

Date: April 26, 2020
To: Mr. Alan Vickers
President of the Society for Technical Communication - Arizona Chapter
Ms. Eva Brumberger
Director ASU Technical Communication Department
From: Rachel Kass, ASU Technical Communication Graduate Student
Subject: Recommendation Report for the Implementation of the Collaboration between the Arizona State University Technical Communication Program and the Society for Technical Communication - Arizona Chapter

Attached is a report detailing the recommendation for the implementation of the collaboration between the Arizona State University (ASU) technical communication program and the Society for Technical Communication Arizona Chapter (STC). After several discussions with both Mr. Vickers and Ms. Eva Brumberger, the head of the ASU technical communication program, the decision that the collaboration could move forward with the understanding that it includes and applies to all students in the program and that it will not require any funding.

In order to best accomplish these two goals, extensive research was conducted in two areas. The first goal was to research events that could be inclusive of all students in the STC program including remote students and all stages of education and experience. The STC program has students ranging from experienced professionals looking to enhance their career with a graduate degree to those looking for a career change, and to students just starting their collegiate journey. To conduct this research, a survey was sent out to all students in the technical communication program. The survey was open-ended and focused on how the partnership could best benefit each of the students. Data was collected about each student's educational and professional experience as well as if they were an on-campus or remote student.

The second area of research was in establishing events that would not require any funding. To accomplish this task, other professional organizations on campus were consulted. Additionally, the information from the student surveys was analyzed in order to determine if they could be held without needing funding. The data was then compiled and analyzed to determine the best course of action for the implementation of this partnership.

The results indicate that meeting the above criteria is possible. Students responded with ideas such as lunch and learn events and local speakers on campus with professors or professionals. The events would be webcast so remote students could also participate. The most requested event was simply interaction with professionals in the industry as well as with companies that utilize technical communicators.

Based on the results the implementation is set to be successful with a series of events already in the making for the upcoming semester. This partnership will be very valuable to the students at ASU and I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of this process. I am happy to answer

any questions or respond to comments via email at rakass@asu.edu or by phone at 123-123-1234.

**Recommendation Report for the Implementation of the Collaboration
between the Arizona State University Technical Communication Program
and the Society for Technical Communication - Arizona Chapter**

Prepared for: Mr. Alan Vickers, President
Society for Technical Communication
Arizona Chapter
Ms. Eva Brumberger
Department of Technical Communication
Arizona State University

Prepared by: Rachel Kass, ASU Technical Communication Graduate Student

April 26, 2020

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Introduction | 4 |
| Research Methods | 6 |
| Area 1: Finding a way to engage all students in the technical communication program | 6 |
| Area 2: Providing Programming Without Needing Funding | 6 |
| Results | 7 |
| Task 1: Finding a way to engage all students in the technical communication program | 7 |
| Task 2: Providing Programming Without Needing Funding | 7 |
| Conclusions | 8 |
| Determine a way to include all students due to the wide range in age, professional and educational experience, and location among ASU technical communication students | 8 |
| Compile potential events and functions that would require no funding from either the school or the organization | 8 |
| Assess said research and recommend if the partnership could be successful | 8 |
| Recommendation | 9 |
| References | 10 |
| Appendix 1: Student Surveys and Results | 11 |
| Appendix 2: Interview Transcripts and Results | 52 |

Introduction

After meetings with Mr. Alan Vickers, the president of the STC Arizona chapter and relevant ASU technical communication personnel, the partnership between the ASU Technical Communication department and the STC Arizona Chapter was tentatively approved with the understanding that the events applied all ASU technical communication students and that they require no funding. As such, research was conducted to determine the feasibility of meeting those requirements and what the partnership would look like as a result.

At this time, there is no professional student organization for technical communication students at Arizona State University. Similarly, there is no formal way for professionals to communicate with ASU technical communication students despite the strong and innovative program that is offered. Initially, students were emailed with a short survey to determine if there was sufficient interest in a collaboration with STC Arizona Chapter and the ASU technical communication program. Once the level of interest was established a letter was sent to Mr. Vickers, the current president of the STC Arizona Chapter expressing the student interest in collaborating with his organization. Additionally, a memo was sent to Ms. Eva Brumberger the head of the technical communication program at ASU explaining the students' interest and recommending a meeting with Mr. Vickers.

After several meetings with both Ms. Brumberger and Mr. Vickers, an agreement was made to approve the collaboration. As a result a team of leaders was compiled to start the implementation process. The leaders were people who volunteered in the initial poll that went out and are listed below along with their roles

Sue Parker, Undergraduate in Technical Communication - Social Media and Marketing
Adam Baker, Graduate Student in Technical Communication - Recruitment
Casey Darlington, Undergraduate in Technical Communication - Event Planning
Rachel Kass, Graduate Student in Technical Communication - President

In order to fully implement the group, the team decided the following two steps would jump start the implementation of the group while meeting the requests of Ms. Eva Brumberger and Mrs. Alan Vickers.

- Determine a way to include all students due to the wide range in age, professional and educational experience, and location among ASU technical communication students.
- Compile potential events and functions that would require no funding from either the school or the organization.

The research started with an optional survey that was sent to all ASU technical communication students. In the survey, general student data was collected including the student's location,

professional experience (if any), and educational experience. It also provided open-ended questions to determine the type of events they were looking for.

Research, independent of the survey, was conducted to find ways to run the partnership and provide valuable experiences for students without the need for funding. Other professional student organizations were consulted and the data was compiled then compared and analyzed.

Then, the recommendations from the students were cross-referenced with the results of the organizational research conducted to build a recommendation to present to Mr. Vickers.

The findings were quite simple but functional. Most students simply desire access to professionals and companies in the technical communication industry. This could be conducted in person, virtually, or both. Utilizing technology and offering the events via live stream will allow all students, whether in person or virtual to attend the events. Most of the events would be focused on varying levels of professional development. For example, maybe one event is on resume building which might cater more to those without a lot of professional experience. Another could be on working with management or negotiating within a company.

When compiling data from other professional student organizations, the ideas presented were quite similar. Many professionals and companies are happy to send a professional to conduct a workshop for free as it is good publicity and outreach for them. Additionally, some companies will even host networking events for students to attend or offer mentorship programs. All are options that will not require funding but simply organization.

As a result of the combined list of events, the team recommends hosting two events in the coming semester: a networking event with a local company and a professional development event led by a professor or volunteer from the STC.

The next sections will present the information described above in greater detail including the concrete results that were discovered and a conclusion with a recommendation for moving forward.

Research Methods

The research was conducted over the course of several weeks. Most of the research included communicating with other campus organizations and the technical communications students themselves. There were two main areas of research:

1. Finding a way to engage all students in the technical communication program.
2. Providing programming without needing funding.

These two areas were kept separate for the majority of the research. Once the analysis of the research began, however, they were analyzed side by side. The results from both were needed to ensure a smooth implementation. Having great student ideas that cost a lot of money are not feasible but neither is offering free events that no one is interested in. By analyzing the two areas together we could ensure nothing got overlooked.

Below is a discussion of the two areas of research:

Area 1: Finding a way to engage all students in the technical communication program

As mentioned in the introduction, an optional survey was sent out to all students in the technical communication program. The survey collected valuable information such as each student's location, professional experience, and educational experience. It also asked open-ended questions regarding what they would look for in the collaboration with the STC Arizona Chapter.

The decision to utilize a survey was a fairly simple choice to make as it collects information directly from the students who will be utilizing the partnership. It also ensures that all types of students are represented whether they are in their first year of college or coming back for a graduate degree after twenty years in the industry.

Area 2: Providing Programming Without Needing Funding

The process for compiling this data took a little more thinking. Online research was an option but hard to determine how the students would react to certain types of events. We decided to reach out to other student organizations that either partner with professional organizations or has a student chapter of a professional organization. The response was overwhelmingly positive as many of the organizations also operate on either a very small budget or no budget at all. Many were willing to share data on free events that were successful, events that suffered low attendance, and much more. The conversations were had over email, over the phone, and on several occasions in person at a campus coffee shop.

Results

The results from both tasks are presented in this section.

Task 1: Finding a way to engage all students in the technical communication program

Once the survey was sent out to students, they were given one week to respond. The survey was emailed out to their school emails and was also posted on the Canvas dashboards for all technical communication courses. All questions on the survey were optional.

75% of students responded, only 3% fewer than the original interest survey that went out on April 10. This data alone verifies we are on the right track as there are still high levels of interest on the student side.

Nearly all of the students filled out all of the information including professional and educational experience and location. 70% of the students who filled the survey out are local to Arizona and are on-campus students. 30% of the students who filled out the survey are online or remote students. This number makes sense as the online programs are significantly smaller than the on-campus undergraduate and graduate technical writing programs and as such will make up a smaller number of students.

There were some great ideas suggested by all students. The survey and its responses are included in Appendix 1.

Task 2: Providing Programming Without Needing Funding

Over the course of two weeks, we met with eight different professional student organizations from Arizona State University to discuss event options that do not require funding. Many of those organizations are also on small or nonexistent budgets and had some great ideas for free events. Some of the organizations had been on campus for decades while others are new in the past 5 years giving a good variety of information. The interviews were conducted over the phone, via email, and in person. All of them were recorded and the data compiled.

The transcripts from the interviews as well as the compiled data are in Appendix 2.

Conclusions

The conclusion of each of the tasks presented by Mr. Vickers and Ms. Eva Brumberger and outlined in the introduction is below:

Determine a way to include all students due to the wide range in age, professional and educational experience, and location among ASU technical communication students

Based on the research students would be open to events that are live cast or recorded and shared. Having the option to attend a live cast speaker or workshop gives remote or commuter students the opportunity to network and ask questions despite not being on campus. On-campus students can attend the events and have a valuable in-person experience.

Compile potential events and functions that would require no funding from either the school or the organization

Ideas were collected from students as well as other professional organizations on campus. The events from students were not limited to being free, though many could be done without a budget. The overwhelming theme from the students was having more access to industry professionals and potentially even having a mentor. This coupled well with the event ideas we received from the student organizations and as such, there is a fairly comprehensive list of event ideas that do not require any funding.

Recommendation

The team recommends that two professional events be held this semester including a networking event and a professional development workshop. Two events is enough to keep students engaged without overwhelming anyone in the process. The two types of events were taken directly from the list of events recommended by students that also were successful for other organizations on campus.

References

(n.d.). Retrieved April 26, 2020, from

<https://asu.campuslabs.com/engage/organizations?categories=13393>

Markel, M., & Selber, S. A. (2018). Chapter 18 Writing Recommendation Reports. In

Technical Communication (12th ed., pp. 470–515). Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.