Proposal Description with Rationale (State current status, proposed change, and why the change is desired. Attach additional sheets if necessary. If the proposal in any way alters the requirements for the program, complete the Revision of Existing Program section of this form):

This proposal creates a new course, CORE 201, as part of the new Core Curriculum.
Effective Date: 9/01/09

Reason for requesting an alternative effective date (please type or write in your reason for the change here):

___ Include a copy of the old and new syllabi to this proposal for comparison.

___ For Program Revisions, attach the Revision of Existing Program Form and include both the current and proposed program.

__X_ For New Course Proposals, attach the New Course Proposal and Assessment of Library Resources Forms with appropriate signatures.

Special Note: Changes to course syllabi must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office on either a 3 1/4 floppy disk or ZIP disk after final approval by the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

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If this proposal in any way affects a professional education program, it must be submitted to and approved by the Professional Education Committee and the Faculty Senate:

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Revised 08/17/05
1. Catalog Entry

Date:

Department Prefix: CORE (three or four capital letters)

Course Number: 201 (three numbers)

Course Title: TOPICS IN WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION

Suggested Course Title for SIS program (28 character limit): Will vary depending on instructor

Prerequisites: CORE 102

Credit Hours: 3

Brief Description: Further development of students’ skills in logic, including a rigorous introduction to informal fallacies, deductive logic and inductive reasoning. Students will also learn how to recognize, analyze, and evaluate arguments in written and oral communication. Students will continue to develop competency in information literacy as they read and critique persuasive writing and communication in the public sphere and create their own arguments designed for public speaking.

2. Detailed Description of Course

a. This course continues the emphasis of the Core sequence on the composing process, the relationship between reading, thinking, writing, and speaking, and on the rhetorical principles that inform successful oral and written communication. Key concepts in public speaking, such as appropriate language and delivery choices will be reinforced. Students will be introduced to formal deductive logic, common forms of inductive argument, the full spectrum of informal fallacies and the ways in which these are integrated into public communication.

The course will include a major public communication project that requires students to research a topic, understand the major viewpoints that surround it, select one viewpoint, and create a piece of communication designed for public persuasion. In the course of the public persuasion project, students will continue to hone their skills in research as inquiry, using both print and digital sources to gather information on a topic which will
then be used as evidence to support both oral argument and extended written arguments. Students will continue to develop their skill in the use of sources, learning to integrate source information and arguments into the extended chain of reasoning they will create in their projects.

Students will also continue to develop their reading skills by analyzing and critiquing multiple rhetorical texts as expressions of ideas and opinions about contemporary life. In the process of such critique, students will learn how to evaluate differing views on various public issues, how to grasp the impact of world-views on claims to truth, and apply the habits of mind required for intellectual objectivity.

b. Detailed Description of Conduct of Course

The formal assignments of the course will contain both writing and speaking elements, with a variety of informal activities contributing to a larger project. The first major assignment will be a written critique of a set of arguments on an issue. The other two major assignments will consist of a researched argument project in which students research a major issue in the public sphere and a public communication project. The researched argument project will include a working bibliography, annotations, activities that analyze and evaluate the arguments of the student’s sources as well as the student’s own line of argumentation. An overview of the viewpoints and beliefs with respect to the issue chosen by the student will be integral to the project. The research project will lead to the persuasive project (which may take any public form, but must have a written component) making the case for a view chosen by the student. For both projects, students will produce multiple drafts, receiving feedback from their instructor and peers.

The research facet of the course emphasizes the process of research using general and scholarly sources as well as the final product of the term paper. Students will return to the RU library for further instruction in its various research tools, such as the computerized catalog system, major indexes, and electronic sources. Students will be required to design their own research projects in conjunction with personal interests and/or the theme of the course. Instructors assess the various steps in the research process as well as the finished product, and students report on their research both orally and in writing, both individually and in groups.

Required projects for course completion:

Textual Analysis - 201

In this project, students will gather a collection of arguments on a current issue in the news or on a topic related to the course theme. Using the principles of logic and rhetoric, students will develop criteria for strong arguments and evaluate the arguments they’ve gathered according to that criteria in an essay. The collected arguments will be cited and documented on a works cited page.
Researched Argument - 201

In this project, students will use a combination of general interest and scholarly sources in order to conduct research on a current issue in the news or on a topic related to the theme of the course and develop a solution in a researched argument essay. Students will develop a research question and strategy which will use different types of database software. In this project they will learn to distinguish between general interest and peer-reviewed sources. They will also prepare and deliver a persuasive speech.

Public Communication Project - 201

In this project, students will assert their own opinions on the issue examined in the researched argument in at least two different media, one of which must be a written document, such as might appear in a newspaper aimed at a general circulation.

Reading Logs

Throughout the semester students will read and respond to a series of texts assigned by the instructor (from textbooks, newspapers, and/or magazines, and other sources). Students will prepare a citation for each reading, an accurate summary, and an analytical response to the ideas and structure of the reading.

Additionally, all students will be required to keep an online portfolio of their work in CORE 201 on the platform that will be chosen by Radford University.

c. Student Goals and Objectives of the Course

This course combines the goals and objectives of the four Core A areas, which are to be fulfilled by the entire Core A sequence. Developmental outcomes for each course have been constructed according to these goals:

Upon completion of University Core A, Radford University students will have achieved competency in four key concept areas: written communications, oral communication, critical thinking, and technology/information literacy.

Goal 1: Radford University students will demonstrate competency in critical reading, standard written English, audience-specific writing, clear and effective prose, and other elements of composition.

Radford University students will be able to:

a. effectively use standard written English (including grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure) to construct a thesis-driven essay supported by reasonable arguments
b. demonstrate the writing process through invention, organization, drafting, revision, editing, proofreading, and presentation
c. choose appropriate genres and styles when writing for a variety of different audiences
d. describe and evaluate critically a variety of print and other sources, synthesize and document material appropriately, and avoid plagiarism when developing a research paper
Goal 2: Radford University students will be able to communicate orally in clear and coherent language appropriate to purpose, occasion, and audience.
Radford University students will be able to:
   a. identify and explain components of and influences on the communication process in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking contexts
   b. demonstrate effective listening and critical analysis skills in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking contexts
   c. identify and apply communication strategies appropriate to audiences in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking contexts
   d. identify and demonstrate communication skills appropriate in interpersonal, small group, and public speaking contexts

Goal 3: Radford University students will learn to distinguish knowledge from opinion, challenge ideas, and develop reasonable strategies for belief formation.
Radford University students will be able to:
   a. apply the processes of deduction, induction, and other key elements of logical reasoning
   b. create a well-reasoned argument by evaluating the validity of ideas and information, providing evidence and support, and arguing against competing claims when applicable
   c. analyze issues, solve problems, and apply reasoning to everyday situations
   d. evaluate written and verbal arguments by discerning any logical fallacies, distinguishing between documented fact and opinion, examining explicit and implicit assumptions, and assessing the use of evidence to draw inferences and conclusions

Goal 4: Radford University students will be able to acquire, analyze, and synthesize digital and print information and explain how digital information is organized and communicated.
Radford University students will be able to:
   a. explain contemporary technological trends and issues
   b. utilize industry standard technologies as appropriate for academic purposes
   c. identify economic, societal, legal, privacy, and ethical considerations for using and sharing digital and print information
   d. demonstrate the use of basic research techniques to locate information from a variety of electronic and print sources
   e. apply appropriate modes of inquiry to evaluate digital and print information in terms of credibility, reliability, and accuracy

**d. Assessment Measures**

Students will produce formal and informal texts, spoken and written, which will be graded according to a set of rubrics designed with the outcomes in mind. For program assessment, a designated set of assignments will be gathered in electronic portfolios of the students’ work to be assessed at the completion of the Core A sequence.

**e. Other Course Information**

**3. Background and Justification**

**a. Need for the Course**

The goal of Radford University’s Core Curriculum program is to offer a sound, liberal arts education that will serve its students well in all of their future endeavors. Core A courses are
designed as a necessary foundation for that education. Core A consists of four sequential and interconnected courses that are rooted in the principles of grammar, rhetoric, and logic—the classical education referred to as the trivium. These timeless principles must nonetheless be studied in the context of the information age that is the 21st century, and thus each of the four courses integrates these essential competencies with information and technology literacy. All Radford University students will take these courses, each of which will examine the competencies in relation to one another, and build upon the skills and knowledge learned in the previous courses.

Upon completion of Core A, our students will be equipped with the foundation to become logical thinkers, effective communicators, critical users of technology, consumers of information, life-long learners, and ultimately better citizens.

b. Students for Whom Course is Offered

All RU matriculants will be required to take CORE 201 or accepted equivalents.

c. Anticipated Enrollment

Approximately 1875 students per year. Each section will enroll no more than 25 students.

d. Frequency of Course Offerings

CORE 201 will be offered every semester, with the majority of the sections being taught in Fall semesters.

e. Level and Prerequisites

This course is at the 200 level because it reinforces and completes the learning outcomes and skills developed in CORE 101 and 102. The course work is more demanding at this level, and so the course is at the 200 level rather than the 100 level. The prerequisite for this course is 102 or its equivalent.

4. Rationale for Resources Required

a. Faculty Resources

Faculty from all departments across campus will be invited to teach CORE 201. Participating faculty will complete training workshops led by the core coordinators. Certain competencies and skills must be covered in each class through particular assignments, ensuring that students will be well prepared for the next course, but professors will be able to choose the topics to which the shared content is applied. There will be an unknown impact on course offerings in departments as faculty are recruited to teach this course. This may require adjunct support within the department to backfill positions.
b. Effect on Existing Curricula

This course serves as the foundation of the new Core Curriculum. A reduced number of sections of COMM 114 and PHIL 113 will be offered as a result of this course.

c. Facilities, Equipment and Supplies

The students will create e-portfolios in all four CORE courses. Access to video equipment will be necessary to videotape student speeches.

d. Library Resources

Currently, McConnell Library has the requisite resources for Core 201.

e. Computer Resources

f. Other Anticipated Resources

Video equipment will be needed to record oral presentations.

* Approval of new courses only. Resources required for new courses must be approved through the college resource allocation process.

All courses must be reviewed departmentally at three-year intervals. All General Education Courses must be reviewed by the General Education Curriculum Advisory Committee at five-year intervals.

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