the challenges of being a first-generation student, and how she has overcome those conflicts. First generation students often have less access to mentors and resources before and during college. Alexandria noted, "Being a first-generation college student comes with a sense of pride, but also presents questions my parents cannot answer." She had a "subpar" understanding of the real world and college compared to other college students, so she had to work harder and learn to ask for help. Even so, she was not deterred from applying to the competitive Professional Writing minor with encouragement from writing professors and determination to excel in future careers.

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“I write to make people aware of important ideas and convey complex issues in a simple way. I want others to be able to understand unseen issues that I have a unique perspective on.”

the PROFESSIONAL WRITING MINOR
UNIVERSITY of CALIFORNIA
SANTA BARBARA

Ali Suebert
First-Generation Writing Award

Major // Political Science
Minor // Professional Writing Business Communication
Desired Career // Next Step is a JD/MBA and go from there.

TIPS FOR APPLICATION

Written by Kirsten Schierholt and Miranda Lee

The application and portfolio process for applying to the minor requires time, planning, and hard work. To answer some frequently asked questions about the process, we asked the directors in the Professional Editing, Business Communication, and Science Communication tracks about how best to prepare and apply.

Here are some insights from Craig Cotich, the Professional Editing Director, LeAnne Kryder, the Business Communication Director, and Janet Mizrahi and Doug Bradley, the Science Communication Directors.

Q: What do you look for in an exemplary application portfolio?

Craig

- Strong interest in the track (motivation)
- Strong writing skills (as demonstrated by the sample writing and the portfolio)
- Good prefaces that explain why the student submitted each writing sample

As I review the candidate, I also look at the student's grades in writing classes and get feedback from their instructors about how they performed and participated in class.

LeeAnne

- Clear writing and an attractive, well-organized presentation of all requested materials.
- I look at the writing courses taken, the instructor, and the grade earned.
- I also like to see writing samples from outside of classes--from jobs, internships, community service, and organizations (school and community).

Janet

- It must be organized and attractively presented
- Show various samples in different writing styles/ genres so that we see the student's ability to switch gears
- Include a variety of science writing (lab reports, etc.) and other non-science writing
- Provide thought-out rationale for choosing the science track

Q: What are some Do's and Don'ts for students applying for the minor?

Craig

Do

- Seek out as many opportunities to write as much as possible, and show that breadth in your writing samples.
- Participate as much as you can in your upper-division writing classes.

Don't

- Only submit long essays as your writing samples (include excerpts when the document is long).
- Have surface errors in your portfolio.

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PROFESSIONAL WRITING MINOR

PORTFOLIO TIPS

How do you start? What resources are out there to help you?

GET STARTED EARLY

Give yourself time to reflect on each piece and get feedback

Start around mid-end July, and have a rough draft by mid September.

EDIT AND REVISE

Ask everyone to help you peer edit

Have a professor or experienced writer look over your application.

PICK PIECES YOU'RE PROUD OF

Select a writing piece after each writing class

Save it onto somewhere accessible in the same location, so that you can access them all quickly.

DIVERSIFY YOUR PORTFOLIO

Writing pieces don't only have to come from classes you take

Sourcing your pieces from a variety of experiences (jobs, volunteering, student orgs, internships, etc.) shows a wide breadth of your work.

USE TOOLS TO YOUR ADVANTAGE

Many free resources exist to help refine your final product

Grammarly can be used to make final grammar, spelling, and sentence structure checks. Use Canva and Piktochart to format visual elements.

TARGET YOUR RESPONSES

Tailor answers to your first choice track

Focusing your answers to the application questions with your first choice track in mind can make you stand out to the track director



TIPS FROM PW MINORS

Branch out with the type of writing you do. Maybe write some articles online or publish blog posts. Having more experience than just writing essays will give you a leg up in your portfolio!

FIRST GEN STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

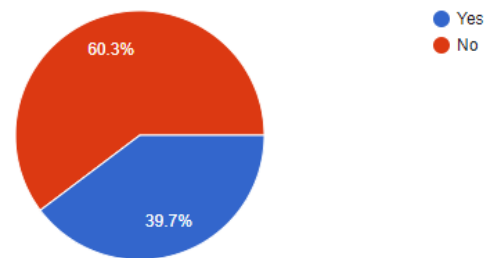
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Writing has been a great asset to Alexandria throughout her college years. She stated, "Writing has been the tool that has allowed me to bridge that gap of knowledge to excel academically and professionally." Through her Public Speaking class with Professor Genova, Alexandria learned how to develop a business idea, convey that idea to a specific audience, and present in a way that is powerful and compelling. These skills helped her as the President of UCSB Mock Trial, where for three years Alexandria has been ranked a top attorney on the West Coast. In Public Discourse, she learned to use writing to solve a problem within a community by giving others a voice and writing to leaders to start a sober center for students in Isla Vista. While working as an executive intern, Alexandria used these skills while briefing the Deputy Commanding General of the Army Corps of Engineers on infrastructure projects and drafting litigation documents for the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Alexandria's success in the Professional Writing minor shows that first-generation students can succeed with enough determination and access to resources and mentors on campus.

She mentioned how one of the difficulties of being a first-generation student is not having parents who can give you advice on college. To first-generation students, she advised, "Seek advice from mentors and advisers from UCSB. I made a lot of close connections, and that helped me because I was able to ask them the questions my parents couldn't answer."

% OF FIRST GEN STUDENTS IN 2019 PWM CLASS



Based on findings in the survey of current PWM students in Spring 2019

PWM IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR TRANSFERS

Written by Kirsten Schierholt

Looking back on my short two years here at UCSB, I can confidently say that pursuing the PWM was one of the best decisions I made. The professors that helped me along my journey not only shaped the kind of student I have become, but they influenced the type of person I am now as I enter the workforce. Their quality of instruction and care is unlike anything I experienced back in community college, and I hope more transfers recognize this vast opportunity and chase it.

As a transfer, you might believe that you can't do the PWM because you don't have time to complete the prerequisite courses, compile a stellar portfolio, and juggle all of the big projects that go along with the process of qualifying for and finishing the PWM, but I'm here to tell you that you can.

If you are debating about taking two prerequisite courses in the same quarter (I did, and you can too) or if you should take classes for your major in the summer (I did that as well) to make room in your schedule during senior year to take the capstone courses if you're accepted: do it.

You will have to make decisions pretty quickly as a transfer, but don't let that feeling of being rushed keep you away from chasing something that you find value and excitement in. You will not regret working towards the PWM at any point in the journey. The skills and lessons you learn in these classes will help you in whatever major (or pre-major) you're in, and in whatever career you decide to pursue.

Good luck in your writing classes and in your portfolio assembly!

TIPS FROM PW MINORS

Don't come into the minor without good reason, but don't be afraid to check out writing courses because you might find aspects of writing that you love but never knew about!

TIPS FOR APPLICATION

cont.

LeeAnne

Do

- visit our Writing Program Student Adviser, both to view sample successful application portfolios from Minors in past years and to ask questions.
- contact current Minor students (at least two) in the tracks you are interested in and ask them questions.
- attend an Information Session, to meet each of the Minor faculty. It can be helpful to hear their “pitch” about their track of the Minor, and you can ask questions in the general Q & A public session or in-person after the presentations.

Don't

- feel that you must take a class from a Minor instructor, or schedule an office visit with a Minor instructor in order to have a better chance of being accepted.
- need a recommendation from another Writing instructor, or a stellar GPA either. We really make decisions based on what we learn from your writing in the application portfolio!

Doug

Do

- show how science communication fits into your future professional and life plans. Do you intend to become a professional tech communicator? Are your ambitions to become a lab manager? Do you intend to incorporate sci comm practices into your research and/or educational ambitions?
- explain how your work samples and introduction align with sci comm, even (or especially) if the science communication track is your second choice or third choice track,

Q: What would you say are the top skills that students gain from the PWM?

Craig

- They can identify and fix the most common problems that plague people's writing.
- They can communicate with writers in such a way that they understand the problem, they see how the edit will improve their document, and they want to work more with you in the future.
- They become more careful, conscientious writers.

LeeAnne

- A chance to craft and polish a professional identity
- Experiential learning through collaborative work, client work, and an internship
- Assistance from motivated student colleagues and a committed instructor to make a successful transfer from school to professional work or advanced studies

Janet

- Experience in learning how to “translate” complex scientific information to non-sciences
- Exposure to various genres or science writing for the public.

Doug

- Allows students to focus their educational preparation upon personal and career goals within the sphere of language arts generally, and writing specifically.
- Students learn a great deal from each other, and if they engage in an internship in Spring quarter, they learn practical skills for coping and managing time in the workplace.

Q: What prerequisite courses do you recommend a student take before applying to get into your track?

Craig

- Writing 105G
- Writing 105R
- Writing 105PS
- Any classes that relate directly to their career goals, such as legal writing or writing for the teaching professions.

LeeAnne

- A student should have taken a Writing Class that requires a sustained, collaborative project (Writing 107B, 107GS, or 107EP).
- Ideally, two or three professional writing courses – besides the ones listed above. Consider taking 107T, 107J, 107L, 107WC.
- I highly recommend the 105 series, 105M (Writing for Multimedia) and/or 105PS (Writing for Public Speaking).

Janet

- WRIT 105SW; 109ST; 109HP; 107J; 107WC

Doug

- Any of the STEM-related courses are useful for the sci comm track (Writing 105M, 105SM, 107EP, 107J, 109T, or 109HP).
- Other writing courses are useful too, like 105G, 105PS, 105S, 107M, 107WC, and STEM-related 199 independent studies projects.

We also have advice from current professional writing minor students in the info-graphic on pg. 4. With faculty and student insight on the application, you are well-equipped to create a strong portfolio. Good luck!

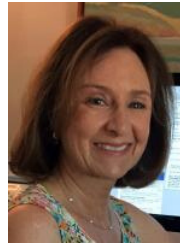
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**Our directors are not just professors;
they are mentors and are here to help
students successfully launch their
careers.**

Keep In Touch

Receive updates on information sessions, deadlines, and requirements by subscribing to the Professional Writing Minor Mailing List. Email our Undergraduate Advisor, Allison Brennan to be added to the list: