

COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

English and Comparative Literature Program Performance Review

Dean's Summary Report and Recommendations

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Dean's Summary Report and Recommendations
Program Performance Review for the
Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics
Programs Under Review:
English: M.A., B.A., Minor
Comparative Literature: B.A.

The Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics is a large, complex department. In addition to the degree programs under current review—the B.A. in English, the B.A. in Comparative Literature, the M.A. in English and the minor in English—the department offers an M.A., B.A., and minor in Linguistics and operates an English Education Program in collaboration with the College of Education. At the time of the last review, the department offered a master's degree in Comparative Literature; at the recommendation of the Graduate Studies Committee, the dean, and the external reviewers, the department discontinued the M.A. program because of severely limited enrollment. The Linguistics Program undergoes a separate Program Performance Review and the English Education Program is reviewed during the College of Education accreditation visits. The department is also responsible for teaching freshman and upper division composition, a service to the University that demands enormous resource. To review only the degree programs without acknowledging the work they do in these other areas would be a disservice to the department.

During the 2010-11 academic year, the Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics, under the leadership of Dr. Sheryl Fontaine, Department Chair, engaged in the program performance review process by conducting a self-study that is summarized in the enclosed report. In March 2011, two external reviewers, Dr. George Uba from CSU Northridge, Dr. John Holland from the University of Southern California, and Dr. Craig McConnell from the CSUF Liberal Studies Department, conducted a day long site visit. After reviewing the program's self-study report and interviewing the department chair, faculty members, the college dean, students and others, the reviewers prepared a joint report.

One measure of a department's overall health is the number of students enrolled in the degree programs offered by the department. Table 1 below shows the number of declared English majors, minors and graduate students during the period under review. The number of students majoring in English grew by 3% during the period under review, an increase that parallels the growth in the number of students choosing to major in the College degree programs overall. There is a solid and substantial core of students in the major. The number of students declaring the Comparative Literature major has remained quite small, with fewer than 15 students in any given year and only 8 students in 2010-11. Comparative Literature is not a popular second major as, per the IRAS website, only 1-2 students have declared Comparative Literature as a second major during the review period. The number of students enrolled in the English M.A. program has declined by 7% from 2004-05 to 2010-11 after reaching a peak in 2008-09. This also parallels the change in the College graduate enrollments as the more expensive graduate programs necessarily constricted to cope with tighter budgets of the last several years.

Table 1
Undergraduate and Graduate Students
Enrolled in the English Degree Programs

Year	# English Majors*	# Comparative Lit Majors*	# English Minors*	# Graduate Students*
2004-05	586.5	8.5	26	79.0
2005-06	603.0	11.5	35.5	88.5
2006-07	626.0	12.0	42.0	100.5
2007-08	641.5	8.5	31.0	105.5
2008-09	616.0	12.0	33.5	109.0
2009-10	570.0	7.5	46.5	80.5
2010-11	604.5	8	36.5	73.5
% change from 2004-05 to 2010-11	3%	0%	40%	-7%

*AY Headcount

Another indicator of the health of degree programs is the number of degrees granted. The summary of degrees granted in the B.A. in English, the B.A. in Comparative Literature, and the M.A. in English can be found in Table 2 below. In looking at the number of B.A. degrees awarded in English, there seems to be a pattern of large numbers of degrees awarded one year, followed by smaller numbers the next year. Assuming the pattern continues in 2010-11, there seems to have been little change in the number of degrees awarded throughout the review period. The number of master's degrees awarded has steadily increased throughout the review period despite the fact that there are fewer students enrolled in the graduate program. It appears that although there are fewer students enrolled, the students who *are* admitted to the program are more successful and more likely to complete the degree requirements. On the other hand, the number of bachelor's degrees awarded in Comparative Literature is disappointingly low, having graduated only 3 students in the seven years since the last review.

Table 2
Degrees Awarded

Year	B.A. English	B.A. Comparative Literature	M.A. English
2004-05	176	0	20
2005-06	159	1	19
2006-07	184	0	28
2007-08	158	0	29
2008-09	186	2	35
2009-10	154	0	40
2010-11	Data not available for 2010-11		

Department Mission, Goals and Environment

The department mission and goals are clearly defined and align with the University's mission and goals. The degree programs offered by the department prepare students for a variety of professions as the skills students acquire—critical reading, analysis, and excellence in writing—undergird success across professional environments.

Program Description and Analysis

Program Changes

The faculty have made changes to the curriculum and program requirements that benefit students and move the programs toward alignment with changes in the discipline. Per the self study, the discipline is moving away from a field-coverage model toward a curriculum designed to achieve identified learning outcomes associated with scholarship as well as practical career preparation. I commend the faculty for their vision and for their efforts in this regard. They have already made changes in the graduate program toward this end and are in the process of reviewing the undergraduate curriculum. One change in the undergraduate program since the last PPR, effective for students entering under the 2011-13 catalog, is the new Comparative Studies requirement. Students earning the B.A. in English are now required to take at least one course in comparative literature. Two new advanced composition courses have been introduced, ENGL 302, *Advanced Composition for the Secondary Teacher*, and ENGL 307, *Advanced Composition in English Studies*. Students majoring in English now take one of these two courses instead of the more general ENGL 301, *Advanced College Writing*. Efforts to expand the creative writing opportunities have been successful and now students can avail themselves of instruction in creative non-fiction, alternative genres such as science fiction or fantasy, and autobiographical writing. A course in play-writing is planned. I am delighted to learn that the department plans to offer the upper division course on Legal Writing after a long period of dormancy. Recently hired faculty have developed several new and exciting courses that have broad appeal—courses such as Harry Potter, The Graphic Novel, Images of Women are just a few of these new courses.

Degree Structure

Per the self study, the discipline of English Studies has moved away from a field-coverage approach, yet the requirements for the degree have remained essentially unchanged. The degree structure for the B.A. in English continues to emphasize the field-coverage model in that it requires students to take at least two basic survey courses, three courses from various periods and/or genres, two major author courses (Shakespeare and either Chaucer or Milton), one language course and four electives. Beginning fall 2011, students will be required to fulfill a comparative studies requirement

Demand and Enrollment Trends

The budgetary organization of the Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics underwent significant changes since the last PPR that are important to document here. These changes were necessary to assist the department in achieving the two marks of success associated with enrollment—making target while staying within budget.

Prior to the last PPR, the department received one FTES target and one general FTEF allocation. From this one “pot,” the department was challenged to manage the growing composition program demands (as the size of the freshman and transfer classes steadily increased), meet the needs of its undergraduate majors and graduate students, and support its single subject credential program. Beginning in 2004-05, the Dean established separate targets for the composition and the degree programs. (English Education, though not technically a degree program, was included with the degree programs target.) The table below summarizes the FTES target and the FTES achieved by the “two sides of the house” as well as the total for the department. Overall, the department generally made target but the composition side has covered the shortfall on the degree program side for the last four years.

Table 3
Target and Achieved FTES from 2004-05 to 2010-11

Year	FTES: Composition			FTES: Degree Programs			FTES: Total		
	Target	Achieved FTES	% of Target	Target	Achieved FTES	% of Target	Target	Achieved FTES	% of Target
2004-05	432	429	99%	700	683	98%	1132	1112	98%
2005-06	488	477	98%	710	710	100%	1198	1187	99%
2006-07	488	470	96%	706	705	100%	1194	1175	98%
2007-08	470	515	110%	696	672	97%	1166	1187	102%
2008-09	544	626	115%	564	541	96%	1108	1167	105%
2009-10	485	586	121%	487	446	92%	972	1032	106%
2010-11	593	597	101%	466	459	98%	1059	1056	100%

The demand for English courses is strong and with 600+ majors, the department does not have to compete for GE students to fill the classes. Classes generally fill well and there are very few classes cancelled due to low enrollment. The department has recently gone to a 3/3 scheduling pattern for faculty assignments and I have some concerns given that the degree programs continue to come in under target. In 2010-11, the budgeted FTEF of 19 and SFR of 23.2 for the degree programs resulted in an FTES target of 461. (Note that the College SFR is 25.1.) This means that, on average, each FTEF should produce about 24 FTES, the equivalent of teaching 120 students. When there is department-funded assigned time, such as for a Graduate Advisor, then the number of students required per FTEF increases. For example, in 2010-11 the department funded the equivalent of 1.4 FTEF for various departmental administrative duties. This means that there were 17.6 FTEF (19-1.2) available to reach the FTES target of 461 and so each position would have

to cover about 26 FTES, the equivalent of teaching 130 students each (on average). In fall 2010, only two tenured/tenure track faculty taught 130+ students and one FERP faculty taught 65+ students with his .5 workload; in spring 2011 only three tenured/tenure track faculty taught 130+ students and one FERP faculty taught 65+ students with his .5 workload.

Changes in the department budget organization also occurred following an alarming trend of overspending for adjunct faculty in the years spanning 2004-05 through 2008-09. Table 4 below shows that for the first five years of the review period, the department seriously overspent its faculty budget. Without explicit assignment of FTEF to composition and to the degree programs, it was difficult for the department to develop a schedule that stayed within budget as the resources needed for the ever growing composition program competed with the classes needed for the major. In 2008-09, we established individual budgets so that the composition program received an FTEF allocation and an SFR appropriate to the necessarily restricted class sizes. Similarly, the degree programs, along with the English Education program, received its own allocation and a slightly higher SFR. Once schedules were built under the new budget system (starting 2009-10), the department remained within its budget.

Table 4
End of the Year Surplus/(Deficit) for the
Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics

Academic Year	PTF Funding ⁽¹⁾	PTF Expenses	Surplus/ (Deficit)
2004-05	\$ 945,979	\$ 968,297	\$ (22,318)
2005-06	\$ 1,209,630	\$ 1,247,308	\$ (37,678)
2006-07	\$ 1,142,780	\$ 1,165,104	\$ (22,324)
2007-08	\$ 1,238,275	\$ 1,421,540	\$ (183,265)
2008-09	\$ 1,301,979	\$ 1,371,345	\$ (69,366)
2009-10	\$ 1,186,278	\$ 1,169,731	\$ 16,547
2010-11	\$ 1,340,121	\$ 1,297,217	\$ 42,904

(1) Includes part time faculty residual plus transfers out and augmentations

Another factor complicating the budgetary environment prior to 2008-09 is that tenured and tenure-track faculty taught degree program classes almost exclusively. Once the separate budgets were established, it became apparent that the faculty lines associated with the degree programs were almost 100% occupied. Since then some of the tenured and tenure-track faculty have begun teaching composition classes; this relieves pressure from the degree program budget. Table 5 below shows the FTEF allocations for the composition program and the degree programs for the last three years.

Table 5
FTEF Allocations and Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty

Academic Year	Composition FTEF Allocation	Degree Program FTEF Allocation	# Tenured & Tenure-Track Faculty
2008-09	22.2	22.74	21 (+2 FERP)*
2009-10	20.0	22.0	20 (+2 FERP)*
2010-11	23.2	19.0	19 (+2 FERP)*

*These numbers do not equate to occupied FTEF positions as they do not include full-time lecturers; also, when faculty teach composition courses the FTEF they occupy is split between the two budgets. For example, a faculty member teaching two courses in composition occupies .75 FTEF in the degree program budget and .25 FTEF in the composition budget.

Documentation of Student Academic Achievement and Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes

It appears that the progress in the area of assessment has focused on the University writing program rather than the student learning goals/outcomes for the degree programs. The faculty have developed a rubric to score ENGL 99 student portfolios, but no data were reported regarding results of the scoring (i.e. percentage of students passing; analysis of areas of weakness; how such an analysis informs pedagogy and effects change in the course instructional design). Assessment of student writing in the new writing course, ENGL 100/100W, revealed that 65% of the students showed improvements in their essays from the beginning to the end of the course. Finally, a common rubric to assess writing in ENGL 101 and ENGL 301 has been developed and has been distributed to all sections of these courses. It appears there has not been an analysis of any data as yet, but I applaud these efforts and encourage them to continue to this next step. Other than an assessment of senior writing skills, the self study makes no mention of assessment efforts associated with the other learning goals for the B.A. in English or Comparative Literature. The self study reports that the M.A. exams are holistically scored using a shared rubric by a faculty committee. I urge the department to evaluate the results of the scoring to learn about the strengths and weaknesses of the program. Assuming the rubric addresses the learning goals for the program, these data allows the department to determine if the current curriculum does, indeed, support students in achieving the identified learning goals.

The learning goals developed for the M.A. program describe what students *do* in the program rather than describe the outcomes for graduates of the program. There is only one outcome per goal. This is rather limited. Usually, a goal will suggest at least 2-3 outcomes that would be evidence that the goal has or has not been achieved. Many of the learning outcomes are written so generally, it would be difficult to assess whether students have achieved them. The goals and outcomes for the M.A. program, as posted on the University website, are as follows:

Goal #1:

Students will complete a course in Introduction to Graduate Studies and be required to take at least one course from three or four discipline areas and five elective courses chosen from these areas.

- Become familiar with the breadth of study that defines the discipline of English Studies.

Goal #2:

Students will regularly read and analyze primary and secondary texts; conduct independent research; engage in analytic, didactic, and informed oral and written discussions with peers, faculty, and disciplinary experts; and write multiple extensively researched and analytically structured essays and/or generically appropriate creative texts.

- Develop the ability to evaluate current knowledge in the field and to deepen and extend their own and others' understanding of this knowledge.

Goal #3:

Students will develop a portfolio that is consistent with the professional direction they intend to take upon graduation.

- Devote sustained time to preparing for and understanding the professional options available to graduates with a master's degree in English.

Goal #4:

Students will write a project paper of their own design, supervised by a faculty member, and approved by the supervisor and a project-writing instructor.

- Demonstrate the ability to complete one extensive, independently designed research or creative project.

The goals and outcomes developed for the B.A. in English work better than those developed for the graduate program; however, several of the outcomes are rather lengthy and would be more effectively communicated if they were separated into 2-3 goals. The goals and student learning outcomes for the B.A. in English are listed below:

Goal #1:

Read critically

- Read a text in any of several genres on a number of levels, including literal comprehension, aesthetic responsiveness, informed awareness of the traditions and the varied critical perspectives within which it may be most productively read, and rhetorical and logical analysis of its argument and/or structure.

Goal #2:

Write effectively

- Write about various kinds of texts so as to articulate the dimensions of the work as described above.
- Demonstrate an awareness of audience, purpose and various rhetorical forms, as well as a high level of control of standard written English conventions.

Goal #3:

Research

- Demonstrate the ability to find in textbooks and research materials—paper and electronic—the kinds of information relevant to a given problem or issue, literary or otherwise, and to integrate that information into one's own written work to support one's argument while giving appropriate credit to the source of the information.

Goal #4:

Knowledge of major literary works and traditions

- Have a working knowledge of the major writers, periods and genres of English and American literature and be able to place important works and genres in their historical context.

Goal #5:

Knowledge of noncanonical literary works

- Have a working knowledge of some important works in nonwestern, ethnic and women's literatures that illustrate the diversity of literary studies and the interconnectedness of literary traditions.

Goal #6:

Structure of the English language

- Have a working knowledge of the structure of the English language and theories of second language acquisition.

The goals and student learning outcomes for the B.A. in Comparative Literature are the same as those for the B.A. in English with one addition:

Reading and writing competence in a foreign language

- Read works in their original language, and translate works from that language into standard written English.
- Have a working knowledge of the structure of the language which the student has chosen as his/her specialty.
- Have a working knowledge of stylistic and rhetorical conventions of the literature of the foreign language the student has chosen to study.

Faculty

In 2011-12 there are five full professors, eight associate professors and seven assistant professors in the department. In addition, there are two professors enrolled in FERP. Given the current FTEF allocation of 20, all faculty lines are occupied unless individual faculty members teach under the composition budget. As the self study recognizes, future hires should be capable of teaching writing, rhetoric and discursive analysis.

The self-study asserts that the number of tenured and tenure-track faculty has declined since the last review (from a high of 27 in 2003-04 to the current low of 20), and while this may be so in absolute numbers, the self-study does not factor in the Linguistics faculty that were counted in 2003-04 and no longer counted in 2010-11; further, this

count does not include FERP faculty that occupy .5 of a faculty position. The total FTEF allocation to the department in 2011-12 is 47, including the allocation to Linguistics. This matches the peak of 47 FTEF allocated to the department during the years of 2005-06 through 2007-08. The University recommends that departments and programs fill faculty lines up to about 75% of the FTEF allocation. The 20 tenured and tenure-track faculty in 2011-12, plus the two .5 FERP faculty, exceed the FTEF of 20 allocated to the Degree Programs; thus, unless the new hires will teach almost exclusively in the Composition Program—or existing faculty members commit to teaching more extensively in the Composition Program—the department is not in a position to hire.

Table 6
FTEF Allocations from 2004-05 through 2010-11

Year	FTEF Allocation: Composition Program	FTEF Allocation: Degree Programs	Total FTEF
2004-05			45
2005-06			47
2006-07			47
2007-08			47
2008-09	22.2	22.7	45
2009-10	20	22	42
2010-11	23.2	19	42
2011-12	24	20	44 (+3 for LING)

Reviewers' Report

The reviewers' report is filled with praise and commendations for this strong, expertly led department. They commended the department for the harmony between the mission and goals with the University mission and goals, for the congenial departmental atmosphere and excellent leadership, for the impressive instruction they observed on the day of the site visit, for the exciting new curriculum developed in recent years, and for the Writing Center and the tutor and TA program. Overall, the reviewers recognize our Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics as superior. The reviewers also offered several recommendations, some of which are noted here.

- Hire two specialists in rhetoric and composition.
- Establish a Director of Composition in addition to a Writing Center Director.
- Consider requiring a dedicated theory course at both the undergraduate and graduate levels for all majors.
- Consider developing a capstone senior seminar course.
- Build the cohort of students majoring in Comparative Literature.
- Establish clear learning goals and direct assessment strategies.

I urge the faculty to seriously consider all of these recommendations.

Dean's Conclusions and Recommendations

I agree with the reviewers. The Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics is an outstanding department with vibrant faculty, excellent students, and strong programs. I am proud of the scholarly work of this faculty and equally proud of their work in the classroom. I offer the following recommendations in the spirit of spurring the department on to even greater strength and excellence.

Division Structure

This department enrolls more students than some entire colleges. For example, in 2011-12 the Department of English, Comparative Literature, and Linguistics received an annual enrollment target of 1,064 FTES. The University's smallest college received an enrollment target of less than 850 FTES. The Composition Program alone requires the scheduling of more sections than all but the largest University departments. The administrative burden of running such a large department needs to be shared. I recommend that the department consider a division organizational structure with a single chair and coordinators for English and Comparative Literature, Linguistics, Composition, and English Education. Coordinators would work with the chair to develop schedules, identify part-time faculty assignments, monitor enrollments, etc.

New Faculty Hires

I strongly agree with the reviewers that the faculty should consider hiring two new faculty with expertise in writing and rhetoric. The FTEF allocation for the Composition Program is almost completely utilized by hiring part-time faculty and it is my position that our students would benefit from full time faculty who are dedicated to this subfield in English Studies.

3/3 Scheduling

I have some concerns that the degree program side of the department is struggling to meet target. I recommend that the department work with the Dean's Office to analyze the scheduling practices, enrollment caps, and enrollment patterns in an effort to understand what changes can be made to better ensure the department will make target.

Comparative Literature B.A.

The undergraduate program in Comparative Literature needs to be revitalized and bolstered or it needs to be closed. The number of students enrolled in the B.A. in Comparative Literature is very small and with only 3 graduates in the past 7 years, I have deep concerns about the viability of this program. I ask that the faculty address this issue by preparing a report on the state of this program that discusses the pros and cons of continuing the program and the pros and cons of closing it. Further, I ask for the faculty to recommend which action should be taken. If the program is to continue, I would like to know what concrete actions will be taken to revitalize the program; further, I would like the faculty to establish a timeline for these actions and benchmarks of success that will help us measure whether the actions are leading to the hoped for results. I urge the faculty to consider other alternatives to closing the program rather than simply allowing the study of comparative literature to fade away. For example, would it make sense to establish concentrations within the B.A. in English, one of which would be Comparative

Literature? I can imagine other concentrations such as Linguistics, or Writing/Rhetoric. Perhaps such an exercise will stimulate the imagination of the faculty and lead to new ways of conceptualizing the degree along the lines of the new development in the English Studies described in the self study. *I ask that this report be submitted to me by the beginning of the fall 2012 semester.*

Assessment

I applaud the work that the department has accomplished so far in assessing student progress and outcomes associated with writing skills. Now it is time for the faculty to focus attention on assessment of the degree program learning goals. First, though, I recommend that the student learning goals and outcomes be reconsidered for both the B.A. and the M.A. (I heartily recommend that the department seek the support and assistance of the assessment coordinator in the FDC for a better understanding of how to develop measurable goals and outcomes.) Second, I ask that the faculty prepare a curriculum map to reveal where, and to what extent, the goals are introduced, developed and mastered. Third, a schedule of direct assessments needs to be developed. *I would like a progress report on these actions by the end of the spring 2012 semester and another progress report by the end of the fall 2012 semester. I would like to see some evidence of direct assessment of at least one learning goal by the end of the spring semester 2013.*

Advising

According to the self study, students have access to four hours a week for advising—one hour for each of four different faculty members. This seems inadequate for 600 majors. I am at a loss to recommend a remedy but point this out as one way to document the need for the University and the College to support advising in a more substantial way. It was not clear from the self study who is responsible for completing the graduation checks.

Night Classes

The dean's report from the last PPR pointed out that the student survey results indicated student dissatisfaction with the class offerings in the evenings. My office has recently received a complaint from a night student who was unable to take a required class because it had not been offered in the evening in more than 5 semesters. My own investigation into the evening schedule of this department supports this student's complaint. For example, over the past five semesters there have been only 9 or 10 sections offered at 7pm and 40-60% of those sections have been graduate classes. I recommend that the department consider developing a rotation of classes such that an evening student would be able to satisfy all requirements within 4-5 semesters. The actual number of courses offered in the evening may not have to increase if there is careful attention paid to such a rotation. Publishing the rotation on the department website would also help students plan when they take their required courses. A large department with this many majors has an obligation to address the needs of our evening students.

Comparative Studies Requirement

The new Comparative Studies requirement, effective fall 2011, is not clearly communicated in the catalog; students seeking to identify courses that meet the requirement are directed to look for courses with an asterisk, but only three courses have

an asterisk even though several other courses, presumably, meet the requirement. I recommend the department develop a comprehensive list of courses that satisfy this requirement. This list should be posted on the department website and advisors should have copies to hand to students during advising sessions. Further, it is important that the TDA office be notified as to which classes meet the requirement so that student TDAs will be accurate.

In conclusion, I am proud of the faculty in this department and I am confident they will chart an excellent future. I look forward to working with them to achieve their goals.