

March 2014

Dear Minor in Writing Admissions Committee,

I had my sights set on applying to the Organizational Studies major since the beginning of freshman year. If accepted into the program, I wouldn't be confined to taking courses in one subject; I could continue to take classes in psychology, history, and even environmental sciences as long as they looked at organizations in one way or another. Upon being accepted into the program earlier this semester; however, I realized that the major has one quintessential subject underrepresented in the curriculum: writing.

As a peer consultant at the Sweetland Writing Center, I could not imagine graduating from Michigan without taking any writing classes in my junior or senior years. I never anticipated how much working to help students improve their writing would end up improving my own, and I want the opportunity to apply what I've learned. Starting at the brainstorming phase all the way through final touches on grammar, I want to implement the advice I give students—like constantly asking questions to ensure they're probing as deeply as possible—in my own writing.

At the same time, it is my responsibility to ensure that my writing abilities remain sharp so I can effectively assist students seeking help. The minor in writing focuses on multiple genres, which would help me better understand the multitude of papers students bring into the center. From an essay analyzing inaugural addresses to a haiku about photography, the minor in writing's emphasis on exploring different ways to write would keep me prepared for whatever may come my way in the center.

As much as my time at Sweetland has driven me to pursue the minor in writing, the minor itself may be a catalyst to achieving my goal for the future: a life in the courtroom. My grandpa, a prominent lawyer himself, attributes his success in the field in no small part to his ability to write. He has always told me that the best lawyers are the best writers because when you write, your arguments cannot be ambiguous. You cannot use pitch or body language to get your point across; you have only words. This means that the words alone must be strong enough to win over your audience and in a court case, being able to win over your audience—the jury—makes or breaks careers.

When practicing law, having this writing ability will allow me to stand out among my colleagues because while they will have only knowledge of the law helping them in the courtroom, I'll have that same knowledge accompanied by a well thought-out argument. Although I can't say with absolute confidence that I'll be a lawyer some day—I'll probably change my mind about a career path ten more times before graduation—I can say that no matter which field I end up in, being a strong writer will help me thrive.

In order to use writing to my best advantage, I need to know how to tailor to my audience. Whether writing for a jury or for a professor, I want to learn how to write in different settings and I believe the minor in writing can teach me how to do this. If accepted, I would love to move out of my comfort zone of literary analyses and research papers and get acquainted with other forms of writing, particularly

new media. With the technology today, writing has grown from simply putting words on paper to putting words into blogs to be published and power point presentations to be displayed. The minor in writing's required e portfolios would familiarize me with these new forms of writing as well as allow me to explore a more personal way to write.

The best way to learn involves surrounding yourself with people who hold similar passions. If accepted into the minor in writing at Sweetland, I would have the ability to learn from both professors and peers who love to write as much as I do. The minor in writing would help me become more than a stronger writer; it would push me to become a better thinker and communicator. I believe the minor in writing is the perfect fit to make my years at Michigan what I want them to be. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Emily Kaplan