1. General characteristics of and brief history of the academic unit

1.1 Mission statement:

The English Department offers instruction at the undergraduate and graduate levels in the areas of literature, rhetoric and composition, linguistics, professional writing, and teacher education. As an academic unit within the humanities, the department is committed to nurturing the cultural and intellectual development of students, while fostering skills of communication and analysis to prepare them for careers in a variety of fields. The department’s commitment to scholarship is based on the premise that participation in a multicultural global community engages knowledge, critical acumen, ethical values, and rigorous standards of evidence. The department’s service to the community, the university, and the academic profession reflects its conviction that literacy is a form of social praxis rather than merely a system of instrumental proficiencies (from the Interim Strategic Planning Report 2005).

1.2 Departmental goals:

In the Interim Strategic Planning Report of 2005, the Department of English articulated the following goals (goals with asterisks beside them have since been accomplished):

1. More interdisciplinary courses at the 200 level and above
2. More formalized mentoring of undergraduate research projects and internships
   • Rewards for undergraduate thesis direction and other forms of mentorship
   • Increased course credit for internships to allow for more writing and reflection
   • Research assistantships
   • Student participation in professional conferences*
   • Establishment of a student chapter of the Society for Technical Communication*
3. Wider use of instructional technology in computer-equipped and other smart classrooms*
   • Second computer classroom
   • Six additional smart classrooms in Morton Hall*
4. More integration of service learning and community outreach into the curriculum
   • Thematic initiatives modeled on Brown vs. Board of Education (Spring 2004)*
   • Course reduction for coordinating an interdisciplinary thematic initiative
5. More opportunities and support for student travel, especially with faculty participation*
6. Greater support for scholarship and research, especially for pretenured faculty
   • Second course release for accumulated thesis direction*
   • Faculty writing/research groups
7. Better incentives for recruiting and retaining faculty
   • “Borrowing” as a refinement of course banking for pretenured faculty
8. More comprehensive mentoring of pretenured faculty*
   • Professional-development program*
   • Wider participation in mentoring pretenured faculty*
9. Increased cooperation with high schools and community colleges
   • College Day for high-school students
   • Faculty exchanges with high schools and community colleges
10. More reciprocal relationships among the department, other academic units, and the community
    • Buckner Lectures and film series tailored to community interests*
    • More coordination of course offerings with other departments, particularly at the graduate level*
11. Greater contact with departmental alumni
    • Departmental alumni chapter
    • Departmental board of visitors
    • Alumni day and other special events to bring alumni to campus*

1.3 Brief history of the academic unit:

UNCW’s modern English department began in 1977 with the hiring of Brooks Dodson through the department’s first national search. Subsequently, the department used national searches to fill all tenure-track lines, thus transforming what was essentially a locally staffed English department into one with national visibility. Along the way, significant hires were made in composition and rhetoric, linguistics, British and American literature, postcolonial literature, creative writing, theory, and film studies. In 1999, for a variety of institutional reasons, creative writing became a separate department; film studies established a separate department in 2005.

In 1989 under the leadership of Chair Robert Byington, the department began a graduate program leading to an MA in English. Barbara Waxman was the first coordinator, overseeing the development of curriculum, the admissions process, and the design of the first program for the training of teaching assistants. The early MA curriculum was aimed at producing graduates with abilities in literature, composition, and theory and providing advanced training for high school English teachers.

In 1997, a more specialized track in critical literacy was added to the MA program in English. For several years, there were two distinct tracks for the English MA, each with different requirements: the literature concentration and the critical literacy concentration. However, the
critical literacy track was eliminated early in Lewis Walker’s tenure as graduate coordinator, which began in Fall of 2002 and ended in December of 2005, establishing a commitment to fostering a general MA degree in English Studies that provides maximum flexibility for students.

In Spring of 2006, Barbara Waxman resumed the position of graduate coordinator and developed explicit guidelines, timelines, and suggestions for students and their thesis committees designed to enable students to more effectively complete their thesis work. Also during Waxman’s tenure, the graduate committee developed a process for assessing student learning outcomes.

New hires in recent years have resulted in the addition of new courses, including ENG 564: Studies in Children’s/YA Literature and ENG 510: Theory and Practice of Cultural Studies, as well as other topics course offerings in popular culture.

Since the last program review in 2002, substantive changes were made to the content and procedures for the administration of the comprehensive examination. Students now study texts from a common reading list that is created annually by the graduate committee and is comprised of four theoretical texts and eight primary texts. An anonymous examination committee selected by the graduate coordinator creates the examination, evaluates each student’s performance, and reports the results to the coordinator. Each student’s exam undergoes blind review. These changes have resulted in greater standardization and objectivity in the assessment of students’ achievements on the comprehensive examination.

In terms of admissions, the graduate committee under the guidance of Barbara Waxman developed a point system for evaluating applications that assigns points to various elements, including students’ writing samples, statements of interest, GRE scores, GPA, and letters of recommendation. These same criteria are employed in awarding teaching assistantships and scholarships.

Finally, in the last two years, the graduate committee developed an indirect assessment tool, an exit survey, administered to graduating MA students to gauge their experience in and impressions of the program. In the first year, the survey was sent out to alumni and the returns were poor. In the second year more data was collected as the survey was given to each student at the end of their thesis defense.

In July 2008, Colleen Reilly became graduate coordinator. Thus far, under her leadership, the graduate program’s website has been revised and updated, the graduate handbook has been updated and completely redesigned, and a policy for awarding points to faculty for work with students on their theses and on the comprehensive examination committee has been developed and adopted.

In recent years, the revitalized Graduate English Association has also been a factor in energizing the intellectual and social lives of our graduate students. A member of the GEA has served on the graduate committee for the past several years to give voice to students’ needs and curricular interests. GEA members have arranged talks by faculty, workshops on a variety of topics, and
group sessions to prepare for the comprehensive exam. For the past four years students have successfully staged a graduate student conference widely attended by graduate students from UNCW and from other institutions in the region.

2. Findings of and responses to previous reviews

The most recent review of the graduate program was performed in 2002 under the supervision of the graduate coordinator, Janet Ellerby. This review examined the program from 1996-2002.

The 2002 self-study report noted graduate faculty workload as a particular problem, along with an inadequate number of teaching assistantships. While faculty and administration generally agreed with this assessment, neither of these problems has been adequately addressed. Our number of teaching assistantships has increased by one in the past five years.

This review also articulated as goals the hiring of more faculty in professional writing, the potential development of a graduate-level concentration in professional writing, and the fostering of better facilities and programs for cohesion among graduate students. We were able to hire one additional faculty member in professional writing in 2005 and one in journalism in 2008; efforts to hire and retain additional faculty in this area are still ongoing. We were given a faculty line for an assistant professor in professional writing area this year and have received a great number of applications for that position.

Since 2002, we have added faculty in children’s literature, rhetoric and composition, and cultural studies; however, the positions in children’s literature and rhetoric and composition replaced retiring faculty in those fields. Recent retirements in linguistics leave gaps in our graduate faculty ranks. In addition, the significant numbers of faculty who have either taken research or family leave or who have lost graduate status in the years since the previous report have further hampered efforts to expand our base of productive graduate faculty.

The 2002 external program review, performed by Thomas McLaughlin of Appalachian State University and Karyn Sproles of James Madison University, was less concerned with faculty workload, noting the greatest need of the program to be obtaining additional teaching assistantships. In addition, McLaughlin and Sproles commented that composition class sizes were far too large, physical facilities for graduate teaching assists were inadequate, policies were sometimes unclear, MFA students burdened the department with training and supervision tasks, and, significantly, assessment procedures (of student progress, curricular effectiveness, and program goals) needed to be developed.

McLaughlin and Sproles recommended that the graduate program continue the curriculum revision efforts that the department had recently completed at the undergraduate level. Specifically, they recommended shifting from a two-track program to a single track with options to concentrate in Critical Literacy or in Professional Writing. They recommended a more systematic method of determining course offerings and more assistance and information be offered to students regarding career options other than teaching. Mentoring of junior faculty—in
particular, making explicit the differences in expectations between graduate and undergraduate courses—was also recommended. Additionally, the reviewers recommended that the MA program increase its involvement in interdisciplinary programs throughout the university and continue its involvement in the Master’s of Liberal Arts (MALS) program.

A separate set of recommendations from McLaughlin and Sproles lists specific resource needs of the program. These included additional assistantships and faculty positions, improved office and gathering spaces for graduate students, and increased technological resources. Additionally, the reviewers felt that the “department might consider proposing a certificate in Professional Writing with a new faculty line or two attached.”

Since these recommendations were made, the department’s efforts to meet them have yielded mixed results. Composition class sizes remain at least five students higher than the “nationally recognized standard” of 20 cited by McLaughlin and Sproles. Facilities for graduate students have seen some minor improvements, such as the relocation of teaching assistants from trailers to offices in the library, and several new policies have been recently formalized by the department—including, significantly, a standardized policy for awarding course releases to faculty based upon thesis advising and other service to the graduate program. As MFA students no longer routinely teach our writing courses, the need to train and supervise them has been alleviated. Most recently, the department has even had some success in obtaining an additional course release for thesis mentorship for the spring semester of 2009, though no commitments were made by the administration for subsequent semesters.

The graduate program has made some significant progress in its assessment efforts, both in assessing individual students’ preparedness to undertake the thesis project and in assessing the program’s effectiveness in meeting its goals. In 2005, the comprehensive exam created for MA students on an individual basis with idiosyncratic reading lists tailored to each student’s research interests became the MA comprehensive exam, given to all students with a common reading list. By creating a program-wide exam, we can assure consistency in the form and content of the examination, and students gain a broader view of the field and share a common experience that increases cohesiveness. Program assessment has also made great strides, with a new system for assessing theses, including common student learning outcomes (SLOs), in place since the spring of 2007. The university’s new assessment coordinator is also assisting with efforts to create and sustain a useful assessment program.

McLaughlin and Sproles’ recommendations that the graduate program consider curricular revisions resulted in even more significant revision than those they suggested: in 2004, the two tracks in the MA were eliminated. No concentrations were created in their place; all students must complete one course in either literary or rhetorical theory. Thanks to efforts by several faculty, especially Meghan Sweeney and Cara Cilano, more workshops and handouts have been created to offer students information and advising about career possibilities; these have been well-received. The method of selecting course offerings remains unchanged, although student advice about course offerings was solicited and acted upon in planning courses for 2008-2009. The department continues a limited involvement in the MALS program, and students can now
avail themselves of the new English as a Second Language certificate program; however, evidence of significant involvement and interest in this program has not yet been collected.

3. General program characteristics

3.1 General discussion:

The Department of English enrolls approximately forty students in its Master’s of Arts Program. Students, in consultation with their advisors, tailor their course schedules to their own career objectives and interests, selecting from a variety of courses in literature, rhetoric and composition, professional writing, literary theory, cultural studies, linguistics, and journalism.

The courses taught within the graduate program reflect the Department of English and university’s commitment to nurturing the cultural and intellectual development of students, while fostering skills in communication and analysis to prepare them for careers in a variety of fields. By regularly offering courses that emphasize multicultural subjects and the value of multiple viewpoints within historical and global contexts, the program models and teaches its students the advantages of rigorous, intellectual inquiry and an appreciation for the global community and its texts.

3.2 Curriculum description:

The MA in English requires a total of 30 hours of graduate coursework. All students take ENG 501: Introduction to Research Methods and either ENG 502: Introduction to Literary Theory or ENG 552: Rhetoric and Culture and six hours of thesis credit. In consultation with their advisors, the students individually choose seven other courses. All graduate courses emphasize rigorous intellectual inquiry; development of sustained, original, critical arguments; careful, considered reading and analysis of texts; the locating and assessment of appropriate primary and secondary research; and the development of ease and facility in public speaking and the expression of ideas. Our program encourages students to work proactively to make connections between their courses and to recognize how the skills and subjects they are learning build on and illuminate each other. Our philosophy consists of encouraging students’ intellectual development by nurturing the academic skills they need and then giving them the freedom to pursue their own intellectual interests either in additional coursework or when writing a thesis.

The 30 hours of coursework required for the MA degree must be distributed according to the following guidelines:

- 24 of the required 30 hours must be taken in residence.
- Six of the 30 hours will be dedicated to writing the thesis, which is generally a two-semester project. While working on the thesis, students enroll in three hours of ENG 599: Thesis each semester.

Each semester approximately 7-9 graduate courses are offered (see Appendix A for a complete list of graduate courses and enrollments in each course from Spring 2002 through Fall 2008). In
the fall semester, ENG 501: Introduction to Research Methods in English and ENG 502: Introduction to Literary Theory are offered. In the spring semester, ENG 552: Rhetoric and Culture and ENG 503: Theory and Practice of Teaching Composition are offered. ENG 503 is required for all teaching assistants. There is usually one graduate course offered during the first summer session. Elective courses typically offered include ENG 511: Studies in the Novel, ENG 551: Topics in Professional Writing, ENG 560: Topics in British Literature, ENG 572: Topics in Literary Criticism, and ENG 580: Studies in Literature. The following is a sample course of study:

1st semester: ENG 501, ENG 502, and one other ENG course
2nd semester: ENG 503, ENG 552, and one other ENG course
3rd semester: Comprehensive Exam during the third weekend of the semester, 1-2 elective courses, and ENG 599
4th semester: ENG 599

Educational objectives:

- Introduce students to the major theoretical issues and topics in English studies relating to language; literature; literacy; rhetoric and composition; professional, technical, and electronic writing; pedagogy; journalism; and critical theory
- Model for and teach how to engage in rigorous intellectual inquiry
- Teach students how to develop sustained, original, critical arguments
- Teach careful, considered reading and analysis of texts
- Teach students how to locate and to assess appropriate primary and secondary research
- Encourage ease and facility in public speaking and the expression of ideas
- Prepare students for further graduate work leading to the Ph.D.
- Offer advanced research and educational opportunities

Programmatic goals:
The following goals were listed in the 2002 self-study. Goals with asterisks beside them have been accomplished.

Curriculum

- Continuously review and update our master’s program so it reflects current thinking in English Studies*

Teaching

- Develop more effective and comprehensive ways to measure, encourage and reward good teaching*
• Offer departmental workshops focused on teaching*
• Encourage the use of technology in our classes*
• Obtain sufficient additional classrooms to cover the number of sections we must offer
• Improve the attractiveness and versatility of our classroom space*
• Provide more classrooms with multimedia capabilities, including internet access*

**Students**

• Foster a greater sense of community among English majors [and English MAs]*
• Provide them with increased educational and social opportunities outside the classroom such as outside research and attendance at conferences*
• Attract more graduate students from outside the region
• Obtain more funding for graduate scholarships and assistantships*
• Review and, where appropriate, expand the library’s holdings in English. Encourage coordination with the library*
• Track English-major [and MA] job placement to enable better advising and to guide curricular decisions*

**Faculty**

• Improve salaries of graduate faculty to obtain equity with comparable departments in the college and with other English departments in the country*
• Provide all faculty, including teaching assistants, with full access to telephone and computer communications and space for student conferences*
• Compensate research-active faculty with greater release time. Provide release time for untenured junior faculty for research.
• Provide adequate rewards to make departmental administrative positions attractive to faculty*

### 3.3 Unique aspects of the program

One of the benefits of our small MA program is that it allows for closer interaction between faculty and MA students than occurs in larger programs focused on awarding doctoral degrees. Small programs such as ours maintain a commitment to individual attention for students. As Table 1 below indicates, the enrollment in our graduate courses is often below 15, increasing the ability of students to interact one-on-one with faculty members and obtain thoughtful and individualized feedback on their work.
Table 1: Total number of graduate courses offered each semester, average number of students per course, Spring 2002-Fall 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses</th>
<th>S 02</th>
<th>F 02</th>
<th>S03</th>
<th>F03</th>
<th>S04</th>
<th>F04</th>
<th>S05</th>
<th>F05</th>
<th>S06</th>
<th>F06</th>
<th>S07</th>
<th>F 07</th>
<th>S08</th>
<th>F 08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of seats occupied in courses*</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of courses offered</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of students per course</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>9.75</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*excludes ENG 591, 596, 598, 599

Our program is also unique in that we have specialists within a number of sub-disciplines of English studies, including literature, rhetoric and composition, professional writing, and, most recently, journalism. Our diverse faculty provide students with a survey of all that the field of English has to offer. As section 9 below reflects, our faculty our remarkably productive and engaged in scholarly endeavors despite their relatively heavy teaching and service expectations.

As an MA-only program, we offer students the ability to complete a master’s thesis, something that larger doctoral programs cannot allow. The thesis project gives students an opportunity to apply all they have learned and create a product on which they can build for publication or further study.

Our mentoring program for teaching assistants is also distinctive in providing the students with an entire year of mentoring with an experienced faculty member prior to teaching on their own. Students teach their own courses in their second year, and all are allowed to teach two different courses, one each semester, providing them with a greater depth of experience. Our graduated program affords students excellent preparation in all aspects of classroom teaching prior to allowing them the opportunity to teach their own courses. Additionally, students develop strong relationships with their mentors during the first year, thus giving them an additional resource to turn to for help and advice during their second year.

Finally, our very active GEA allows students to develop leadership skills and create their own scholarly communities. The GEA sponsors workshops run by faculty and support personnel from the library and career services on a range of topics related to research and professional development. They also, as mentioned above, organize an annual graduate student conference. Their monthly meetings are well attended and provide a social outlet for students. The size and intimacy of the program makes the GEA a very significant organization that plays an important role in the department.

4. Certification, interdisciplinary, and other programs

Graduate faculty in English participate in such undergraduate interdisciplinary minors as Environmental Studies, Post-Colonial Studies, Women’s Studies, Film Studies, Native-American Studies, as well as the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies and the Master of Fine Arts in Creative
Writing programs. English studies by nature encourages an interdisciplinary approach to written texts that incorporates historical, sociological, psychological, philosophical and other disciplinary perspectives. Likewise, the spectrum of contemporary literary theory draws upon an equally broad range of disciplinary perspectives, including, but by no means limited to history, sociology, psychology, economics, women’s studies, communication and media studies, and linguistics.

English graduate faculty, whether teaching on an undergraduate or graduate level, therefore model any number of disciplinary vantage points in their presentation and analysis of written texts, which may range from Elizabethan drama and Victorian novels to film, television soap operas, comic strips, and magazine ads. The professional writing component of the undergraduate and graduate English curricula likewise draws upon a variety of disciplinary perspectives, including rhetoric, linguistics, ethics, sociology, organizational communication, teaching with technologies, and media studies.

The English graduate program’s commitment to interdisciplinarity is further evidenced by the fact that students are encouraged to take courses outside of the English graduate curriculum; students are permitted to enroll in one graduate course outside of English with approval of the graduate coordinator and can avail themselves of graduate courses in history, graduate liberal studies, Spanish, and creative writing. In addition, students in the Master’s of Arts in Liberal Studies program, the MA program in Environmental Studies, the Master of Education (MEd) program, the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) program, and the licensure program in teaching English as a second language are allowed to, and in the case of the English MAT program required to, take relevant elective hours in the English MA program.

Graduate students also participate in internships at a variety of educational, business, and governmental agencies, enrolling in ENG 598: Internship in Applied English Studies. Students have worked and are currently working at a variety of educational institutions and community organizations, including Cape Fear Community College, Brunswick Community College, James Sprunt Community College, the Wilmington Literacy Council, Cape Fear River Watch, and Encore Magazine. Such participation not only reflects the English MA program’s commitment to applied learning, but further reflects an active service-oriented commitment to the university’s regional outreach mission.

5. Facilities

The facilities available to our graduate program include extensive resources and programming through Randall Library and the Career Center; departmental materials, workshops and course offerings; technology and office space; and a thriving Graduate English Association. Resources for research include numerous holdings at Randall Library, computer labs, and an excellent interlibrary loan system. With access to Project Muse, JSTOR, and many other online databases, students have the opportunity for in-depth scholarly research on or off campus. Randall Library also provides a variety of other services to graduate students. The STAR
(Student Thesis Assistance @ Randall) program, a “one-on-one guidance and support system for graduate students,” offers thesis guidance with a “personal librarian.”

Our program supplies students with a handbook as well as guides to writing the thesis and applying to Ph.D. programs. Numerous resources for finding careers post-graduation are available at the Career Center. Furthermore, graduate faculty regularly offer students workshops on applying to Ph.D. programs, writing resumes and curriculum vitae, publishing articles, and other topics that foster students’ intellectual development.

Every semester, we offer approximately seven to nine graduate courses. Each course is capped at fifteen and the average number of students in each course is approximately twelve (see Table 1 above for specific information regarding numbers of courses and course enrollments and Appendix A for a complete listing of course offerings). Students also have the opportunity to be involved with our internship program, which matches up those who are interested with venues that best meet their needs, including our own Writing Services housed in the University Learning Center.

Many of our graduate classes are held in smart classrooms (which include internet connections, VCRs, DVD players, and projectors) or in our computer classroom. One of our graduate seminar rooms, renovated in 2008, also features a smart board. Recently, the public spaces committee has begun to make Morton Hall, which is slated for renovation in 2012, more functional and attractive. We hope to involve graduate students in this process.

In the past few years, the Graduate English Association (GEA) has become a vibrant student organization with the help of motivated current students and devoted alumni. Students gather for social events, comprehensive examination study groups, and thesis work groups. Not only does the GEA serve as a support network, it provides students with the sense of being a part of an academic community. For each of the past three years, English graduate students have taken on the task of organizing and hosting an academic conference at UNCW. A sign of their ever-growing professionalism, these conferences require students to schedule guest speakers, invite graduate students from other universities, assess abstracts, develop a program, and present papers. Students have also been traveling to conferences in the region such as graduate student conferences at UNC Charlotte and the University of Virginia and, in 2008, the American Literature Association Symposium in Savannah, Georgia. They may apply for Graduate School and Graduate Student Association travel grants as to help fund these scholarly pursuits.

Finding adequate space for our students outside of class remains a serious concern. Ideally, graduate students should have their own meeting place; however, due to space limitations in Morton Hall and at UNCW generally, this is not currently possible. Furthermore, teaching assistants are often required to share offices with three or even four others. We would like to see the number of offices increased, and we would like these offices to be in Morton Hall. Our current composition coordinator, Anthony Atkins, has done all he can to make sure that TAs have access to computers by working with our Technology Assistance Center and obtaining additional laptops, but adequate access to this equipment is an ongoing challenge.
6. Personnel

Listed below are all tenured and tenure-track faculty by name, graduate institution, date hired, and teaching and research interests. An asterisk beside the name indicates that the faculty member has graduate faculty status.

Professors

John P. Clifford*, Ph.D. New York University; 1978
Composition and rhetorical theory; critical theory; postmodern fiction

Janet M. Ellerby*, Ph.D. University of Washington; 1990
Critical theory; autobiography/memoir; Modernism

Christopher Gould*, Ph.D. University of South Carolina; 1986
Composition; American literature; Eighteenth-century literature

Keith Newlin*, Ph.D. Indiana University; 1992
Nineteenth-Twentieth-century American literature; drama

Lee Schweninger*, Ph.D. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; 1985
Nineteenth-century American literature; American Indian literatures

Lewis Walker*, Ph.D., University of Virginia; 1980
Renaissance Drama, especially Shakespeare; Milton; late medieval, especially Chaucer

Barbara Waxman*, Ph.D. City University of New York; 1983
Multicultural American autobiography (food memoir); literary gerontology; American Latino literature; Victorian literature

Michael Wentworth,* Ph.D. Bowling Green State University; 1983
British Renaissance literature; American studies; popular culture

Associate Professors

Diana Ashe*, Ph.D. Texas A & M University; 2000
Rhetoric; discourse analysis; professional writing

William D. Atwill, PhD. Duke University; 1990
American Modernism and Post-Modernism; American Realism

Mark Boren*, Ph. D. University of Georgia; 2003
Nineteenth-century American literature; psychoanalysis and literature
Donald E. Bushman, Ph.D. University of Tennessee; 1994
Composition theory; history of rhetoric; writing across the curriculum

Cara Cilano*, Ph.D. Duquesne University; 2001
Postcolonial literatures; critical theory

Lu Ellen Huntley, Ed.D. North Carolina State University; 1994
English education; literacy studies

Paula Kamenish*, Ph.D. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; 1992
Comparative literatures and cultures; literature in translation

Katherine Montwieler*, Ph.D. University of Georgia; 2000
Eighteenth-century British literature; Nineteenth-century British literature

Daniel Noland, Ph.D. University of Texas; 1987
Linguistics; nature, environmental, scientific literature

Colleen A. Reilly*, Ph.D. Purdue University; 2001
Professional writing; electronic composition, citation, and publication; computer gaming and literacy

Kathy Rugoff, Ph.D. Florida State University; 1988
Modern and contemporary American and British poetry; interconnections between literary texts, music, and the visual arts

Assistant Professors

Anthony Atkins*, Ph.D. Ball State University; 2005
Rhetoric and composition; technology and writing; professional writing

Janis Chakars*, Ph.D. Indiana University; 2008
Journalism, international communication, media history

Tiffany Gilbert*, Ph.D. University of Virginia; 2006
Twentieth-century American literature and culture

Nicolas Laudadio*, Ph.D. State University of New York, Buffalo; 2006
Science fiction and film; cultural studies; literary theory

Katie Peel*, Ph.D. University of Connecticut; 2008
Children’s and young adult literatures; Victorian literatures; queer studies
Kristen Seas*, Ph.D. Purdue University; 2008
  Rhetorical theory and history; composition studies; gender and cultural studies

Meghan Sweeney*, Ph.D. State University of New York, Buffalo; 2003
  Children's and adolescent literature; critical theory

See Appendix B for abbreviated curriculum vitae for each faculty member listed above. Graduate faculty status is also indicated on the curriculum vitae.

Non-tenure track faculty

Joyce Hollingsworth (Ph.D., University of North Carolina at Greensboro) a full-time lecturer, has served on a number of thesis committees in the last two years due to the extraordinary number of graduate faculty on leave over this period.

Staff

Will Wilkinson, Associate Director of the University Learning Center and Writing Services Program Coordinator assists in the training and supervision of teaching assistants who work as tutors in Writing Services during their first year.

We have no research assistants.

The office has three administrative staff members who assist faculty in the following manner:

  Jane Bullock is an Administrative Specialist who oversees all department office operations. She maintains the budget under the direction of the department chair, supervises two staff, assigns offices to part-time faculty, orders furniture, and is liaison for the department with the College of Arts and Sciences, Academic Affairs, Human Resources, and other campus departments and units.

  Donna Carlton is the Administrative Support Associate who works most closely with the graduate program. She arranges for travel authorization and reimbursement, assists with the coordination of student advising, assists the Administrative Specialist with scheduling and budget duties, manages work study student office assistants, orders textbooks and desk copies, coordinates student evaluations, and helps with purchasing.

  Open position: Administrative Support Associate whose primary duties include maintaining the departmental websites, bulletin boards, and audio-visual equipment. This individual also will design all departmental publications, assist faculty with technology-related projects, maintain the inventory of supplies, and report problems with classroom and offices spaces to Facilities Management or Technical Support.
7. Graduate students

7.1 Data about applicants and students admitted to the program

As Table 2 indicates, we generally receive between 20-25 applications each year for Fall admission. The number of applicants admitted ranges from 16-22. Our acceptance rate (as a percentage) generally falls in the high 60s to low 70s, for Fall enrollment, with a low in 2004 and a spike in 2007.

The percentage of students admitted who actually enroll has decreased in recent years, partly because our ability to enroll qualified students, especially from out-of-state, is hampered by our small number of teaching assistantships, small fund of scholarship money, and the requirement that all students pay tuition.

Table 2: Number of applicants, students admitted, and students enrolling, Spring 2002-Fall 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S 02</th>
<th>F 02</th>
<th>S 03</th>
<th>F 03</th>
<th>S 04</th>
<th>F 04</th>
<th>S 05</th>
<th>F 05</th>
<th>S 06</th>
<th>F 06</th>
<th>S 07</th>
<th>F 07</th>
<th>S 08</th>
<th>F 08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of applicants</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students admitted</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of applicants admitted</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students enrolling</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of admitted students enrolling</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data in Table 3 below indicate that students we accept generally have a verbal GRE score in the mid-to-high 500s. The average score of accepted students has not changed in a consistent manner over the last six years.

Table 3: Average verbal GRE scores of students accepted, Spring 2002-Fall 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average verbal GRE score</td>
<td>507</td>
<td>535</td>
<td>556</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>536</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>581</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The undergraduate grade point averages of the students who enroll in our program generally average in the 3.5 range, with some higher and some slightly lower.
Table 4: Average undergraduate GPAs of students enrolling, Fall 2001-Fall 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average GPA</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>3.45</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>3.70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our program enrolls mostly white, female students from North Carolina. This trend has not changed very much over the last six years. In 2004-2005, we admitted an almost equal number of resident and nonresident students, although the numbers of nonresident students has dropped again in recent years.

Table 5: Ethnicity, gender, and residency information about students admitted into the MA program, Fall 2001-Fall 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity*</td>
<td>B: 1</td>
<td>W: 16</td>
<td>B: 1</td>
<td>W: 17</td>
<td>H: 1</td>
<td>W: 16</td>
<td>W: 20</td>
<td>B: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>W: 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M: 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency***</td>
<td>R: 14</td>
<td>N: 3</td>
<td>R: 15</td>
<td>N: 3</td>
<td>R: 13</td>
<td>N: 5</td>
<td>R: 17</td>
<td>R: 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N: 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*B=black, H=Hispanic, W=White, U=Unknown; **F=Female, M=Male; ***R=Resident, N=Nonresident

As Table 6 below indicates, we generally draw students from undergraduate institutions in North Carolina, with some students coming from other institutions in the South and a few from the Midwest.

Table 6: Undergraduate institutions of admitted students, Fall 2006-Fall 2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate institutions*</td>
<td>Carthage College Coastal Carolina University Illinois State University Mount Union College North Carolina State University of Georgia UNCW (7)</td>
<td>Elon University Spelman College North Carolina State University of Georgia University of Maryland College Park University of North Carolina Chapel Hill UNCW (10) Vanderbilt University Virginia Polytechnic Institute (Virginia Tech)</td>
<td>Appalachian State University North Carolina State University of Florida University of North Carolina Chapel Hill University of North Carolina Pembroke UNCW (7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*records do not list an institution for all students prior to 2006; the number of students from each school is listed in parentheses if there were multiple students from that institution
7.2 Recruitment efforts and admission criteria

Most students learn about our program initially from our website. In an effort to enhance the efficacy of this passive recruitment vehicle, we have recently updated the website, making it easier to navigate. Additionally, we have redesigned the graduate handbook to make it a more visually appealing and informational marketing tool. Furthermore, we recently created a new information poster to mail to other institutions and distribute at college/graduate school fairs. Previous coordinators have attended college/graduate school fairs at other North Carolina institutions to engage in recruiting. We also recruit a significant number of MA students from among our undergraduate students largely through the appealing educational environment created in our undergraduate courses.

Our admission criteria have remained largely the same, although, since the last review, we developed a point system in an attempt to normalize the review of applications. Students submit the following materials with their applications:

1. An application for graduate admission
2. Official transcripts of all college work (undergraduate and graduate)
3. Official scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) not more than five years old
4. Three recommendations (forms are provided with the application) from individuals in professionally relevant fields, addressing the applicant’s demonstrated academic skills and/or potential for successful graduate study
5. An essay that addresses the applicant’s purpose for graduate study (English Essay Form is included with the application)
6. Evidence of a Bachelor’s degree at the time of entrance
7. A ten-page analytical writing sample that includes a bibliography citing secondary sources in MLA format.

Points are awarded to the various elements in the application according to the following guidelines:

- **GPA:** 1 point for each .10 above 3.00 in GPA; -1 for each .10 below 3.00 in GPA
- **GRE verbal scores:** 1 point for each 10 points above 500 on verbal GRE; -1 for each 10 points below 500 on verbal GRE
- **GRE analytical writing sample:** 1 point for each .5 above 4.0; -1 for each .5 at 4.0 and below
- **Letters of recommendation:** 2 points for each Highly Recommend letter (Recommend with Enthusiasm); 1 point for each Recommend Without Reservation (Recommend with Confidence); 0 points for Recommend with Reservation or other designations
• **Statement of Interest:** 2 points for a thoughtful, well-crafted statement addressing academic/professional goals; 1 point for a solid statement; 0 points for a statement that has some conventional errors or wanders off topic; –1 for a statement that has a number of errors and fails to address the topic requested; -2 for a statement with many conventional errors and little redeeming content

• **Writing sample:** 3 points for an outstanding argument that cites a number of secondary sources effectively and in correct MLA format; 2 points for a solid argument that cites a few sources effectively and correctly; 1 point for a paper of the correct length that cites few sources; and 0 points for a paper under ten pages, citing no sources

In Fall 2008, the graduate committee revised the point system to make the addition and subtraction of points more uniform across criteria, adding a subtraction of points for a substandard writing sample, for example. We intend to continue the use of this revised ranking system going forward as it has allowed us to better compare applications for the purposes of awarding teaching assistantships and scholarship monies.

7.3 **Retention rates and advising efforts**

Since the last self-study, our retention rates (stated as a percentage) have been increasing slightly from the high 80s to the mid-to-high 90s in recent years. See Table 7 below.

**Table 7: Numbers of graduate student enrolled, graduated, and retained Spring 2002- Fall 2008**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>S 02</th>
<th>F 02</th>
<th>S 03</th>
<th>F 03</th>
<th>S 04</th>
<th>F 04</th>
<th>S 05</th>
<th>F 05</th>
<th>S 06</th>
<th>F 06</th>
<th>S 07</th>
<th>F 07</th>
<th>S 08</th>
<th>F 08</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of students enrolled</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new students</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students graduated</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of students retained</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>97%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graduate faculty and the graduate coordinator help students succeed in our program by working closely with them while in our courses and writing their theses. The graduate handbook provides a clear delineation of the milestones students must achieve and provides advice about how they might approach them (see Appendix C for the Graduate Handbook). Individual faculty have also developed handouts for students about preparing for and taking the comprehensive examination and successfully completing a thesis. When proposing a thesis and filing the appropriate paperwork with the graduate coordinator, students are encouraged to develop timelines for their projects to help them adhere to a schedule for their work.
New students receive individual advising from the graduate coordinator prior to registering for courses. While the Graduate School has recently made this advising voluntary for returning students by removing registration codes for all graduate students, the graduate coordinator encourages any student seeking advice to meet with her. Our streamlined curriculum, involving relatively few required courses and no tracks or categories, proves to be easily comprehended by students.

Students also use the GEA to support and assist one another in successfully navigating the program. Members of the GEA organize study sessions for students preparing to take the comprehensive examination. Additionally, the GEA often organizes informational sessions on thesis writing.

Finally, graduate students can take advantage of research support programs offered by Randall Library each semester. These programs focus on a range of skills including database research strategies, using interlibrary loan, and locating and evaluating other electronic sources. Additionally, as mentioned above, the library provides the Student Thesis Assistance @ Randall (STAR) program. Students are paired with a dedicated librarian who has knowledge of their subject area and assists them in using all library resources to successfully develop and complete their thesis projects.

7.4 Financial support for and facilities available to students

As Table 8 below reflects, our number of teaching assistants and the compensation they receive have been steadily increasing since 2006.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of TAs</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding per student</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td>$8,500</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>$9,000</td>
<td>$9,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total TA funds</td>
<td>$68,000</td>
<td>$68,000</td>
<td>$68,000</td>
<td>$68,000</td>
<td>$81,000</td>
<td>$81,000</td>
<td>$95,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to teaching assistantships, our students are eligible for other scholarships and tuition remissions. Table 9 outlines the scholarship funds allocated to the Department of English by the Graduate School for several academic years. The total amount of these funds has also been steadily increasing. The English MA generally receives one New Scholar Award per academic year. The Graduate Tuition Remissions are designated for out-of-state students who are awarded a teaching assistantship to pay the out-of-state portions of their tuition. The Graduate Tuition Scholarships are awarded in varying amounts to off-set in-state tuition for a number of students accepted into the program in a given academic year. Finally, the Alton Lennon Yates Scholarship is a departmental scholarship that is awarded to one outstanding applicant per year. Our departmental benefactor, Charles F. Green III, established this scholarship, which was first awarded in 1998-1999. Mr. Green has generously increased funding for this award each year.
Table 9: Scholarship funds available for English MA applicants per academic year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total funds to award per year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awards</strong></td>
<td>2004-05 2005-06 2008-09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Scholar Award</strong></td>
<td>1 @ $1,000 1 @ $1,000 1 @ $1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate Tuition Remissions</strong></td>
<td>Cost of out-of-state tuition Cost of out-of-state tuition 2 @ $10,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate Tuition Scholarships</strong></td>
<td>$7,500 $8,500 $9,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alton Lennon Yates Scholarship</strong></td>
<td>$2,500 $3,800 $5,400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our students are also eligible to be nominated for a number of very competitive scholarships and fellowships offered through the Graduate School and funded by outside donors, including the Jane Logan Lackey Scholarship ($1,100 per year); the Sylvia and B.D. Schwartz Graduate Fellowship ($2,100 per year); and the Lacy C. and Doris L. Sidbury Fellowship ($1,100).

In terms of travel funding, students can apply for Graduate School Grants of up to $400 to travel to present a paper, participate in a panel discussion, or give a poster presentation at a professional conference. Students are also eligible to apply for Graduate Student Association Travel Grants of up to $240 to attend professional conferences, workshops, or to complete thesis research. These grants are designed to reward excellence in scholarship and to increase the visibility of the UNCW’s graduate programs within their academic communities. Faculty advisors regularly inform students about the existence of these travel funds and provide support for students’ applications. Starting in Spring 2009, graduate students will be able to participate in the Wentworth Travel Fellowship program previously available only to undergraduate students. This travel fellowship is funded by our departmental patron, Mr. Charles Green. Each student may apply for funds up to $1,500 to travel to sites in the United States and abroad relevant to the writers, works of literature, or literary movements they wish to study.

As mentioned above, we have limited space available for graduate students’ gathering spaces and offices for teaching assistants. Our situation reflects the space constraints on the campus as a whole. While our teaching assistants have been moved out of temporary trailers shared with students from biology, they still occupy crowded offices in Morton Hall and in Randall Library. Graduate students do not have their own lounge space; however, they utilize the Faculty Commons in Morton Hall for GEA meetings and have access to a graduate student computer lab in Randall Library as a research space. As a student organization, the GEA is eligible to schedule a myriad of other meeting spaces on campus. Additionally, graduate students can use a growing number of common study and meeting spaces throughout the campus, particularly the newly renovated union and the study/coffee lounge in Randall Library.

Our highest priority needs relate to funding for teaching assistantships and tuition scholarships. For the 2008-2009 academic year, we lost at least three outstanding applicants because the
amount of support we could offer to them was insufficient or could not compete with offers from other institutions. In order to compete for the best candidates, we need to offer them competitive financial packages.

7.5 Students’ time to degree, awards, and placement

From 2005 to the present, as Table 10 demonstrates, our average time to degree varies from 2.4 to 2.8 years. Many of our students work either part-time or full-time while completing their MAs, which accounts for the slower average pace.

Table 10: Average time to degree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of students graduating</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18*</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time to degree (yrs.)</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longest time</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortest time</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*includes Fall and Spring graduates

In contrast, Table 11 shows that our teaching assistants almost universally graduate in 2 years, indicating that with adequate financial support allowing them to focus on their work and studies, our students proceed to degree within the recommended time frame.

Table 11: Average time to degree for TAs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of TAs graduating</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average time to degree (yrs.)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Our students are engaging in important scholarly activities, including presenting papers at a range of conferences and publishing articles. Below is a list of the conferences at which our students presented during the past four academic years. Also included are any students’ publications and awards for the same time frames.

2004-2005

Conferences:

American Literature Association Conference, San Francisco, May 2004
Graduate student conference, Southern Connecticut State University, March 2005
Graduate English Association Conference, University of North Carolina Charlotte, January 2005 (3 students presented)
Conference at Val-Richer, France, September 2004
Awards:


Winner of Best Poster Award, New Hanover Regional Medical Center Research Fair: Kelly Porter, “The Frequency and Function of the Passive Voice in Nurses’ Progress Notes.” November 2, 2004

Publications:


2005-2006

Conferences:

Southern Writers, Southern Writing, Graduate Student Conference, Oxford, MS, July 2005

British Commonwealth and Postcolonial Studies Conference, Savannah, GA, February 2006 (3 students presented)

“Title Effects,” Graduate Student Conference, University of North Carolina Wilmington, April 2006 (8+ students presented)

Awards:

UNCW Writing Center Tutor Award: Neeley Gossett and Jay Whitaker

2006-2007

Conferences:

Graduate English Association Conference, University of North Carolina Charlotte, January 2007 (2 students presented)

“Sea Change: Evolution of Text and Its Reception,” Graduate Student Conference, University of North Carolina Wilmington, March 2007 (17 students presented)

American Literature Association Conference, Boston, May 2007

Publications:

2007-2008

Conferences:

Graduate English Association Conference, University of North Carolina Charlotte, Spring 2008
Pennsylvania College English Association Conference, Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA, Spring 2008
Graduate Student English Association Conference, University of Virginia, March 2008
Graduate Student Conference, University of North Carolina Wilmington, April 2008 (8+ students presented)
Annual Shakespeare Symposium, Cal State University, April 2008
American Literature Association Symposium on American Fiction, Savannah, October 2008 (2 students presented)

Post-graduation pursuits

Upon graduation, our MA students pursue a variety of careers and work for a range of organizations and businesses. Below are the immediate placements of graduates of which we are aware during the past four years.

2004-2005

Adjunct teacher, North Hennepin Community College, MN
Doctoral student, City University of New York, NY
Part-time instructor, University of North Carolina Wilmington (3 students)
Teacher, West Mecklenberg High School, Charlotte, NC
Test grader, Measurement Inc.

2005-2006

Doctoral student, University of Maryland, Baltimore, MD
Doctoral student, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL
Doctoral student, University of North Carolina Greensboro, Greensboro, NC
Master’s student, Public Administration Program, UNCW
Part-time instructor, Costal Carolina Community College, Jacksonville, NC
2006-2007

Doctoral student, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana PA
Doctoral student, Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL
Doctoral student, University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH

2007-2008

Instructor, Cape Fear Community College, Wilmington, NC
Part-time instructor, Costal Carolina Community College, Jacksonville, NC
Part-time instructor, UNCW (7 students)

7.6 Outcomes assessment for the MA in English

We use the thesis, the culminating academic experience for the MA student in the English graduate program, as the artifact we assess to determine if our students have developed the skills and the knowledge covered by our student learning outcomes (SLOs). These SLOs are as follows:

Learning Outcome #1: Student should be able to conduct sustained research and compare the arguments of scholars with understanding.
1. Student uses an appropriate number of secondary sources.
2. Student cites an appropriate variety of secondary sources throughout the thesis.
3. When appropriate, student synthesizes secondary sources.

Learning Outcome #2: Student should possess the ability to engage with critical theories in the interpretation of texts.
1. Student demonstrates the understanding of at least one critical theory.
2. Student effectively employs critical theory as a way to understand texts.
3. Student demonstrates an understanding of the advantages and limitations of critical theory.
4. Student effectively demonstrates the conventions of integrating into the thesis the ideas and language of at least one appropriate critical theorist.

Learning Outcome #3: Student should be able to organize complex evidence to support a claim about texts and to argue persuasively for this claim.
1. Student presents and develops a clear claim about texts early in the thesis.
2. Student presents clear and complex ideas to serve as evidence in support of the primary claim.
3. Student’s use of evidence is responsible, logical, and organized.
4. Student’s argument is persuasive.

**Learning Outcome #4: Student should be able to cite or document scholarship accurately and construct a complete and properly formatted list of works cited.**

1. Student introduces citations according to appropriate scholarly conventions.
2. Student constructs a works cited list according to appropriate scholarly conventions.
3. Student’s list of works cited matches textual citations.

Members of the graduate committee examine one third of the theses of graduating MA students at the end of each calendar year, assessing them in terms of SLOs 1 and 2 in even-numbered years and 3 and 4 in odd-numbered years. Each thesis assessed as Excellent, Good, Fair, or Poor in terms of each sub-item under each SLO.

To date, we have completed two rounds of assessment of our MA theses: a pilot study in January 2007 of theses from students graduating in May 2006 and a full application in December 2007 of theses from students graduating in December 2006 and May 2007.

For the pilot study, the graduate committee assessed four theses using SLOs 1 and 2. At this time, each thesis was rated either Yes or No with regard to each sub-item under each SLO. Below is a summary of the results from the pilot study:

**Learning Outcome #1: Student should be able to conduct sustained research and compare the arguments of scholars with understanding**

1. Student uses an appropriate number of secondary sources: 12 Yes; 0 No
2. Student cites an appropriate variety of secondary sources throughout the thesis: 9 Yes; 3 No
3. When appropriate, student synthesizes secondary sources: 8 Yes; 3 No; 1 Maybe

The committee determined that this area of synthesizing secondary sources may need more attention in graduate courses. Some committee members also noted the lack of recent scholarship and excessive reliance on a small numbers of sources in a number of theses.

**Learning Outcome #2: Student should possess the ability to engage with critical theories in the interpretation of texts.**

1. Student demonstrates the understanding of at least one critical theory: 11 Yes; 1 No
2. Student effectively employs critical theory as a way to understand texts: 11 Yes; 1 No
3. Student demonstrates an understanding of the advantages and limitations of critical theory: 10 Yes; 2 No
4. Student effectively demonstrates the conventions of integrating into the thesis the ideas and language of at least one appropriate critical theorist: 9 Yes; 2 No; 1 Maybe

The committee determined that students seemed to do fairly well with this learning outcome, but some could use more work on how to integrate into the thesis the ideas and language of at least one critical theorist. This might involve more work on paraphrasing and summarizing the ideas of the theorist and more reflection on the implications of the theorist’s ideas as well as more active application of the ideas to the study of other texts and rhetorical practices. Students might need to think more about the limitations and advantages of using particular critical theories, and this kind of reflection could become an important element of our graduate classes.

Prior to the full application of the assessment criteria in December 2007, the graduate committee replaced the Yes/No rating system with the scale including Excellent/Good/Fair/Poor. For this full assessment, the committee examined six theses in light of SLOs #3 and 4.

**Learning Outcome #3: Student should be able to organize complex evidence to support a claim about texts and to argue persuasively for this claim.**

1. Student presents and develops a clear claim about texts early in the thesis: 14 Excellent; 16 Good; 6 Fair
2. Student presents clear and complex ideas to serve as evidence in support of the primary claim: 13 Excellent; 11 Good; 10 Fair; 2 Poor
3. Student’s use of evidence is responsible, logical, and organized: 15 Excellent; 14 Good; 6 Fair; 1 Poor
4. Student’s conclusion is effective: 15 Excellent; 13 Good; 8 Fair

**Learning Outcome #4: Student should be able to cite or document scholarship accurately and construct a complete and properly formatted list of works cited.**

1. Student introduces citations according to appropriate scholarly conventions: 19 Excellent; 13 Good; 4 Fair
2. Student constructs a works cited list according to appropriate scholarly conventions: 19 Excellent; 10 Good; 7 Fair
3. Student’s list of works cited matches textual citations: 18 Excellent; 15 Good; 3 Fair

Based on their assessment of the theses, the committee determined that the sub-items under SLO 4 were consistently achieved by students. However, they also determined that the skills covered in sub-items 2-4 of SLO 3 needed to be addressed more directly in courses and by thesis directors and readers.
Now that all four SLOs have been assessed and the committee has identified areas that need to be improved upon, we have a basis for assessing subsequent theses to determine if students’ work improves in the targeted areas.

Our assessment process appears to be productive and sustainable. The more detailed rating system also seems to have supplied the committee with more useful information.

7.7 Students’ responses to the program

In Spring 2008, seven of the fifteen graduating MA students completed an exit survey providing their responses to questions about the program, including advice for incoming students, suggestions for program materials and advising, responses to courses, and plans for using their degrees in the future. Below is a snapshot of their responses.

**Advice for incoming students**
- Become acquainted with how to find and use primary sources earlier in the process
- Work with fellow students to prepare for the comprehensive exam
- Focus your studies on your own goals
- Take an active role in the GEA
- Select courses wisely
- Start working on the thesis early

**Suggestions for program materials and advising**
- Found orientation and advising very helpful
- Would have liked to find out more about opportunities on campus to work and get involved
- Create more opportunities for new students to speak with graduating students
- Put the handbook in electronic format

**Responses to courses**
- Asserted that the most valuable courses include: ENG 501: Introduction to Research Methods in English; ENG 502: Introduction to Literary Theory; ENG 503: Theory and Practice of Teaching Composition; ENG 580: Studies in Literature: The Short Story; ENG 598: Internship in Applied English Studies
- Would have liked to have taken more courses related to professional writing
- Would like more courses in pedagogy related to literature as well as composition
• Would like more courses related to digital rhetoric

**Plans for the future**

• Continue teaching at the community college level (five students)
• Apply to PhD programs (three students)
• Pursue work in student affairs

As part of the information gathering for this report, the graduate committee met with five former and current students to discuss their responses to the MA program on November 20, 2008. The student representatives included two graduates from Spring 2008 who are currently teaching part time for the department, two current second-year students, and one first-year student who is also a teaching assistant. The responses of the students are outlined below.

**Positive aspects of the program**

• Appreciate the flexibility of the program resulting from few requirements
• Learned a great deal about what it means to study English
• View the cost of the program as reasonable

**Suggestions to improve the program**

• Suggest more focus in the form of classes and other activities on career paths other than teaching
• Make the availability and process for obtaining internships more apparent and accessible
• Offer more courses in rhetoric, professional writing, and pedagogy

Many of the students’ useful feedback and suggestions are reflected in the goals and objectives for development discussed in section 10 below.

**7.8 The role of teaching assistants in the graduate program**

Teaching assistants are tremendously important to the English curriculum. They provide excellent support as tutors in our Writing Services office in the University Learning Center. They are involved with our faculty search committees, attend regular composition program meetings, and meet with the composition coordinator frequently. They are also excellent teachers in their own right when, in their second year, they teach their own sections of ENG 101: College Writing and Reading I and ENG 201: College Writing and Reading II. Teaching assistants regularly get remarkably high evaluations on our SPOT (Student Perception of Teaching) instrument, often outshining tenured faculty. They are thoroughly committed to their students.
and to the teaching of writing and contribute to the culture of our department. They often work with faculty on research and service projects and attend regional and national conferences. Faculty often consult TAs for input concerning the graduate curriculum and the kinds of courses from which they would like to choose. The English department undergraduate and graduate students and faculty would benefit immensely from a greater allocation of teaching assistants. The TAs contribute a vibrant enthusiasm for teaching composition and focusing on student-centered pedagogies.

8. Affirmative action

Both previous coordinators during the period of this self study took steps to attempt to diversify the applicant pool for our MA program. Both made visits to other campuses in North Carolina containing significant numbers of minority students, such as UNC Pembroke, to inform and recruit potential applicants for our program. Additionally, Lewis Walker sent literature about the program to all campuses in the UNC system. Finally, in order to make the program more inviting for a variety of students, the coordinators attempted to balance the course offerings and include literature by and about underrepresented groups.

Going forward, our program certainly can expand its efforts to recruit minority students. One way of doing so is to use the McNair Senior Scholars Directory to which UNCW gained access this Fall. The Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program is the single largest federal effort to encourage and prepare low-income, first-generation in-college and minority students to pursue graduate education.

This database provides graduate programs with wide access to students interested in pursuing graduate work, including a list of recent graduates (graduated Spring 2008), graduating seniors (will graduate Fall 2008 to Spring 2009), and rising seniors (will graduate Fall 2009 to Spring 2010). It includes student names, contact information, undergraduate major and graduate area of interest identified by the GRE taxonomy codes, and undergraduate research area.

In October 2008, Colleen Reilly, the current graduate coordinator, used the database to locate the names of undergraduate students who will graduate in Fall 2008 or Spring 2009 in English. She sent an email to 14 of those students providing them with information about our MA program and inviting them to apply for admission. The use of this database will become a routine practice in aiding us to diversify our applicant pool and, eventually, the program.

Please see Appendix D for the University’s affirmative action statement.
http://www.uncw.edu/policies/02-230-eoandaa.htm

In addition, UNCW has stated commitments to diversity in the UNCW Strategic Plan (see the Core Values and Goal III):
http://www.uncw.edu/planning/documents/StrategicPlan.pdf
9. Summary of research and scholarship of the academic unit

9.1 Introductory summary statement
In addition to being committed teachers, our graduate faculty are engaged in important scholarly endeavors that are impacting their intellectual communities both nationally and internationally. Within the last five years, twelve graduate faculty have published twenty-seven articles in significant national or international journals important to the sub-disciplines of English studies. Additionally, three faculty have had one or more books published by important academic presses. Furthermore, nineteen faculty delivered 103 presentations at national or international conferences during this time period. Lastly, one faculty member was awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, two were awarded Fulbright Lecturer Awards, two were awarded Fulbright-Hays Grants for summer travel, two attended National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institutes, and numerous others earned semester-long or summer research grants from UNCW. The specific scholarly achievements of individual faculty are outlined below.

9.2 Publishing, performances, or exhibitions

Key journals in the sub-disciplines of English studies

- a/b: Auto/Biography Studies
- ALAN Review (Assembly on Literature for Adolescents)
- American Indian Culture and Research Journal
- American Literary Realism
- American Literature
- Children's Literature
- Children's Literature Association Quarterly
- Children's Literature in Education
- College Composition and Communication
- College English
- College English Association Critic
- The Comparatist: The Official Journal of the Southern Comparative Literature Association
- Composition Studies
- Computers and Composition
- Foundation
- Frontiers: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad
- Eighteenth-Century Studies
- Enculturation
- European Romantic Review
- Extrapolation
- The Gerontologist
- JAC: Journal of Advanced Composition
- Journal of Aging, Humanities, and the Arts
- Journal of Popular Culture
Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts
The Lion and the Unicorn
Mosaic: A Journal for the Interdisciplinary Study of Literature
MELUS: Multi-Ethnic Literature of the United States
Philological Quarterly
Philosophy and Rhetoric
Publication of the Modern Language Association (PMLA)
Rhetoric Review
Rhetoric Society Quarterly
Renaissance and Reformation
Science Fiction Studies
Shakespeare Quarterly
Shakespeare Studies
Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society
Sixteenth-Century Studies
Studies in American Fiction
SAIL: Studies in American Indian Literatures
Studies in Romanticism
Tulsa Studies in Women’s Literature
Upstart Crow
Victorian Literature and Culture
Women’s Studies in Communication
Women’s Studies Quarterly
Women’s Writing

Scholarly books published by graduate faculty

Janet Mason Ellerby

Keith Newlin
Lee Schweninger


Significant peer-reviewed articles published by graduate faculty

**Anthony Atkins**


**Mark Boren**


**Cara Cilano**


**Janet Mason Ellerby**

“Untangling the Trauma Knot: Autoethnography and Annie Ernaux’s *Shame.*” *Mosaic* 38.3 (2005): 59-75.
Tiffany Gilbert


Nicholas Laudadio


Katherine Montwieler


Keith Newlin


Colleen A. Reilly


Lee Schweninger


Kristen Seas


Meghan Sweeney


Barbara Waxman


9.3 Funded projects

Anthony Atkins and Colleen Reilly
Friends of UNCW, “Request for Digital Video Cameras,” March 2007, $737.90. We used these funds to purchase a digital video camera for student use to produce multimedia projects for courses and presentations.

9.4 Presentations at refereed conferences

Key conferences in the sub-disciplines of English studies

American Comparative Literature Association Conference
American Indian Workshop
American Literature Association
American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies Conference
Annual Conference of the International Communication Association
Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference
Association for Gerontology in Higher Education Convention
Association of Teachers of Technical Writing
Children's Literature Association Conference
College English Association Conference
Conference on College Composition and Communication
Computers and Writing International Conference
Council of Programs of Technical and Scientific Communication Conference
Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century British Women Writers Conference
Feminisms and Rhetorics Conference (Biennial)
Gerontological Society of America Convention
International Association of the Fantastic in the Arts Conference
International Society for the History of Rhetoric Conference
Middle Tennessee University’s Biennial Modern Critical Approaches to Children’s Literature
Modern Language Association Conference
National Council of Teachers of English
National Association for Humanities Education
North American Society for the Study of Romanticism
Penn State Conference on Rhetoric and Composition (Biennial)
Popular Culture Association/American Culture Association National Conference
Renaissance Society of America
Rhetoric Society of America (Biennial)
Science Fiction Research Association Conference
Shakespeare Association of America
Thomas R. Watson Conference on Rhetoric and Composition
Writing Program Administration Summer Conference
Faculty participation in key national conferences

Diana Ashe


Anthony Atkins


“Teaching with New Media in the Classroom: Altering Identities of the Writing Instructor” Conf. on College Composition and Communication. New York. 2007.


MA English Self-Study Report 37

“Graduate Student Training and Technology: Rhetoric and Composition Programs.” Conf. on College Composition and Communication. San Antonio, TX. 2004.

“How Do We Teach the Teachers?” Computers and Writing International Conf, Pre-conference Workshop (Teacher Preparation Forum/Workshop). Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN. 2003.

Mark Boren


Janis Chakars


Cara Cilano


John Clifford


Janet Mason Ellerby


Tiffany Gilbert


Nicholas Laudadio


Katherine Montwieler


**Keith Newlin**


“Clouted by Reviewers: The Texts of Rose of Dutcher’s Coolly.” Association for Documentary Editing Conference. Indianapolis, IN. 13 Nov. 2004


**Katie Peel**


Colleen A. Reilly


“Research and Citation Practices for New Media Scholarship” with Douglas Eyman. 59th Annual Convention of the Conf. on College Composition and Communication. New Orleans, LA. April 4, 2008.


Kathy Rugoff


Lee Schweninger


Kristen Seas


“Beyond Mentoring: Assessing Our Own Needs as Graduate Instructors.” Conf. on College Composition and Communication. Chicago, IL. March 2006.

“Cutting the Cord: Seeking a New Corporeal Rhetoric for Non-phallic Subjects.” Feminism(s) and Rhetoric(s) Conf. Houghton, MI. October 2005.


Meghan Sweeney


Barbara Waxman


Michael Wentworth

“‘You Must Remember This’: The Failed Poetics of Memory and Place in Theodore Dreiser’s A Hoosier Holiday.” American Literature Association Symposium on American Fiction. Savannah, GA. October 3, 2008.
9.5 Leadership roles

**Anthony Atkins**
Executive Board, Carolina-Writing Program Administrators  
Publicist, Research Network Forum sponsored by the Conference on College Composition and Communication  
Publicity Chair, Graduate Research Network sponsored by the Computers and Writing International Conference  
National Taskforce member, Conference on College Composition and Communication Committee on Computers in Composition and Communication (7Cs Committee)

**Paula Kamenish**
Chair of faculty development and long-range planning, South Atlantic States Association for Asian and African Studies

**Keith Newlin**

**Colleen Reilly**
Reviewer, *Journal of Effective Teaching*, 2006-present

**Kathy Rugoff**
Member, Board of Directors, College English Association, 2006-present  
Member, Nominating Committee, College English Association, 2004-2005, 2008
Lee Schweninger
   Interim Program Director, University of North Carolina in Washington, DC, Program, 2007-present

Meghan Sweeney
   Editorial Board Member, Prentice Hall Anthology of American Literature, 2003-2008

9.6 Honors and awards

Diana Ashe

Mark Boren


Janis Chakars
   REEI/Mellon Endowment Dissertation Write-up Fellowship, Indiana University, Spring 2008
   REEI/Mellon Endowment Student Grant-in-Aid of Travel to Conferences, Indiana University, November 2007
   Grant-in-Aid of Dissertation Research, Indiana University School of Journalism, Fall 2005
   John F. McLeod Fellowship, Indiana University, Fall 2005
   Harold and Elaine Fisher Graduate Fellowship, Indiana University, Fall 2005
   Mark and Ruth Feree Fellowship, Indiana University, Fall 2005
   IREX Individual Advanced Research Opportunity Grant, Indiana University, Fall-Spring 2003-2004

Cara Cilano
   Faculty Reassignment Award, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2008
Charles L. Cahill Award for Faculty Research and Development, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2008

Fulbright Lecturing Award, Yanka Kupala State University, Grodno, Belarus, February-July 2007

National Endowment for the Humanities Institute: Re-imagining Indigenous Cultures. The Pacific Islands, University of Hawai‘i, Summer 2003

**Tiffany Gilbert**

Summer Research Initiative Grant, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2008

**Paula Kamenish**

Academic Affairs Travel Award to Chile, University of North Carolina Wilmington, July 2004

Office of International Programs Grant to Paris (Bibliothèque Kandinsky), University of North Carolina Wilmington, March 2004

Fulbright-Hays Grant to Universidad católica de Valparaíso, Chile, Summer 2003

**Katherine Montwieler**

Faculty Reassignment Award, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2007

Summer Curriculum Development Initiative, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2007

Summer Research Initiative Grant, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2005

**Keith Newlin**

Charles L. Cahill Award for Faculty Research and Development, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2005


Faculty Reassignment Award, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2004.

**Colleen Reilly**

Computers and Composition Distinguished Book Award, Computers and Writing Conference, 2008, awarded to the edited collection in which my chapter appears: “Multifaceted Methods for Multimodal Texts: Alternate Approaches to Citation Analysis..."


Charles L. Cahill Award for Faculty Research and Development, University of North Carolina Wilmington, “Learning to Produce Multimedia to Enhance Teaching and Research in Professional Writing,” 2003

Summer Research Initiative Grant, University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Summer 2002

Kathy Rugoff
Summer Research Initiative Grant, University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Summer 2005

Lee Schweninger
Fulbright Lecture Award, Skopje, Macedonia, 2004

Kristen Seas
Janice M. Lauer Award for Excellence in Dissertation Work, Purdue University, 2007. Awarded to one PhD candidate each year in Purdue’s Rhetoric & Composition program, selected by alumni of the program.

Purdue Research Foundation Grant for Dissertation Research, $2400, Summer 2007.

Strategic Initiatives Fellowship, Purdue University Graduate School, $42,000, Fall 2005–Summer 2006. Awarded to graduate students to pursue empirical research aimed at improving the lives of fellow graduate students.

Barbara Waxman
Fulbright-Hays Grant to Universidad católica de Valparaíso, Chile, Summer 2003
Faculty Reassignment Award, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2003

9.7 Other evidence of faculty productivity important to the academic unit

Michael Wentworth
Graduate Mentor Award, University of North Carolina Wilmington, 2006. Awarded to a member of the graduate faculty who has excelled at teaching at the graduate level and mentoring graduate students, guiding their research activity and aiding them to establish themselves as independent scholars and professionals.

10. Goals and objectives: Strengths and opportunities for development

The graduate faculty met on Friday, October 10, 2008, to discuss the program’s strengths, weaknesses, and goals for the future. We generated the information listed below, which was refined and added to by the graduate committee during a subsequent meeting on October 23, 2008.

10.1 Strengths

Below are the main strengths of our program:

• We are a small, regional program. We provide a place for many UNCW graduates to pursue MA-level work in English studies.

• We offer good preparation for Ph.D. programs. Our individual attention to students is one of our greatest strengths, and through that attention, we help to place many students who wish to pursue advanced degrees into Ph.D. programs.

• We have a well-staffed program. Our faculty represent numerous areas within literature, English education, rhetoric and composition, professional writing, and, recently, journalism.

• We have a wonderful mentoring program; our students have close working relationships with their teachers.

• Our students can tailor their course of study to their own interests and goals. Our program requires only two courses, ENG 501 and 502 or 552, of all students. Therefore, they can select from any other courses that interest them or aid them to meet their objectives.

• We are a generalist program. Students are not segregated into tracks but are all part of the same program.

• Our curricular flexibility provides faculty with the opportunity to develop graduate classes in their areas of academic expertise based on their research interests.

• Students have ample opportunity for intellectual enrichment through attending presentations arranged through a number of lecture series, such as the Buckner Lectures sponsored by the Departments of English and Creative Writing and the UNCW’s Leadership Lecture Series.
10.2 Goals: Problems to be overcome and strategies for approaching them

Preparing students to achieve goals and understand possibilities

- In general, we need to focus more on helping students to market themselves and learn what they can do with their degrees beyond pursuing a doctoral degree or teaching.

- We should cultivate a closer connection with organizations in the community, perhaps through internships for graduate students and service learning.

- We need to reach out to alumni by better tracking our graduates and posting their biographies and testimonials online.

- We should also encourage students’ self-reflection in exit surveys and interviews. (What have you learned in the past two years? Where are you now? How have you developed those skills over the past two years?) In addition to personal exit interviews, we could hold focus groups where the students who are graduating can discuss their experiences within the program.

- We need to reexamine our required courses in light of student feedback and outcomes assessment and make changes in the curriculum where necessary or warranted.

Working with other programs on campus

- We need to cultivate a sustainable dialogue with faculty and students in related programs whose students take our courses, including the MAT, MED, and MFA programs.

- We need to explore how we can more productively participate in interdisciplinary programs on campus, including MALS and the certificate program in English as a Second Language.

Obtaining funding and support recruitment

- We need to remain committed to increasing our number of TAs. TAs tend to graduate in a timely manner (two years) and provide an important source of well-trained instructors to the department for Basic Studies courses.

- We need to lobby to be able to award scholarship money earlier in the spring for students applying for Fall admission. We lose some students because we cannot make decisions about their funding until April.
• We should reach out to local businesses and organizations as potential sources of funding for research and other initiatives.

Facilities

• We need to find a space to be converted into a graduate student lounge, preferably within Morton Hall, in order to foster community and comfort among students and TAs.

10.3 Opportunities for development

Our program can build upon some of the work done by our undergraduate program to provide MA students with applied learning experiences. For example, we have a thriving undergraduate internship program with two internship coordinators who are expert in matching students with internships that fit their interests and goals. Recently more graduate students have expressed interest in doing internships. We should capitalize on this interest to help students locate pathways to using their degrees outside of academia.

We also have an excellent scholarship program to support student travel for academic enrichment that is funded through our departmental patron, Charles Green. These awards, the Wentworth Travel Awards, enable undergraduate students to receive up to $1500 to travel to locations of interest to literary study, such as archives, writer’s birthplaces and homes, and regions important to particular literary movements, genres, or periods. Recently we were given permission to expand the eligibility for this award to graduate students and are actively encouraging them to take part. In Fall 2008, five graduate students earned Wentworth Travel Fellowships. We should increase awareness among graduate students of the potential to use these awards to spur their scholarly pursuits.

We can increase our participation in interdisciplinary graduate programs, such as the English as a Second Language (ESL) add-on licensure program offered through the Watson School of Education. This would be an excellent and useful credential for our students to acquire to prepare them to teach ESL in the United States and abroad.

10.4 New degree programs

We would like to explore beginning a certificate program or degree program in rhetoric, professional writing, and journalism. Our students seem increasingly interested in these areas of study, and our department is also expanding in faculty in these sub-disciplines. The certificate or degree programs in this area may work best as online or partly online programs in order to connect with working professionals in our region.
10.5 Future personnel needs

To support greater participation in the ESL certificate, our department would need a graduate faculty member in linguistics. Our graduate faculty in linguistics are on phased retirement. This faculty member would need to be proficient in and/or interested in teaching online, as the faculty in education who run this program envision it as an added credential available electronically to working educators throughout the region and beyond.

Additionally, if we are to begin a certificate program or MA program in rhetoric, professional writing, and journalism, we need to complete successfully our search for a new professional writing faculty member this year. Other hires may be needed in the future to support any online degree program.

10.6 Development potential given several budget scenarios

What could the program support with a modest decrease (e.g., 3-5%) in support?

The MA program in English could support the program outlined above but with reduced course offerings, reduced support for faculty travel, and fewer resources and personnel to devote to the professional and collegial life of graduate students.

With fewer resources, we would be much less competitive in recruiting nonresident and minority students, as we may have even less attractive financial packages to offer.

What could be accomplished if support remains the same?

We could continue to offer our program but many of the goals we outline above may be slow to be accomplished. The goals that require little additional funding such as outreach to local businesses and other campus agencies could be addressed. However, goals requiring additional personnel, such as participating in the ESL certificate program or developing a program in rhetoric, professional writing and journalism would not be possible. Furthermore, we would not be able to provide better space for our graduate students to meet and work nor could be enhance our infrastructure.

What could be accomplished with a modest increase in support?

Additional funds could be allocated to graduate students in the form of support for graduate student research endeavors including travel to conferences, scholarships, and additional resources. More money could be allocated for faculty travel and more support given to graduate faculty for reading and directing theses. We may be able to provide untenured faculty with some release time to aid in developing their research agendas and progressing toward tenure.

What could be accomplished with a significant increase, etc.?

The English faculty could be given the same level of support now given to other graduate programs within CAS such as a 3/2 load for research active faculty. Additional credit could be given for directing and reading theses in the form of a course release for directing and reading a specified number of theses. Additional travel funds could be used to support research for both
faculty and graduate students, and, of course, additional monies could be used to support teaching assistants and the research projects of our graduate students. If the increased support included new faculty lines, we could develop the certificate and/or online program in rhetoric, professional writing, and journalism, and increase our participation in the ESL certificate program.
Review team:

Annette Federico, Department of English, James Madison University

Malin Pereira, Department of English, UNC-Charlotte
TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Summary

II. External Review Process

III. Report

IV. Conclusions
I. Summary

The UNC-Wilmington M.A. program is healthy in most respects, but there is room for improvement in several areas, each of which will be addressed more fully in the report. The external review team identified strengths and opportunities. These are summarized here and described in detail in the full report.

Program Strengths:

- The program has the support of the administration at the Graduate and College levels, enrollments are generally strong, and there is good placement of graduates
- The graduate director has identified the need for the program in the region, and the vision for the M.A. serves the population
- Recruiting within the state is good and could be broadened. There is an awareness of the importance of recruiting faculty and students for diversity
- Assessment tools are very effective
- The department has committed faculty with good publications, and faculty have reasonable visibility within the profession. Faculty can teach in their areas of interest and develop their research agendas
- This is a good program for students seeking a doctorate, but also for those headed to local community college or adjunct teaching. Students seem content with program offerings and the faculty is supportive of their different goals. There is a non-competitive learning environment
- Faculty workload is, for the most part, equally distributed among graduate faculty, but some changes might be considered to support untenured faculty
- The existing comprehensive exam and thesis requirement works for students, but could benefit from comparisons with peer institutions
- Several needed resources described in the self study seem to have been addressed (T.A. offices, for example)
- The 2/2 teaching load for T.A.’s serves both students and the department
- The Graduate English Association is healthy and seems to energize both faculty and students in the program

Opportunities:

- There could be more T.A.’s and stipends should be raised to compete with peer institutions
- Although the capstone experience seems to work for students, comparable M.A. programs do not require both an exam and a thesis.
- The graduate director could become more involved in overseeing the thesis process by providing a timeline, written standards, and distributing equitable supervision loads
- Generally, graduate faculty mentoring workload and exam/thesis workload and structure needs some attention
- Students would be well-served by a course which specifically address teaching literature at community colleges
• The graduate director could re-examine existing course offerings to streamline some courses and eliminate others
• The point system is unclear and not consistent throughout the university
• There is some concern that advising is unevenly spread among graduate faculty. Advising should be centralized in the graduate director
• The graduate director should be given a course release in the fall semester in order to deal efficiently with incoming students during orientation and throughout fall semester.
• Departmental administrators should be able to earn points
• Recruit aggressively for diversity
• Graduate faculty could be held to standards in addition to the current policy regarding scholarly productivity. The department could articulate expectations for contributing to and helping to build the graduate program
• The department could develop some offerings in world literatures and more diversity in courses
II. Review Process

The UNC-Wilmington M.A. program participates in program review every seven years. An internal review committee prepared a self-study document, which was reviewed by the external review team before their campus visit. On campus, the team met with faculty, administrators, and students.

Interviews:

• Colleen Reilly, Director of Graduate Studies
• Keith Newlin, Department Chair
• Robert Roer, Dean of the Graduate School
• Tony Atkins, Composition Coordinator
• David Cordle, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences
• Graduate Committee (Colleen Reilly, Katherine Montwieler, Barbara Waxman, Mike Wentworth, Meghan Sweeney, Diana Ashe)
• Graduate faculty
• English graduate students

History:

The self study thoroughly documents the graduate program’s history since its inception in 1989. The last program review was in 2002. The most significant changes since then have been a restructuring of the comprehensive examination; the implementation of a point system for evaluating applicants and awarding teaching assistantships; developing an indirect assessment tool; appointing a new graduate director (July 2008); updating and revising the program’s website and graduate handbook; and adopting a point system to compensate faculty working on thesis and exam committees.

Program goals:

The self study divides the M.A. programs goals into four areas, curriculum, teaching, students, and faculty, and the following report will consider each area separately. We note that most of the goals set in 2002 have been achieved, but there are a few that have not been successfully met.

Teaching:
• Obtaining additional classrooms

Students:
• Attracting more students from outside the region

Faculty:
• Compensating research-active faculty with release time
III. Report

Curriculum

The M.A. requires 30 hours of graduate coursework, with two required courses (ENG 501 and ENG 502 or ENG 552), and 6 hours of thesis credit. We liked the openness of the curriculum, the emphasis on electives rather than required courses, and the elimination of tracks. Students have a good mix of seven to nine courses to choose from each semester, ranging from literature, critical theory, professional writing, and communication. Faculty can stretch the course offerings to fit their own research interests.

The program remains fairly traditional in its offerings, however. The department as a whole could fruitfully diversify its faculty areas of expertise and introduce a curriculum that reflects changes in the profession within the last ten to fifteen years. There could be more graduate-level courses, for example, on world literatures, African-American literature, and gay and lesbian literature. In terms of genre, the department is heavy on narrative and light on courses in poetry and drama. We realize that some faculty were on leave during our visit, and we are pleased to see a new hire in African-American literature next year. Still, we urge the graduate director and department head to continue to make diversity a high priority for curriculum development.

The graduate courses are for the most part well enrolled, so there is no problem filling classes. There are sets of courses, however, that seem moribund (504, 505, 506). These courses could be eliminated; they could be collapsed into one course with a broad title (i.e., British Literature Before 1789); or they could be listed as 400/500 splits. There was some confusion about the distinction between “topics” and “studies” courses. The graduate committee might want to look at the catalog descriptions of these courses and discuss whether or not there are meaningful differences in content.

Teaching assistants and students who plan to teach composition as adjuncts are well served by ENG 503. The graduate committee might consider creating a course that would also prepare students to teach literature in community colleges (after the example of Eastern Carolina University). The internship program seems to be working, but should also be reexamined for viability.

One aspect of the curriculum was problematic: the structure and purpose of the comprehensive exam. The take-home part of the exam is questionable, as it could encourage plagiarism and lacks oversight. Three faculty members set the texts and write the exam questions, and this could be problematic in terms both of faculty workload and the structure of the exam, since there are no learning outcomes associated with it. The program does not assess based on this exam.

We also learned that while the department believes it must have both the thesis and exam, the graduate school does not require both – the thesis could count as the exam. Since it is not typical in most English M.A. programs to have both a thesis and an exam, and since the department has a good program assessment already created around the thesis, we recommend dropping the exam. That might help with faculty workload.

The students we spoke with seemed to have no complaints about the exam, because they viewed it as the stamp of approval before moving on to the thesis. A more
structured process for the thesis, however, that set specific stages and work products along a set timeline, would create the same system of sanctioning competency.

Teaching

Research-active faculty teaches a 3/3 load, and all faculty teach composition. Graduate courses are small seminars (12-15 students), and there seems to be a fair student-teacher ratio on the graduate level.

Graduate faculty also participates in a mentoring program for graduate students. There is some concern that mentoring is uneven among faculty (both in terms of workload and the degree of involvement with students), and that it can add a considerable burden of uncompensated workload to untenured faculty with active research agendas. We recommend that the graduate director and graduate committee think about ways to fairly distribute mentoring among faculty, and perhaps write up a set of guidelines and expectations for both students and faculty.

Along with mentoring, graduate faculty may serve as thesis directors and on thesis committees. The graduate director needs to have more oversight on managing theses. Some faculty serve regularly on thesis committees, but not everyone shares this responsibility. To ensure that work on theses is fairly distributed among faculty, the graduate director could assign students a committee: students tend to select faculty they know, and the graduate director can steer them toward the most appropriate professors available. There also should be more clarity on the expectations for a successful thesis (the length seems rather easily negotiable, for instance), and consistency among committees supervising the defense. Placing a strict timetable on the program’s website and specifying standards would help both faculty and students gain some control over the process. If the graduate committee decides to eliminate the comprehensive examination, students should be encouraged (or required) to begin reading for their thesis in the summer before their second year.

Students

UNC-W graduate students are generally happy with the program’s organization and with the faculty, and they seem well prepared for life after graduate school. The Graduate English Association supplies a helpful support network, the mentoring system builds confidence, and students seem comfortable approaching faculty and the graduate director when they have problems or questions. Overall the program supplies a non-competitive and rich learning environment.

The composition coordinator closely supervises T.A.’s, and that aspect of the program seems to be working. T.A.’s are content with a 2/2 load, but we recommend increasing their stipend to $10,000, and, if possible, creating more assistantships. T.A.’s are supplied with computers and their offices are in proximity to English department faculty.

The M.A. students we met seemed highly motivated. They are encouraged to go to professional conferences (funding for graduate travel is generous) and have taken the initiative in organizing and hosting their own graduate student conference at UNC-W. Students who wish to go on to Ph.D. programs have been largely successful; those who
go into teaching, professional writing, or other careers have had little difficulty finding jobs.

As for recruitment, we suggest that recruiting for diversity from the McNair Scholars database might yield few students, because the emphasis in that program is on students getting the Ph.D. A terminal M.A. program, from the perspective of those advising the McNair Scholars, would not be a successful placement unless the student was in need of considerable further mentoring before applying to Ph.D. programs. Directors of McNair programs must provide statistical evidence of a successful rate of mentoring underrepresented groups into Ph.D. programs, and placement in a terminal M.A. program would not help their statistics. So, in addition to this effort, we suggest using a one-on-one approach on the part of select faculty, in which the faculty who have developed a good rapport with students from underrepresented groups be supported by the department financially and in workload to individually recruit students from regional undergraduate programs. They could contact undergraduate coordinators from the programs and ask them to identify prospective students. They could visit the program, asking to meet those students and share M.A. program information. They would need to work individually with each interested student, helping them with financial aid information and making follow-up calls frequently to answer questions. The department could consider sponsoring visits from seriously interested students. Students from underrepresented groups are most likely to come to your graduate program when they feel they have a personal, supportive relationship with a faculty member; see courses in the curriculum that relate to their interests in graduate study; and receive financial aid that enables them to attend graduate school. It also helps if they see a cohort of other underrepresented students, but that may take some time to build. Additionally, some students from underrepresented groups are particularly interested in applied programs that assure job placement, so focusing on professional writing as well as literary areas will help diversity recruitment.

Recruiting in general could be enriched by an annual fall visit to UNC-Chapel Hill’s undergraduate English program. You seem to have several Chapel Hill undergraduates among your graduate student population, to whom two years at the beach in a flexible, individualized M.A. program sounds attractive. You also would get a well-prepared set of students.

Faculty

Some English departments experience a degree of professional tension or competition among literature faculty, technical writers, and composition/rhetoric people. We were very favorably impressed with the degree of collegiality and cooperation among the faculty in this department. With three new administrators (department head, graduate director, and composition coordinator), two new hires for 2009-10, and many young Ph.D.’s, there is opportunity for positive change for the program. We sensed an eagerness to shape the M.A. to match the evolving interests and needs of future faculty and students. The graduate faculty are clearly committed teachers and active scholars.

We were not encouraged by the point system’s efficacy as a means of appropriately compensating faculty for work on theses, etc. In particular, two points of difficulty emerged: one, that the timeline for compensation works against junior faculty,
who often are past the point of the tenure decision before they are compensated; two, the
point compensation is not allowed for departmental administrators, which overworks the
administrators and also places them in danger of losing their graduate faculty status
because they do the thesis work anyway and then don’t have any time in which to do
research and publish. In our view, it is best to support a graduate program director, a
composition director who oversees T.A.s, and the chair of a department with a graduate
degree with compensation for work on M.A. theses and exams, because otherwise you
end up with administrators who have been unable to keep up with research in their field.

IV. Conclusions

The external review team did not identify any serious problems with the graduate
program. It has a secure place in the structure of the English department and the College
and serves a professional need in the region. Graduate faculty are productive scholars
who enjoy the benefits of teaching in a small M.A. program. There seems to be a
comfortable rapport among faculty working in different areas of specialization.
Enrollments are steady. Under the supervision of a new graduate director, department
head, and composition coordinator, we see positive changes coming to the curriculum
and opportunities for broader recruitment.

The single greatest concern was faculty workload. While a 3/3 load that includes
teaching composition is appropriate for a regional comprehensive university, we urge the
administration to look carefully at adequate workload adjustments for department
administrators that includes awareness of their administrative responsibilities and
compensates for their work on theses and exams. Furthermore, we urge all the graduate
faculty to take a careful look at who among them may not be supervising a fair number of
theses or serving often enough on the M.A. examining committee, and who may be
taking on too many of these responsibilities too often. A shared, public sense of what is
enough and what is too much would spread the workload more equitably and would also
highlight exactly where additional workload adjustments may be needed for the graduate
program director and composition coordinator.
Outside reviewers came to UNCW to conduct a review of our MA in English program on April 6-7, 2009. Our department received their report in May 2009. Since the beginning of the Fall 2009 semester, we have held numerous Graduate Studies Committee meetings and two all-Graduate Faculty meetings to develop a response and propose changes to our program in light of the information gleaned from the self-study and reviewers’ report. A summary of the reviewers’ input and our actions, current and proposed, are outlined below.

Summary of programmatic strengths identified by the outsider reviewers

Our reviewers, Annette Federico, James Madison University, and Malin Pereira, UNC Charlotte, identified many positive aspects of our program, the most significant of which are listed below:

- Awareness of the importance of recruiting students and increasing diversity among applicants and enrolled students in our program
- Effective outcomes assessment practices
- Committed faculty engaged in scholarship
- Non-competitive learning environment that prepares students for doctoral programs, community college teaching, and other endeavors
- Laudable TA training program in which students do not teach until year two
- An appropriate course load of two courses per semester for second-year TAs
- Engaged and vibrant Graduate English Association (GEA)

We intend to build upon these strengths and continue to improve our program for our students and community.

Opportunities identified by outside reviewers related to university and administrative issues

The outside reviewers recommended some changes to our program’s resources and management structure, which are outlined below:

- Obtain more TAs and provide TAs with higher stipends
- Revise the course-release policy to put it in line with the rest of the university
- Allow administrators to earn releases
- Distribute supervisory duties (thesis) more evenly across graduate faculty
- Articulate expectations for graduate faculty to include program building activities

As mentioned above, the Graduate Faculty met to discuss these issues. We are aware in this tough budget environment that we are unlikely to receive additional TAs or money for an increase in stipends in the near future. We are currently exploring creative ways to provide some of our exceptionally qualified graduate students with teaching experience after they have
completed 18 hours of coursework. This will give those students support and experience and provide our undergraduate students with instruction by trained instructors. Our Chair, Keith Newlin, and the Graduate Coordinator, Colleen Reilly, have met with Associate Dean Kathleen Berkeley regarding our course release policy. We understand the revisions we need to make to our policy and how best to equitably distribute any possible releases earned through graduate and honors thesis direction. Lastly, our Graduate Faculty discussed how to expand participation in recruitment and thesis supervision. The Graduate Coordinator plans to steer new students to faculty directing fewer theses. Regarding recruitment, we have begun recruiting our own students more actively by having the Graduate Coordinator and a current MA student visit all senior seminars to provide students with information. Students who expressed interest in our program have already been contacted by the Graduate Coordinator via email.

Opportunities identified by outside reviewers related to degree requirements and curriculum

The outside reviewers also recommended some changes to our program’s degree requirements and curriculum, which are outlined below:

- Reexamine requiring both an exam and thesis in light of the requirements of peer institutions
- Consider altering the form of the exam and delivering it as a sit-down, proctored experience
- Develop and distribute more explicit thesis guidelines/advice
- Reexamine and streamline course offerings published in the catalogue to reflect courses currently taught
- Recruit for diversity through reaching out to specific students identified by colleagues
- Increase offerings in professional writing/literacy as a recruitment tool
- Offer more diverse courses and courses in world literatures
- Offer a course in teaching literature (university studies and community college teaching)

In response to several of these recommendations, we have already proposed changes to our curriculum and have submitted those changes to the graduate council. Below is a summary of the changes we have proposed and the justifications for those changes:

1. Institute a non-thesis option, requiring 6 additional hours of coursework in place of the current 6 hours of ENG 599: Thesis
   - Of the 14 (17 total) peer institutions that offer an MA in English, 10 offer a non-thesis option
   - Some students could benefit more from additional coursework, particularly those students not planning to pursue doctoral work
   - Students writing theses would be those most motivated to do so and would see the project as directly assisting them to achieve their goals
• More graduate courses could be offered providing students with more options to pursue their own interests through coursework

2. Change the total number of required hours from 30 to 36, with thesis option students doing 6 hours of thesis
   • Of our peer institutions with MA programs, 5 require 36 hours, 1 requires 34, 2 require 33, 2 require 32, and 4 require 30
   • Requiring students to take more hours would provide them with a broader base of knowledge and allow for more flexibility in pursuing interests beyond the required courses
   • Requiring students to take more hours would provide room in the curriculum to add courses such as a course in community college pedagogy, which presumably many students might take

3. Maintain a standard, written comprehensive exam, but alter the format to speak directly to our programmatic goals and student learning outcomes
   • Of the 14 peer institutions that offer an MA in English, 12 mandate a comprehensive exam; 11 are written, 1 oral
   • A standard written exam adds consistency in students’ experience of the program and provides an indication that all students can synthesize material and respond to questions about that material in writing
   • Linking the exam to the thesis process precludes/complicates the introduction of a non-thesis option, which the Graduate Faculty came to see as an important goal
   • Students, including the GEA representative on the Graduate Studies Committee and the students interviewed for the self-study, would like to see the exam maintained because it provides them with a milestone by which to judge their progress through the program, compels them to read and grapple with important texts that they might otherwise not encounter, provides them with a sense of accomplishment that is derived from successfully completing a universal requirement
   • The format of the exam should be altered to make it a proctored experience, taken in a computer classroom over a period of 4 hours or so (as per the recommendation of the outside reviewers)

In addition to these proposed changes, we are also working on or planning to address other recommendations in this category. The Graduate Studies Committee is reviewing the catalogue and will submit suggested revisions to the Graduate Council, after allowing the Graduate Faculty to review them. We also plan to offer a class in teaching writing and literature at the community college and university studies level in Fall 2010. MFA students in Creative Writing have also expressed interest in our offering such a course. Our recent hire in African-American Literature will teach a graduate course in the academic year 2010-2011, which will help to diversify our offerings. Finally, the Graduate Studies Committee plans to reach out to colleagues within their disciplines to locate potential racial and ethnic minority students interested in pursuing an MA in English to whom we can write and potentially recruit.
Institutional support requested

While we have made strides as a department to address the recommendations of our reviewers, some institutional support is needed to aid us in our efforts.

- As soon as it is fiscally practicable, providing us with additional TAs and increasing their stipends
  - Our TAs provide much instructional support for University Studies both as students and upon graduation as they teach writing courses foundational to our undergraduate curriculum
  - TAs have been more extensively trained than other part-time faculty who teach introductory writing courses as they are mentored by our faculty for an entire academic year, have coursework in pedagogy, and receive instructional support and oversight through their entire second year. Because their more rigorous training supports the CAS instructional mission, resources might be shifted to support additional TA lines rather than adjunct faculty
  - Any additional scholarship monies we could obtain would aid us to recruit top prospective students to our program. In the past two years, we have lost at least two of our top five recruits to other schools who were able to offer them a most substantial support package.

- Supporting research active faculty, including departmental administrators, by continuing to provide them with the ability to earn course releases through graduate and honors thesis direction