Comprehensive Program Review: Self Study
Department of English & Foreign Languages: 2007-2014
Coordinated by Dr. Genie Bryan, Chair
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Executive Summary

The Department of English and Modern Languages houses the BA in English, the BA in English with Professional Writing and the BA in English with Teacher Certification. EML has eleven full time instructors and one instructor who teaches one to two courses per semester who work in the BA program. We have one to three adjuncts working in the department; the number varies due to availability. Because we are also a Modern Languages department, we also have one full time foreign language instructor and one part time instructor who teaches Chinese.

The major strength of the Department of English and Modern Languages (EML) is the dedicated faculty members who give their expertise and time to our students, both majors and non-majors. According to SACS-COC, all program faculty members are fully credentialed. To their credit, EML faculty often go beyond their contracted duties to insure that our students receive the best education we can offer in our department. Unfortunately, this strength is also one of our most threatening problems; over 1/3 of our current faculty are actively on the job market. They are not easily replaceable cogs in the machine as all of these members of the corps of instruction are valuable in our department and bring something unique to GSW. Obviously, morale is terribly low. Our salaries, while all salaries at GSW are lower than regional standards, those in the College of Arts and Sciences are notably lower than in other colleges and they are not competitive with comparable institutions. In addition, the faculty share of benefits, such as health insurance, rises annually without a subsequent rise in salary.

In addition to salary problems, there are other fiscal problems that should be taken into account. While these problems are not unique to EML, they have a notable effect on both morale and how effectively the department is run. The department’s operating budget has remained unchanged for many years. We can longer replace broken printers and out-of-date computers/software for our faculty. The travel/research budget remains stagnant despite obvious rising costs and the continued demand for scholarly engagement. Cuts in the library budget compromise the ability of both faculty and students to engage in research. The offices and classrooms in the EML building are woefully out-of-date in regards to technology and are much in need of a “face lift.” At a time when we are trying to build online offerings, the technology problem is particularly damaging to building pedagogically sound distance learning programs.

The EML building remains out of compliance with ADA requirements due to the absence of an elevator in the building. Faculty offices are upstairs; therefore, a student with a disability faces significant difficulties meeting with a professor. Downstairs classrooms must be left open, leaving space unused, in anticipation that students or faculty may encounter injuries during a semester. One year a member of the EML faculty became disabled. The solution was to move her office to a downstairs classroom thus effectively segregating her from her colleagues (there is no office space downstairs). This is not true ADA compliance.

EML contributes more credit hours to the general education curriculum than any other department on campus. All students are required to take ENGL 1101, ENGL 1102 and one 2000-level literature survey course. The foreign language sequence required by many majors is also housed by our department. In addition to course offerings, we are responsible for gathering
and/or assessing all of those courses as well. While this report does not address the MA program in Critical Literacy, our department also houses this graduate program which carries its own demands on resources.

In regards to program assessment, EML has been consistently and conscientiously assessing individual courses of the major and the program since the last CPR was conducted. We reflect on our findings and adapt both courses and the program to better meet the needs of our students.

We continually review course offerings and make adjustments as our assessment results show need. For example, we recently determined, based on both the ETS Field Test and the GACE, that our majors needed a course in Literary Theory (ENGL 3100) rather than Introduction to the Study of the English Language (ENGL 3211). After consulting with our colleagues in Education, since this change would significantly affect our Teacher Certification students, we have written a proposal to replace ENGL 3211 with ENGL 3100. Our teacher certification candidates will be better prepared for their professional certification tests and all of our majors will be more prepared for the GRE and possible graduate study.

Our program currently (as of October 2014) serves 50 undergraduate majors. We also have five graduate students enrolled in our MA in Critical Literacy. We have eight students scheduled to graduate fall 2014 (and three MA students scheduled to graduate). This number is expected to rise in coming semesters.
Narrative

Current EML Mission Statement

The Department of English and Modern Languages cultivates intellectual, communicative, and creative growth in its students through general education courses in composition and literature; an undergraduate program comprising courses in composition, literature, professional writing, and foreign languages; and a graduate program in Critical Literacy. Through its academic, scholarly, and service activities, the department develops and maintains excellence in its faculty, staff, and students.

Program Overview

The Department of English and Modern Languages plays a vital role in serving the core at GSW. We serve Core Areas A, B, C and F. These core requirements include the composition sequence ENGL 1101 and 1102, the literature survey requirement (ENGL 2110, 2120, or 2130), the foreign language required by many majors and Core Area B option ENGL 2200. We usually participate in Core Area B option and offer one section of WMST 2001 as well. Our FTE’s not covered by previous annual reports are as follows:

Fall 2013: 2414 (UG) and 54 (G)
Spring 2014: 2441 (UG) and 48 (G)
Summer 2014: 427 (UG) and 9 (G)
Fall 2014: 2343 (UG) and 30 (G)

The department offers a minor in Spanish and courses in Chinese.

In 2013, spring semester, we began teaching courses to support the Spanish minor Dr. Blanchard requested EML develop in the fall of 2010. There is interest in the minor; however, offering enough classes with only one full-time faculty member in Spanish is difficult. This one instructor must also cover all the 1000 and 2000 level courses necessary for the foreign language requirement of the core. At present we have three students enrolled in the Spanish minor.

Our faculty continue to play a vital role at GSW in administrative/service roles that add to the life of the university and departmental community.

Beginning Fall 2013, on the suggestion of the outgoing chair, we began offering Master Advisers for our majors. Dr. Elizabeth Kuipers and Dr. Lauren DiPaula offer their expertise to our students as the department’s dedicated advisers. They receive only one course release per year for this important administrative work. We believe this has been successful for a variety of reasons. Dr. Kuipers reported that after midterm Fall 2014 she held appointments with 30 of our majors in response to her emails. Having an adviser with time dedicated to this task makes an enormous difference in contact with our students and decreases student confusion about who their adviser is. Drs. Kuipers and DiPaula work diligently to stay apprised of all requirements.
and make certain our majors are constantly apprised of information that affects them. They also hold workshops that aim to positively impact our students academically.

Dr. Jeffrey Waldrop serves as the Director of the University Honors Program. He receives one course release per semester for this work. His duties in this capacity are extensive but most assuredly bring prestige to our university. The director is involved in recruiting, advising, scheduling, assessment, recording and reporting the activities of the program. For the past three years 75% of its students have achieved semester honors--Dean's or President's List--and Latin honors at graduation. The 2015 Georgia Collegiate Honors Council conference will be hosted by GSW.

Dr. Lauren DiPaula works as the Director of the Writing Center for which she receives one course release per semester as compensation. Her work here benefits the entire university as the Writing Center works with students across the curriculum. She trains tutors with an eye to the latest pedagogy in composition studies, takes the tutors to conferences, and maintains a website where students can receive online tutoring if they are online GSW students.

Ms. Lydia Rogers is the Director of Learning Support and receives one course release per semester for this administrative work. This work is time intensive. The position requires significant attention to administrative details from staying up to date with BOR Learning Support mandates, registering and advising LS students and assessing her own courses and gathering assessment information from the math department.

Dr. Michael Moir serves GSW as the faculty adviser of Sirocco, GSW’s arts magazine. Although this is a student publication, the work of the faculty adviser is extensive. There are a number of duties that students simply cannot perform that fall to the faculty adviser. Without a dedicated faculty member, this publication would fail. Sirocco circulates throughout the community and represents GSW. He receives no compensation for this valuable work for our university.

Dr. Paul Dahlgren recently took over as the Director of the MA Program in Critical Literacy. In his short time as Director, he has already made some valuable changes to the program guided largely by assessment data. He has the unenviable task of raising numbers in the program while overseeing a significant revision to the curriculum. He receives one course release per semester.

**Major Strengths**

I. Faculty

By far, the most valuable asset of the EML program is the faculty. Due to recent hires, we are able to offer some much needed courses we lacked for our majors (see below in Assessment Program and results of assessment in Appendices). Our newest hires have added some much needed areas of expertise, especially in modern and postcolonial literatures. In recent years, we have added some much needed expertise in rhetoric and composition studies. As a result of the department’s good fortune, courses offerings are much more diverse and address the needs of the program in a dynamic fashion. Many of our faculty are over-extended as they value their roles in
the university community. The EML faculty are generous with their time to a fault, often to the
own detriment, insisting that our students need additional time, programming or uncompensated
independent studies. Many of our faculty members willingly take on overloads noting
departmental need. Despite significant demands on their time and financial stressors, our faculty
remain remarkably active as scholars. The scholarly work of this department is, for the most part,
directly applicable to the mission of our institution and the department. The faculty curriculum
vitae in the Appendices will bear this out.

II. Assessment Program

The Assessment Program in EML is not merely an exercise we undertake for reaffirmation. The
EML faculty all participate in the assessment process at some level. With input from every
faculty member, we have succeeded in developing, and often adapting, assessments which
maintain academic freedom and take careful looks at our PLOs.

Our largest task in assessment deal with Core Area A (ENGL 1101 and 1102). We gather
artifacts from those classes each year and archive those for assessment coordinated by the Office
of Institutional Effectiveness and Planning. Based on data, we have changed the artifact gathered
in 1101. Previously, we had given the same exam across all 1101 courses. This was ineffective,
for a number of reasons. In 1101, each instructor gathers a sample of response essays
electronically. In 1102, each instructor gathers a research based assignment given toward the end
of the course. These two artifacts give us a good picture of what our students are learning in the
two required writing courses.

Our program assessment is, in my opinion, remarkable. In response to assessment data, pilot
programs and reflection, our faculty have made some important changes to the BA program.
Because detailed information on assessment is included in the Appendices, only an example for
illustration, beyond that given in the Executive Summary, will be provided here. We discovered
a significant lack in 20th century literature offerings through our assessment date. To address this
problem, we embarked upon creating courses designed to fill this gap. Four courses were
created: Postcolonial World Literatures (ENGL 3470); Modern British Literature (ENGL 3460);
Modern American Literature (ENGL 3510); and Postmodern and Contemporary American
Literature (ENGL 3520). Data following the addition of these courses seems to indicate these
program changes have had a beneficial impact on our ETS scores (Please see Assessment Report
12 and Assessment Report 13 to 14).

We initiated a pilot program on revising our program PLOs after engaging in PLO course
mapping to determine how well each of our PLOs were being covered in the program. Results
suggested that a revision of PLOs #2 and #5 were advisable. At this writing, this is still under
discussion on the department.
Areas for Improvement/Opportunities

I. Department Chair

The position of Department Chair was difficult to fill after Dr. Elizabeth Kuipers stepped down due to, as she stated in her annual report of 2013, “time-consuming, thankless tasks and supervising a diverse, relatively large group of faculty” with “minimal” “compensation and release-time.” The reason this is a weakness for the EML program should be obvious. With a chair stretched between three (and often four courses due to the need for overloads in EML), it is nigh near impossible to be as efficient and observant as is necessary in a department as important and busy as ours. The current chair will do the job as long as the department wills it; however, an additional course release to allow more time for more thorough attention to administrative matters in a department of this size is more than crucial. In years past, department chairs at GSW taught two courses in addition to their administrative duties. Without the benefit of a strong faculty and a dedicated, hardworking senior administrative assistant, the daily running of the department would no doubt seriously struggle under the current demands placed on the chair.

II. Course Offerings

In response to assessment results, we have been more aggressive about offering a better variety of courses. However, we would like to do more here. This will be difficult due to a number of factors. The USG requires students to complete Core Area A within 30 hours. This means we must offer a large number of ENGL 1101 and 1102 courses each semester. We must serve the core; this often leaves our major underserved due to a need for at least one more permanent faculty line. Many of our faculty are needed almost exclusively to teach core courses.

III. Assessment

In regards to assessment, I do not believe we need much improvement to what we are doing. However, we do need some attention to what we do with some of our results. We initiated a pilot program to determine if new Program SLOs were needed. Once it was determined that we needed new Program SLOs and new ones were drafted and discussed, the momentum ceased. The department needs to return to this important issue for the benefit of our students. The Assessment Reports included in the Appendices will bear out my confidence in the efficacy of our assessment work. To avoid redundancy, I refer reviewers to those reports.

IV. Composition Courses (ENGL 1101 and 1102)

Many of our faculty members are concerned that our students leave the two core writing courses without as much expertise as we would like in regards to research writing and argument based writing. This concern indicates that some time needs to be spent in consideration of how best to approach this problem. Obviously, this is a problem as our majors go into upper-division coursework; however, this is a concern that affects every student who takes these courses at GSW.
Key Challenges

I. Retention of Faculty

Currently we are fortunate to have a diverse, dynamic department. It is an easy matter to look into the near future where this will no longer be the case. As noted earlier, an enormous number of our colleagues are on the job market seeking positions with competitive salaries. While our salaries are only one factor in the difficulties of working at GSW, this seems to be the driving factor in job searches. The loss of any of our colleagues will mean that some of our valuable courses won’t be offered unless we can find replacements. While it is obvious that many in our administration view English PhDs as “dime a dozen,” our colleagues are not; they were hired for their specific skills and they should be kept here because of those skills and the connections they have made with our student population. We have reached a point where even some of our senior faculty seek a way off our campus. The loss of institutional memory is an obvious loss here but valuable knowledge and experience leaves if we lose senior faculty. Morale among the faculty is remarkably low. The salaries put faculty in the position of having to ask for overloads or to find second jobs teaching online or for other institutions. The volume of freshman composition classes in some faculty course loads exceeds the recommendations from national organizations that dictate best practices and are another source of burnout for the faculty. Additionally, the faculty are demoralized by the demand for a professional level of scholarship when there is little to no support for that scholarship in terms of resources and travel funds. Therefore, the department chair has chosen to use the departmental “profit” from summer funds to supplement the nearly non-existent departmental travel budget. As those funds continue to be directed elsewhere because of budget issues, travel remains a significant financial burden.

Something significant must be done to address this.

II. Facilities

The EML building is in sad repair. Rainy weather means leaks, garbage cans in classrooms and hallways and drips on the heads of students and instructors. This is hardly a positive atmosphere. This has been addressed in annual reports; therefore, I will not beleaguer the point further. Our classrooms often illicit comments from our students about how shabby they appear. New paint is needed, at the very least. And ceiling tiles need to be replaced where they are stained or missing from leaks.

The EML building not ADA compliant. This is obvious to anyone who has been to our building. I will offer one heartbreaking example to demonstrate why simply saying we can meet students downstairs is not compliance. We had a student who was severely disabled who wanted to work on Sirocco. The office for the magazine was upstairs. The faculty adviser did not know this student was interested in working with the magazine staff. In order to be at the meeting, the student crawled up the stairs and down the hall. When she found out that the office was being moved downstairs so that she could work on the magazine, she was so humiliated she stopped coming. This should not have happened on a campus with a mission statement which includes “maintaining a diverse, accessible . . . campus” and providing “an environment which affirms . . . diversity of . . . disability.”
We understand that GSW is in a budget crisis. However, the lack of climate control on weekends is a significant problem. Faculty members need to work in their offices on many weekends. Fingerless gloves and fans should not be the solution. Having to beg for suitable working conditions should not be the “normal” of our work lives. This cuts down on productivity in a number of ways. A few examples should serve here. Many of us teach online courses and cannot afford to upgrade our home computers. Many of us use Turnitin.com for plagiarism detection and grading; our home computers are out of date and no longer have the kind of functionality the web site needs. Much of our research material is print; we should not have to port large stacks of books/journals home on weekends.

III. Technology Needs

The lack of up-to-date technology is an on-going problem in the EML building. These are not problems that we can solve with our small departmental budget. We can barely replace printers for faculty members much less deal with the enormous problems of teaching with 20th century technology in the 21st century classroom.

Our Professional Writing Program is in danger of becoming obsolete because we are seriously behind on technology. Our students deserve up-to-date technology for their coursework. We need a Mac Lab with software for document and web page design (it is worth noting that this would benefit all of our majors and the MA in Critical Literacy). We cannot claim that we are adequately preparing our graduates to work in any field that would require them to do web/document design or technical writing without new technology. Both of our computer labs are seriously out of date and barely support the demands of our ENGL 1101 and 1102 courses. Many of our instructors teach using technology extensively, and more would do so if it weren’t such an exercise in frustration, in order to reflect the world outside academia.

The administration at GSW and the USG continually asks for more online course offerings. While we acknowledge that this is the here and now of education, we cannot continue to cobble together online courses without some technology upgrades (the lack of real instructional design professionals will not be addressed here). Our office computers are “dinosaurs” and do not support basic needs for putting courses that meet best practices online. It is absurd that we should have to rely on our own home computers for our work. Most of us cannot afford to update our home computers to reflect the dynamic needs of online pedagogy. We need a video camera and space where faculty can record lectures to put in their online classes. To go a step further, a fully technologically advanced classroom would allow us to offer some synchronous online class time. With this kind of technology, we could Skype in online students for meetings/discussions and guest lecturers (this would benefit our “brick and mortar” classes as well).

The computers and video equipment in all of our classrooms are ridiculously out of date. Simple tasks like using Power Point becomes cumbersome because the computers are so slow. Many of our classes incorporate media and this becomes almost impossible with the current equipment. Some of the sound equipment is so faulty that dialog cannot be heard past the first two rows of the classroom.
IV. Recruitment for and Growth of the Spanish Minor

We began offering courses for the Spanish minor during the academic year 2012-2013. While we are enthusiastic about the minor, the department is in a difficult position here. We need to offer more courses so that students can complete the minor in a timely fashion; however, without an additional faculty member, we cannot offer more courses. Without more students enrolled in the minor, we cannot get approval for an additional faculty line. The problem is obvious.

Progress toward Strategic Goals

Since the 2012-2013 annual report, we have made progress where possible on our strategic goals. In this document, only the goals that have not been 100% met will be addressed. Only the goals relevant to the BA program and minor in Spanish will be addressed here. For information on past progress, please refer to previous annual reports in the Appendices.

Goal 2: Revise Program SLOs in response to annual assessment

This goal has not been met and is previously identified in this document as an area that needs our attention. The SLOs have been discussed, piloted and rewritten. The faculty must vote on putting them in place.

Goal 3: Implement and maintain Spanish minor

This goal is being met as well as can be expected. We only have one full-time faculty member to support the Spanish minor. Although a new faculty line is requested at each new budget hearing, the line is always denied. We cannot offer enough classes to recruit large numbers of students into the minor. Advisers often complain that although their advisees are interested in the minor they cannot complete the minor in a reasonable amount of time.

Goal 4: Offer adequate 1101/1102 classes to meet BOR Area A 30 hour rule; incorporate ENGL 1101 into more Learning Communities to make 30 hour rule feasible for students.

A small pilot was done with two sections of ENGL 1101; however, the result was not as successful as the instructors had hoped for. More advance preparation with all the involved instructors was needed. This would need to be a larger campus-wide program with committed resources for real success.

Goal 6: Upgrade facilities

No further upgrades since 2012-2013 annual report. As noted above, this is a major weakness in need of attention.

Goal 7: Have enough English faculty to offer a fuller spectrum of classes on the books.

We have made some progress here as we have been aggressive about offering more upper division courses in recent years. For example, African-American Literature will be taught spring 2015, Postcolonial World Literature in being offered currently and a Special Topics in Women’s Literature was offered spring 2014.
Goal 12: Find resources to support faculty development for conference travel.

No further progress has been made here. Short of holding bake sales, we don’t see what we can do to support funding for conference travel in the department.

Draft of New Unit Strategic Plan

Mission Statement at 2007 CPR

The Department of English and Modern Languages prepares students for successful careers, effective leadership, and productive citizenship by challenging them to develop both their critical thinking and communication skills in basic education as well as advanced major level classes. The programs offered by English and Modern Languages foster students' critical engagement with the world by exposing them to various literary and cultural perspectives. The Department's highly qualified, flexible faculty is dedicated to student-centered learning, and dynamic, problem-based education.

Current Mission Statement

The Department of English and Modern Languages cultivates intellectual, communicative, and creative growth in its students through general education courses in composition and literature; an undergraduate program comprising courses in composition, literature, professional writing, and foreign languages; and a graduate program in Critical Literacy. Through its academic, scholarly, and service activities, the department develops and maintains excellence in its faculty, staff, and students.

Plans for the Future

It is clear that our department has changed a great deal in the last seven years (to avoid redundancy, please refer to the annual reports). We have added a minor in Spanish, classes in Chinese, an MA in Critical Literacy, new courses in response to assessment data and several new faculty members. We believe, and our assessment program bears this out, that our programs are stronger due to our willingness to reflect on what we do and change, in addition to our excellent faculty in EML. We would like to continue to grow and adapt to the 21st century.

In an ideal scenario, we would like to see our program reflect the technologically changing world to better prepare our graduates for their professional lives after college or further education. We need additional faculty to support both the minor in Spanish and the English program (this concerns stress on the faculty due to rules from the BOR about when students complete Core Area A and supporting the graduate program).

One of our definite strengths as program is our diversity. We are unique for a small program in that we can offer expertise in rhetoric, composition studies, critical theory and cultural studies.
and literature. We should build a mission statement that capitalizes on this. As we learn from one another, our students can leave our program with skills that reflect our strengths.

In response to concern from upper administration, the department will run pilot program for Obligatory Supplemental Instruction (OSI) spring 2015. The program will be run through the Writing Center, directed by Dr. Lauren DiPaula. Obviously, this will place further demands on Dr. DiPaula and the involved instructors. If the pilot is successful, OSI will be available for all sections of ENGL 1101 and 1102 beginning fall 2015. We wholeheartedly desire the success of our students, but we must acknowledge that this will further stretch resources and the time demanded of our instructors.

Our new mission statement should support the importance of critical thinking, the flexibility of the degree in English, the importance and value of studying the humanities and our focus on research and writing for academic and professional audiences.

Goals

Many of our goals from previous years will be on-going such as continued assessment practices, offering a variety of upper division courses, encouraging the Spanish minor, seeking facility upgrades and pursuing additional faculty lines to support our programs.

Future goals will focus on improving our First Year Writing Program, our BA program and retaining our valuable faculty. To place our 2000-level survey courses in line with other USG institutions, we are currently working on splitting those courses (e.g. the 2120 course will be split into one course from the beginnings to 1785 and another from 1785-present). In addition, we should seek ways to capitalize on the strength and value of the diversity of our faculty.

In reference to improving our First Year Writing Program, some attention must be paid to class size and faculty load. Currently the caps on the composition classes are 22. This, along with the number of composition classes some of our faculty members teach, is pedagogically unsound. Alice Horning’s 2007 article, “The Definitive Article on Class Size,” published in the WPA journal, convincingly argues that composition classes should, ideally, have 15 students. The maximum should be 20, and no writing teacher should teach more than 60 students per term in writing-driven courses. We currently have full-time faculty teaching 66 students per term. In past semesters, the number has been as high as 96 students per term. We simply cannot ignore the guidelines for writing classes that are being published by the Council of Writing Program Administrators and the National Council of Teachers of English. To bring our program in line, thereby ensuring continued quality student and faculty work, we must reduce the number of students in the first year writing classes and have more faculty to share the burden of instruction.

We hope to build an excellent OSI program through our Writing Center that will eventually support not just ENGL 1101 and 1102 but writing across the curriculum as well.