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edited by Bobby Rettew

MAPC Welcomes Professor Deb Morton

Prof. Deborah Balzhiser Morton is joining the MAPC program from Illinois State University where she will complete her Ph.D. in English Studies this July. She brings not only an emphasis in technical writing and distance learning but also industry experience as an editor, technical writer, interaction designer/multimedia reviewer - and the list goes on. Her experience lies in the area of user-centered design as well as the technical writing emphasis. She has been involved in multiple projects that have relied on her expertise in developing training software, promotional materials, online reports, web-based training and even a mentoring structure for State Farm Insurance. While working on her M.S. in Writing at Illinois State, she was a contributor to the NCA report identifying the technological review and planning for the year 2000.

Prof. Morton will be teaching ENGL 851 - Professional Writing this fall semester.

Prof. Morton grew up in the "village" of Tinley Park, Illinois which is a southwest suburb of Chicago. When her father was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis, she decided to attend college as a back-up plan if her mother was unable to find work. While attending Western Illinois University, she studied Journalism and worked full-time in a fast food restaurant. This is where she began her career as a technical communicator, creating sanitation documentation and plans that were adopted by the district stores. She also created training plans for new employees, which increased retention by about 30%.

Prof. Morton's life outside of the academic world provides an escape from the everyday routine. She enjoys everything from rubber-stamping and scrap booking to camping, hiking and particularly traveling.

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Corporate Advisory Board Spring Meeting

"Life After MAPC" was the topic for this past Corporate Advisory Board meeting that took place on April 3rd at the Madren Center. There was a wide range of presenters this semester, thus allowing many alumni to return and share their workplace wisdom and advice.

Bronsen Beisel and Tim Cook took time to focus on how to use the MAPC degree as a springboard for your career. Both employees of IBM, they addressed how they use their degree daily along with outlining the skills required during this tough economical period. They stated, "The world is changing, so be prepared...the technology is great but know how to still communicate the same information in changing technology."

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ENGL 892

This course is set up for students who have chosen a project as a part of their course of study rather than a thesis. Before you can register for this class, you must complete the following: 1) approval of your project proposal by your committee members, and 2) Dr. Howard must have received a signed copy of the "Committee Request Form." Registration for this course must take place during the semester you plan to complete and defend your project. It is necessary to both complete and defend your project in order to receive a passing grade in ENGL 892.

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Dr. Deb Morton continued

She is excited about moving to Clemson and experiencing the coast and mountains of this region. She is especially thrilled at this opportunity to escape from the hard winters of Illinois!

Prof. Morton is looking forward to this coming fall semester when she will be teaching ENGL 851: Professional Writing. She is hoping to bring experience with distance and organizational learning, with an emphasis on cooperative learning. And as she exclaims, "I would LOVE to teach collaborative, interdisciplinary design studios!!" Please welcome Prof. Deb Morton as the newest faculty member of the MAPC program.

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Melissa Tidwell addressed how she has merged her MAPC degree and her current Master's study in counseling. She expressed that her MAPC degree has taught her how to analyze information by breaking it down, recognize her "world view", and practice effective skills in document design and writing. "Because professional communication crosses so many boundaries, I have the passion for the work that I do," Melissa stated.

Dr. Teddi Fishman covered many points during her brief presentation. She presented the question: "How does MAPC get me where I want to be professionally?" She presented a few thoughts, including 1) MAPC allows flexibility of exploration of interests, 2) MAPC provides a wealth of different experiences, 3) MAPC allows you to try on many hats, and 4) MAPC allows you to practice using many different technologies.

MAPC Focus Group

Student turnout was terrific for this semester's MAPC focus group, held on April 8th in 206 Strode. The purpose of the focus group was to provide students with an opportunity to voice their opinions regarding the MAPC experience. This provided valuable student assessment of the MAPC program which is important in the overall evaluation of the program. The student feedback from the meeting was transcribed and distributed to each individual faculty member.

The format of the MAPC focus group was slightly different this semester than it has been in the past. MAPC graduate student Samantha Tucker mediated the meeting, whereas in the past, faculty members have served as the facilitators. Participants participated in an intense discussion covering in many relevant subjects.

The following are specific topics addressed in the meeting: 1) What do you feel are the strengths of the MAPC program? 2) What aspects of the program do you feel could be improved? 3) If you're finishing your first year, or have already finished your first year, do or did you feel prepared to begin your thesis or project? 4) Are there any courses you'd like to see offered in the upcoming year?

Facilitating the meeting was a challenging task for Samantha, yet she felt that it had a positive outcome.

Important Deadlines for Graduation

May Graduation

April 25th - Obtain approval from the Graduate School for completed thesis or dissertation
May 2nd - Submit duplicated copies of thesis or dissertation to the Graduate School Office.

August Graduation

May 9th - Submit GS2 Form to Graduate School
June 9th - Submit GS4 Form to Graduate School
July 18th - Take oral and/or written examination.
July 25th - Obtain approval from the Graduate School for completed thesis or dissertation