

1985

## University of Central Florida 1985 self study Southern Association of Colleges and Schools : Institute for Technical Documentation self study report

University of Central Florida. Institute for Technical Documentation

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UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

1985  
**Self Study**

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

INSTITUTE FOR TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION

SELF STUDY REPORT

INSTITUTE FOR TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION

Prepared by

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Acting Director

## INSTITUTE FOR TECHNICAL DOCUMENTATION

### 1. Philosophy

#### 1.1 Role in the University and the Community

The Institute of Technical Documentation serves as a contractor to provide special services in Technical Writing for the community and the University. The Institute offers a variety of critically needed services to client companies. These services include:

- Development of technical documentation at a reasonable cost.
- Development of original technical documentation.
- Translation of foreign language material.
- Development of seminars to assist clients in their own documentation efforts.

The Institute can provide these and other valuable services at moderate cost to its clients because of its low overhead costs. The Institute consists of a small core of permanent professional staff who have access to all of the facilities of the University of Central Florida. The bulk of the research and labor is done by University faculty, assisted by staff and students; all of whom have demonstrated expertise in technical writing, documentation, or a closely allied field. The Institute contracts for writing projects in industry and in the University:

- A. Provided specialized technical writing for civilian employees of the Naval Training Device Center
- B. Produced a revised version of a user manual for Dynamic Control--a software company
- C. Bid for subsequent projects at Dynamic Control
- D. Supplied writers for special projects for UCF Office of Sponsored Research
- E. Negotiating with the Florida Solar Energy Center to write manuals for their project.

## 1.2 Evaluation and Projections

The Institute provides professional services in Technical Writing that not only supplement services a particular company or department already has, but the Institute also provides a writing section for those who do not have that capability. The Institute has a large professional staff available and will have to expand this staff in the future to meet the demands being placed upon it. New areas are opening up in this field that will demand the use of more computers by the Institute staff and will also necessitate some further educational training for members of the staff.

In addition, the Institute is capable of providing in-house service courses for industry and government in Technical Writing techniques.

## 2. Organization

### 2.1 Duties and Staffing

The Institute now has a Director and two Project Supervisors. The Director oversees all projects and assists in obtaining, planning, and bidding on projects. The Project Supervisors seek out contracts, investigate needs, prepare contracts with the help of OSR, work closely with project staffs, designating work, and schedules, and are responsible for specific duties for each specific contract. The rest of the staff varies from project to project. They are recruited as the need arises from a group of available professionals who are screened by the Director and Project supervisor before being assigned to a project. There is not any ongoing salary for any of the Institute's staff. They are paid according to the specific, individual contract requirements.

### 2.2 Projections

In the future, a system to assure the Director and Project Supervisors of an ongoing salary to take care of duties preliminary to contract acceptance must be worked out.

## 3. Financial Resources

### 3.1 Funding

All funding comes from contracts awarded to the Institute. A certain amount is designated for Institute expenses in each contract.

### 3.2 Equipment

Expense funds are used for discs, tapes, ribbons, and repairs for equipment in the Technical Writing laboratory.

#### 4.1 Recruitment, Selection, and Salaries

Personnel are recruited for each specific task, in each specific contract, by the Project Supervisor who determines what specific talents are needed.

Salaries vary depending on the type of project. For example, if the project requires writing a computer manual, the writers receive a professional salary of \$15.00 per hour, while the Supervisor receives \$18.00 per hour.

#### 4.2 Security, Working Conditions, and Projections

Promotions are based on Institute need and participant's performance. The Director establishes criteria for promotion. Separate office space does not exist for the Institute. All work is done in English faculty offices and in the English Department's Technical Writing Laboratory.

In the future, as more contracts are awarded to the Institute more Project Supervisors and staff will be needed as well as a part-time secretary or clerk to keep records and books.

### 5. Physical Facilities

5.1 At present, the English Department Technical Writing Laboratory contains two Lanier Word Processors and two printers donated to the Technical Writing program by Harris Corporation; one Digital computer and letter-quality printer; and one IBM System Six, loaned by the UCF Office of Sponsored Research. The room is small, and more equipment such as an IBM PC, and an Apple II computer are needed by the Institute. Therefore, an additional room is needed not only for this equipment but also for office and secretarial space. Also, funds are needed for equipment upkeep.

5.2 N/A

### 6. Computers

#### 6.1 Impact and Needs

As previously stated, most Institute work is performed in the Technical Writing Laboratory on the Lanier Word Processor, and the Digital computer. Two new computers, an IBM PC and an Apple (with printers), are needed to help us bid for, and implement, new contracts to keep the Institute a viable, growing concern.