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16. Summary
1. Overview

The Department of English & Comparative Literature believes that a rigorous study of literature effectively promotes the kind of skills global citizens need today: advanced oral/written communication skills, cutting-edge critical/creative thinking skills as well as sophisticated global literacy and complex cultural awareness.

1.1. Goals.

In consonance with the mission statements of SJSU and the College of Humanities & Arts, the Department of English & Comparative Literature has articulated the following goals:

- Develop students’ literary understanding, including their reading ability, critical thinking, interpretive skills and historical knowledge of literature and language.
- Deepen students’ appreciation of diverse cultures and expand their view of the world through study of the written word.
- Develop students’ rhetorical and creative skills: ability to think, speak, listen, and write effectively.
- Maintain a broad-based program of General Education courses at both the lower and upper division levels.
- Recruit and retain a diverse student and faculty population.
- Foster professional growth and development for the faculty.
- Develop and maintain excellent relations with our wider Community, including alumni and emeritus faculty.

1.2. Programs.

The Department of English & Comparative Literature offers the following programs:

- B.A. English, Literature
- B.A. English, Concentration in Career Writing
- B.A. English, Concentration in Creative Writing
- B.A. English, Preparation for Teaching (Single Subject)
- M.A. English
- M.F.A. Creative Writing

In addition to the above Majors, the Department offers Minors in English Literature, Comparative Literature, Creative Writing, and Professional/Technical Writing.

Furthermore, the Department offers a massive General Education program, with about 120 sections of freshman composition courses every semester as well as courses in Critical Thinking and other SJSU studies (see section 11 below).

1.3. Students.

The Department has been able to meet enrollment targets for the period under review. The headcount enrollment for the undergraduate English major
increased from 326 in 2006 to 405 in 2008, then dipped slightly to 355 in 2010 but is again increasing; FTES rose from 890.4 in 2006 to 1103.7 in 2008, dipped slightly to 962.0 in 2010, but rose again to 1015 in 2011-2012; average class size was maintained at about 25 in the undergraduate program and at about 12 in the graduate program. The number of undergraduate degrees awarded rose from 78 in 2006-07 to 108 in 2009-10, although in the past year, it has dropped to 43. (Appendix A)

1.4. Faculty.
Currently, the English Department is made up of 74 faculty members: 18 tenured (3 on FERP), 3 probationary, and 53 temporary. Of the 74, 48 are female and 25 are male; 59 are identified as white, 8 as Asian, 2 as Hispanic, 1 as Black, and 8 as Other. (Appendix B) (http://www.oir.sjsu.edu/Faculty/Departments.cfm?version=graphic&DPT=E_CL)

2. Strengths
Since the last Program Planning review in 2006, the Department of English & Comparative Literature has continued to operate in a severely static budgetary environment. Nevertheless, the Department has maintained the following strengths:

2.1. UG/G Teaching and Research program. The English Department successfully maintains rigorous academic requirements as well as class size (caps: 25 for writing intensive UG, 30-35 for other UG, and 16 for G). Along with careful and continuous advising, many opportunities are made available for students to pursue scholarly as well as creative work with guidance from faculty. The graduate program also offers a strong TA program that prepares students for teaching careers. The English Department also offers students a wide array of awards for scholarly as well as creative work. (For list of Awards, see Appendix: C; also http://www.sjsu.edu/english/undergraduate/scholarship/)

2.1. Composition Program. The Department has a strong composition program run by a motivated and creative group of teachers. Currently, the program is undergoing an overhaul of the course guidelines and student learning outcomes to better reflect national best practices, faculty strengths, and student needs. In addition, pilot programs are being run to test the efficacy of portfolio assessment. The collaboration among the members of the faculty whose teaching load is already heavy (up to eight courses per year with high course caps of 25 students per section; the National Council of Teachers of English and the Modern Language Association recommend twenty), is a true strength of the program.

2.3. Creative Writing track. Since the recent introduction of the B.A. creative writing concentration program, an increasing number of students are declaring an English Major with a CW Concentration. CW is the fastest growing track in the Department. In addition to a wide range of literature courses, the CW program offers
students opportunities to take writing workshops in three genres, to edit a literary magazine (*Reed*), and to take a course with a distinguished visiting writer.

2.4. **English Subject Matter Preparation Program.** The SJSU English Subject Matter Program was approved by the CA Commission on Teacher Credentialing with only one request for minor revisions while at least 10 of our CSU sister institutions had to submit as many as eight revisions. Additionally, only 20 of the 23 CSUs have achieved CCTC Approval. Even more sobering, no UC institutions have approved English Subject Matter Programs; and of the 45 other post-secondary institutions in the State, only 7 have approved English Subject Matter Programs; so it is a significant achievement to have an approved English Subject Matter Program at San José State.

2.5. **Faculty Productivity.** Since 2006, the English Department faculty has published a total of 20 books, 40 peer-reviewed journal articles, and 109 creative works in various forums. The faculty has also secured 63 grants (including a $200,000 grant in 2011 to establish Iranian Studies at SJSU) and 15 awards (including the SJSU President's Scholar Award for Scholarly Excellence in 2009) (*Appendix D*). All faculty members are regularly evaluated with the University SOTE and the Departmental Peer Evaluation (*Appendix E*) forming an important part of their file.

3. Challenges

3.1. **Staffing.**
Over the last four years, the Department has been functioning entirely without or with a malfunctioning office manager. This has not only put a tremendous burden on the Chair and the Associate Chair (who has had to take on the office manager’s role as well), it has also strained an already overstretched faculty to breaking point. In addition to its efficient day to day functioning, the Department’s ability to maintain and process all forms of data (budgetary, academic, assessment related) has severely eroded. Furthermore, technical support for basic tasks like updating and maintaining the Department website is sorely lacking. The Department is currently working on hiring a new office manager this semester in an effort to redress the current stressful situation.

3.2. **Faculty Hiring.**
Failure to replace tenure-line faculty lost to administrative positions, tenure decisions, and other factors has severely hurt the Department’s ability to offer high-quality instruction. For instance, the Career Writing Concentration, which had once been a dynamic and vigorous concentration within the B.A. program, has weakened and deteriorated. During the review period, the Department has not had a T/TT faculty member with expertise in the field to develop and grow the program. However, a TT position in the field of Career/Professional/Technical writing has now been approved and the Department is currently in the
process of interviewing candidates. With the new hire, the Department hopes to revive and rebuild the Career Writing concentration in the B.A. program. Upcoming phased retirements are likely place the English Education Program in a challenging situation as well. Given the serious delays in hiring, it is difficult to know how the English Education program can continue to operate at the current high quality level.

3.3. Policy Matters.
The Departmental Policy Committee has completed updating the Policy Manual. However, ongoing loss of faculty is making some departmental policies on committee composition and size untenable. While work escalates, RTP and Recruitment Committee membership may have to drop from 7 to 5.

4. Synergies
English faculty is involved in many interdisciplinary synergies within the Department, the College, University and beyond, in teaching as well as professional activities. Some members of the Department teach/team-teach courses in other Departments in the College (mainly Humanities) while other members collaborate on grant proposals and research with faculty in other Departments both at the College (LLD) and University levels (Business, Education, Global Studies). Several faculty members are also involved in collaborative research with colleagues in other institutions, national as well as international. (Appendix D).

While members of the English faculty have found creative ways to collaborate on many teaching as well as research/creative projects, workload issues continue to impose an undue burden on those who do so. The current full-time teaching load of 4 + 4 three unit courses, especially given the time-consuming labor-intensive demands of teaching reading/writing, leaves the faculty with little time for innovation or collaboration. Moreover, the question of how assigned time is to be accounted for in collaborative team teaching has yet to be satisfactorily settled.

The above summary reflects the state of the Department as a whole. What follows below is a more specific evaluation of each major program in the Department of English & Comparative Literature.

5. B.A. English, Literature

5.1. Strengths.
The undergraduate English major, with 48 units, a solid core of required courses and a foreign language requirement, represents both in total units and in specific requirements a demanding, in-depth study of the field (http://www.sjsu.edu/english/undergraduate/bachelors/).
In addition to providing sound and extensive knowledge of different areas of literature, the program aims to develop communication and critical thinking skills by requiring and evaluating written work in all of its literature courses (3,000 words of required writing in lower-division courses, 5,000 in upper-division— which all instructors must assess for the quality of writing). All course syllabi are checked to ascertain that writing requirements are being respected. The program also requires all instructors to include our recently revised SLOs on their syllabi and to link the SLOs to specific assignments. Students are assessed in their mastery of these goals in the Department’s advanced writing course (English 100W) and the Capstone course (English 193). All majors receive careful and continuous advising every semester from faculty advisors (Appendix F).

5.2. Challenges
The main challenge is to provide better administrative infrastructure, instructional resources, and technological support to faculty and students. Without improvement in these areas, it is difficult to see how the Department can continue to offer a high quality learning experience to students.

5.3. Trends.
In response to healthy enrollment, changing student/faculty interests, and shifts within the discipline, the Department has streamlined the B.A. English curriculum by proposing some new courses, combining some existing courses, and eliminating certain courses. Most recently, the Department deactivated a series of courses (134, 137, 174, and 154) and proposed new ones (177 and 117A). The Department has advanced these changes in order to encourage development of innovative new courses, improve the focus and effectiveness of required courses, engage students more actively in planning their own learning, and strengthen the assessment plan for the major.

5.4. Needs/Plans.
We need to streamline the assessment process to make it more efficient and effective. Faculty members also need more time and opportunity for collaborative teaching/research. While the Department believes it has always offered a strong major, it continues to make modifications aimed at addressing changing student needs and improving student learning and success. Using this Program Review as yet another opportunity to reevaluate every aspect of its program, the Department has sought feedback from current students and faculty. The results of this review (Appendix G), along with structural changes within the Department/College, are likely to shape future revisions of the program.

6. B.A. English, Career Writing

The program exhibits two main strengths: (1) its attention to the basics of good professional writing and editing; (2) its strong instruction in those basics (http://www.sjsu.edu/english/undergraduate/majorcw/). Students get valuable
hands-on experience with producing the English Department Newsletter (http://www.sjsu.edu/english/undergraduate/newsletter/). In addition, the program’s location in the heart of Silicon Valley provides students with internship and employment opportunities.

6.2. Challenges.
The greatest challenge for our program is lack of funding, facilities, and full-time faculty with the time and administrative support necessary to secure such funding and facilities. The vast majority of professional writing today is produced in online fora. Our department has no access to the kind of technology and facilities necessary (software and hardware) to ensure that our students are fully competent in the skills required for employment in online writing and editing environments when they graduate.

6.3. Trends.
While its location in the heart of Silicon Valley continues to offer students excellent opportunities for real-world “clients” for classroom writing and editing projects, the current downturn in the economy has produced fewer opportunities for paid internships. This situation will change as the economy picks up.

6.4. Needs/Plans.
We need more full-time tenure-line faculty committed to the program, and we need our own incubator classroom equipped with up-to-date technology (software and hardware) in which to teach our courses, and we need commitment from our administration that such a classroom will be permanently funded and maintained at state-of-the-art levels in order to ensure that our students are employment ready when they graduate.

We are currently conducting a national search for a tenure-line faculty member to oversee and work toward bringing the program into the twenty-first century as part of his/her regular assignment.

7. B.A. English, Creative Writing

7.1. Strengths.
The CW concentration is the fastest growing track in the B.A. program. The program has several important strengths. First, an 18-unit Creative Writing course requirement (ENGL: 71 entry-level requirement plus 15 upper-division units) in which students can select to focus on taking workshops primarily in one genre (repeatable for credit) or in two or three genres. Second, an 18-unit Creative Writing course requirement in which students can elect to take 6 of their CW units in the Reed Magazine class, an activity class which organizes submissions, edits, and distributes the magazine both in print and in online electronic form. Third, an 18-unit core requirement of literature classes appropriate to increase the knowledge and widen the interests of Creative Writers. Fourth, a required core course, 139: Visiting Writers Seminar, in which students meet with distinguished
local and national writers and poets presented on campus by the Center for Literary Arts, an organization run by a tenure-line member of the department faculty. Fifth, a required core course, 193C: Capstone Seminar, in which students revise a portfolio of their creative work in one or more genres, plus produce new work as well as reflect on their development of Creating Writing knowledge and skills. This course parallels the 193 Capstone class for the English (literature) majors. And finally, nine units of required upper division literature electives, courses appropriate to increasing the knowledge and skills of Creative Writers

For full program requirements, see:  
http://www.sjsu.edu/english/undergraduate/majorcreatwrit/

7.2. Challenges.
The program’s main challenge is to provide a sufficient number of seats in undergraduate writing workshop courses -- 130, 131, and 135 -- without increasing class sizes. We also need to schedule writing workshops on days and times that accommodates both daytime and evening students without causing scheduling conflicts with core literature and required elective literature courses. Another challenge is to provide sufficient seats in literature courses and core courses for the CW Concentrators. Finally, we would like to provide better administrative infrastructure and advising to support CW Concentrators.

7.3 Trends.
The main trends in the program are: first, increased enrollment demand for 131: Poetry Writing and 135: Creative Nonfiction Writing; second, rapidly increasing number of students declaring as English Majors with a CW Concentration; and third, increased enrollment demand for 139: Visiting Writers Seminar and 193C: Capstone Seminar in Creative Writing and Self-Reflection. This increase is due to increasing number of CW Concentrators.

7.4. Needs/Plans:
The program needs to ensure that at least two sections of 130: Fiction Writing and 131: Poetry Writing are offered each semester, and at least one section (perhaps two) of 135: Nonfiction Writing. The program also plans to do the following: (i) increase the frequency of offering 139: Visiting Writers Seminar to once per semester or three out of every four semesters, (ii) create two upper-division craft and theory genre courses: one in poetry and poetics; another in narrative theory and craft of fiction/nonfiction, (iii) develop a Creative Writing Concentration website for students to post work and for guest poets and writers to interact with undergraduate students and creative writing instructors in upper-division writing workshops, (iv) purchase and install more digital workstations and add technological capacity to Sweeney Hall 229 for interactive teleconferencing and presentations/interactions with writers and students in distant locations, (v) develop curriculum and facilities for an upper-division course on Creative Writing for digital media, (vi) publish each semester an online newsletter for Creative Writing Concentrators on the Department website.
7. **B.A. English, The English Subject Matter Preparation for Teaching Program**

8.1. **Overview**

The English Subject Matter Preparation for Teaching program does not submit a program evaluation to undergraduate studies at SJSU; however, the program does have a major external reviewer in the CA Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC). The CCTC requires institutions that offer coursework for prospective English teachers to submit Program Approval documents that demonstrate the way the English Preparation for Teaching program fulfills the Standards for English Language Arts, grades 7-12. In December of 2005, the Program Approval document for SJSU’s English Subject Matter Program was submitted by the program director. The basic document was 80 pages; with the support materials and evidence, the entire document was 800 pages. It is not feasible to include even the basic document for this Program Review; however a scanned copy of the official letter of approval received from the CCTC, December 8, 2006, is included (Appendix H).

Additionally it is important to note that SJSU’s English Subject Matter Program was approved with only one request for minor revisions. This is in comparison to at least 10 of our CSU sister institutions, which had to submit as many as eight revisions. Additionally, only 20 of the 23 CSUs have achieved CCTC Approval. Even more sobering, no UC institutions have approved English Subject Matter Programs; and of the 45 other post-secondary institutions in the State, only 7 have approved English Subject Matter Programs. The work of compiling the document is tedious and labor-intensive; the demands of the CCTC are frequently less than transparent, so it is a significant achievement to have an approved English Subject Matter Program at San José State.

The CCTC serves as an external reviewer; additionally an assessment done within the Department is the English Credential Interview. This interview serves as an exit assessment of students who have attended SJSU at least two years as well as of applicants coming from other schools and programs. The English Credential interview has four written components that are submitted two weeks in advance of the interview. The Interview Packet (Appendix I) describes these components in detail. They assess the candidates’ writing skills, ability to discuss the literary devices and interpretations of poetry, and ability to identify issues in student writing. The interview itself is 45 minutes long and includes a 5th component – a mini teaching demonstration. The rubric for scoring the candidates is also included in the interview packet files. Assessment data from the last 10 semesters of interviews is provided in Appendix J. A significant conclusion indicated by the data is related to those who had to re-interview. Most of these students did not attend SJSU or do coursework in the Department of English and Comparative Literature; some transferred to SJSU after completing AA degrees at community colleges;
many had taken the California Subject Examination for Teachers (CSET), consisting of 4 Subtests: 2 are multiple choice, 2 are essay exams. The CSET is approved by the CCTC as one of the ways teacher candidates can demonstrate subject matter competency; the other way is by coursework in an approved program.

Two other aspects of assessment relating to English subject matter knowledge include the requisite 2.75 GPA required for admission to the Single Subject Credential Program and the Performance Assessment of CA Teachers (PACT). The PACT is actually a post-BA assessment; student teachers in their final semester complete the Teaching Event that consists of five components:

- Context for Learning;
- Planning, Instruction, and Assessment (for 3-5 days of instruction)
- Instructing Students and Supporting Learning—which includes videotaping one class
- Assessing Student Learning
- Reflecting on Teaching and Learning

The aspect of Academic Language is evaluated and needs to be addressed throughout the commentaries accompanying each of the five components. All the components of the PACT, with the exception of the Context of Learning, require the teacher candidates to have solid subject matter knowledge; thus the PACT provides another external evaluation of SJSU’s English Subject Matter Preparation for Teaching Program. Two courses offered through the Department of English and Comparative Literature, ENED 353: Methods of Teaching English and ENED 365: Seminar in English Education provide direct support for students completing the PACT. Successful completion of the PACT is a requirement for obtaining a preliminary Single Subject Credential; this exit assessment has been a State Requirement for students entering credential programs after July 1, 2008. (For Assessment Data on the PACT, see Appendix K)

The following advising materials are included in Appendix L.

- BA – English Subject Matter Preparation
- English Subject Matter Preparation checklist
- Road Map for English Subject Matter Preparation Program
- English Subject Matter Requirements

For full program requirements, see http://www.sjsu.edu/english/undergraduate/basingle/

### 8.2. Strengths

Several of the strengths of the English Subject Matter Preparation for Teaching Program are also challenges. Because the English subject matter program in the Department of English and Comparative Literature is a CCTC approved-program, students are able to take a set of required courses aligned to the content of English/Language Arts for 7-12 grade students in CA public schools and gain a
comprehensive knowledge of the content. Graduates with the English Preparation for Teaching emphasis are consistently stronger teacher candidates. The State of CA allows for the CSET as an alternative way of demonstrating subject matter competency, though as the data from our credential interviews shows, those who take the CSET, an isolated set of examinations, more often have to re-interview and frequently have greater difficulty in their student teaching.

Professors Warner and Lovell have developed a qualitative evaluation that is completed by all English Education candidates at the end of their final semester of the Credential Program (Appendix M). While this evaluation is administered at the end of the credential program and may not seem directly associated with the undergraduate experience, it asks students to reflect on all the ways they have worked with the English Department. Students consistently comment on the strength of the English faculty and on the support and advisement they have received throughout the program.

8.3. Challenges

The challenge of offering an Approved Subject Matter program is that students have to be able to get the required courses. In light of the on-going cuts to the CSU in general and to San José State University in particular, it becomes increasingly difficult to assure students in the English Preparation for Teaching program that the required courses can be offered every semester.

Currently Professors Mary Warner and Jonathan Lovell, Director and Associate Director of English Education respectively, bring extensive experience in English Education. Both have experience in teaching English in grades 7-12; have worked extensively with the San Jose Area Writing Project, providing professional development in the teaching of writing K-college; and have developed strong partnerships with many of the school districts throughout Santa Clara County. Warner and Lovell do all the advising for students throughout the program from their undergraduate preparation through their final semester of student teaching. Again, while the quality of their leadership and direction is a significant strength of the program, the challenge is that Professor Lovell will begin phased retirement at the end of Spring 2013; Professor Warner is likely to begin phased retirement in 2015. The size and demands of the English Education Program make it impossible for one person alone to direct the program; additionally the complexities of the English Education Program require specific expertise that not every English professor holds. With the fairly imminent phased retirement of Professor Lovell, the English Department needs to be able to hire a professor with preparation in English Education and experience with the National Writing Project. Given the serious delays in hiring faculty, it is difficult to know how the English Education program will be able to offer the quality program it has been offering.

8.4. Trends
The numbers of students in the English Subject Matter Preparation for Teaching majors has held steady since Fall 2006 when Mary Warner became Director. One reason it is difficult to know in any given semester exactly how many students are in the English Ed program is that many do not declare this specific focus and are only listed as BA in English majors. A safe estimate is that approximately one-third of the majors in the Department will enter the Single Subject Credential Program. Additionally, many students who graduate with a BA in English come back within a few years of graduation to complete whatever they need for subject matter competency and then move into the Single Subject Credential Program. The program has a good record of graduates getting hired. Though throughout the thirty-three school districts in Santa Clara County there have been teacher layoffs and increases in class sizes to deal with the ongoing budget cuts to education, most English Ed grads are hired within a year.

8.5. Needs/Plans
The most pressing need is to plan for the upcoming phased retirements of Lovell and Warner.

9. M.A. English

9.1. Strengths
The two most important strengths of the M.A. English program are: (1) the training it provides for students who plan to go on to seek jobs in teaching, especially the teaching of writing, and (2) the breadth of coverage of various eras and traditions of literary production (Appendix N). The program fulfills the first by having both a Graduate Assistant Program and a Teaching Associate Program. Placement in these programs is open to both MA and MFA students and is highly competitive. In the GA program both MA and MFA students are paid to shadow a professor in the teaching of a specific class, to help with office hours, to grade papers, and, on occasion, to lead the class in lecture or discussion. Usually students will work for a year as a GA before they become Teaching Associates. The transition is not automatic but involves another application and interview process. Once they are Teaching Associates they work as the instructor of record for their own section (or sections) of English 1A Freshman Composition, the most common area in which new English MAs—or MFAs or PhDs for that matter—will find teaching work. The T.A. Coordinator not only visits their classes at least twice but also runs ongoing meetings covering a range of topics related to pedagogy. Each new T.A also has a peer mentor, a TA who is now in his/her second year and teaching English 1B, the 2nd semester of Freshman Composition at SJSU. With up to two years of teaching Freshman Composition under their belt by the time they obtain their degrees, these graduate students are strong contenders for teaching positions even in poor economic times.
The M.A. English program’s focus on coverage or “breadth” is at least partially determined by the comprehensive examinations which every MA must pass to graduate and which cover classical/ancient literature, British literature since its origins in Old English, American literature, and the literatures of other Anglophone countries, as well as a sampling of literature in translation from around the world. In so far as possible, the program offers courses in a wide range of periods and traditions each year. The breadth of the M.A. program helps students as future teachers and as students in doctoral programs. By drawing attention to periods and areas students may not have previously had much interest in, the program promotes greater breadth of knowledge and makes students better, more confident teachers. The grounding students receive in the broad canon of literature and the training in research they acquire in the mandatory English 201, Methods and Materials class, prepares them for advanced study.

All M.A. graduate courses are taught in the evening, with classes beginning at 4 and 7 PM Monday-Thursday. This makes the program ideal for working adults, especially high school teachers, many of whom have returned to school to get more training within their subject area.

For full program requirements, see [http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/ma/)

### 9.2. Challenges

Our greatest challenge is recruiting top quality students while doing no advertising and offering no financial support other than the possibility of a GAship. Another challenge is preparing students for the comprehensive exams, especially those students who may have many other work or family responsibilities in addition to school.

### 9.3. Trends

More and more students with a 3.0 or better (the official minimum requirement for admission), are not prepared for graduate work. The impact of grade inflation at many institutions is evident in applications where decent GPAs are not always accompanied by solid writing and research skills. It would be helpful to raise our minimum requirements, but unfortunately we are not receiving enough applications to reject those with 3.0 to 3.5 GPA, especially when applicants with higher GPAs are more likely to be wooed away by institutions that can offer financial support. If we made our graduate programs smaller, we would lose the range of courses we can currently offer which are the key to its strength. While the weaker students we accept into the program can usually make it through their coursework (only a 3.0 is required to graduate), about 1 in 20 MA students fails part of the comprehensive exam (usually part 2), and fails to graduate.

### 9.4. Needs/Plans

The M.A. program needs to decrease the number of British literature classes, substituting them with more broadly defined periods and topics so that we can offer the whole rotation of the graduate catalog in the two years that it takes a full-time MA student to complete his/her coursework. At present, we offer only three American literatures courses that deal with genre, period or theme. American literature content is therefore defined by the rotation of faculty and their special
skills. If the British listings would follow the same formula, we could ensure a quicker rotation of courses and faculty. By broadening class descriptions, British literature faculty could teach to their strengths and expertise rather than the specific course that happens to be offered (i.e. now: “17th century literature” could be defined by the expertise of a faculty member instead as “Themes in Early Modern Literature: Nation and Narration” or “Genres in Early Modern Literature: The Pastoral and Ideologies of Class, Gender, and Form”). We also need to keep updating the comprehensive exam and its reading list periodically to ensure that the exam continues to reflect the goals of our program.

It would also be good to see some funds put into the process of advertising our program and recruiting talented MA candidates. At present our only form of advertisement is word of mouth. Most of the people who apply to our program have a reason for staying in this geographic location, not any particular reason for studying at SJSU. Many of our MA students have graduated from our own BA program. It would be better for our program and our students if we could recruit from a larger more diverse pool of applicants and demonstrate that student come to SJSU for what it has to offer academically rather merely for the convenience of its location.

We need to make better use of social media to keep in touch with alumni and thus to track how well our students are doing as PhD students and teachers at a variety of levels after they leave our program. At present we assess these long term outcomes through mostly anecdotal evidence. In general, the program would benefit from any administrative support that could help us to track alumni and keep records of where people are teaching now and learn how well prepared they are to teach, how well alumni did in applying for admission to advanced programs, how well they did in graduate school, and on the job market after obtaining their degree.

10. M.F.A. Creative Writing

10.1. Strengths

The main strength of the program is its dual genre focus; students are required to take 12 units of workshops in their primary genre, 6 units of workshop in their secondary genre. Required reading list for an MFA exam in both genres. The program also combines 18 units of workshop requirements (studio courses) with 15 units of required craft courses and/or literature seminars. In addition, the program includes a core course, 201C: Methods and Materials of Literary Production, which introduces MFA students to creative writing as a profession within the context of academic institutions, independent and academic publishing, and not-for-profit and academic-based literary organizations. Satisfies the GWAR by having students do research and compile an annotated bibliography on a contemporary author. Students must also write publishable book reviews, literary essays, and thesis proposals (practice for submitting a thesis proposal for approval by the Department Graduate Committee). The program further provides for
students to complete up to 6 units of an internship, working with a faculty member teaching a composition or undergraduate creative writing or literature course. Students can also choose to assist with the work of a local or regional arts organization, public arts funder, or private foundation. This fulfills the professional training requirement of the MFA curriculum. The program moreover provides for students to complete up to 6 units of composition and rhetoric pedagogy course work. This fulfills the professional training requirement of the MFA curriculum. Most importantly, the program provides for students to complete a publishable thesis in a genre of their choice (For thesis guidelines, see Appendix O).

For full program requirements, see [http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/mfa/](http://www.sjsu.edu/english/graduate/mfa/)

10.2. **Challenges.**

The program faces the following challenges: (i) to increase the size and quality of the pool of applicants seeking admission to the MFA program, (ii) to modify the MFA admissions review process to be less burdensome for faculty and the Creative Writing Director, (iii) to ensure that graduate workshops in all of the program’s primary genres (Creative Nonfiction, Fiction, Poetry, and Scriptwriting) are offered each semester, (iv) to ensure that 202: Poetic Craft and Theory and 203: Poetic Craft and Theory are both offered once each academic year, (v) to find sufficient seats in 241: Fiction Workshop for all the eligible primary and secondary genre Fiction track students each semester, (vi) to create a less burdensome administrative infrastructure to seat MFA students during the Early Registration period in the genre workshops that fulfill their graduation requirements, (vii) to create incentives to motivate tenure-line Creative Writing faculty to take on second and third reader responsibilities for MFA thesis committees, and (viii) to help students prepare to pass their Foreign Language requirement by examination. And to better coordinate Foreign Language exams with faculty in the World Languages Department and/or other appropriate departments.

10.3. **Trends**

The main trends in this program are: higher percentage of students applying from out of state; increasing interest in the Creative Nonfiction track, both as a primary and secondary genre; and increased student demand to take literature-based graduate courses offered outside the English Department by such departments as Philosophy and RTFT.

10.4. **Needs/Plans**

The MFA program plans to change the nature of the MFA exam or possibly eliminate it, as a majority of MFA program faculty prefers to do. We will also try to find ways to develop more administrative support for the MFA program and the MFA Director and to find sources of financial support for students in the MFA program in their first year. Another important goal of the program is to develop a translation seminar or workshop for students in the MFA program that satisfies the MFA Foreign Language requirement. The program needs to decrease workshop class size, and if necessary, increase the number of sections of an impacted genre track such as Fiction and/or Creative
Nonfiction. We also need to offer 202: Poetic Craft and Theory each spring semester and 203: Narrative Craft and Theory each fall semester. We would like to consider offering online sections of graduate writing workshops during summer session. We would also like to create or host an international exchange program for MFA students through Extended and International Studies. Finally, we need to increase the budget for print and online advertising for the MFA program. It would also be very helpful to hire additional part-time administrative staff to assist the MFA Director handle routine administrative tasks such as facilitating MFA admissions and MFA workshop student registration.

11. General Education

11.1. Composition

11.1.1. Strengths
As indicated by generally positive student and peer evaluations, the Composition program has a very talented, motivated, and creative group of teachers. Successful hiring and supervision make possible our dynamic community of teachers, despite the fact that these efforts are challenged by heavy teaching loads (faculty teach up to eight courses per year with high course caps of 25 students per section; the National Council of Teachers of English and the Modern Language Association recommend twenty). The program is also innovating by recommending an overhaul of the course guidelines and student learning outcomes to better reflect national best practices, faculty strengths, and student needs. In addition, we are running pilot programs to test the efficacy of portfolio assessment. The collaboration among the members of the faculty in all of the aforementioned endeavors is a true strength of the program.

11.1.2. Challenges
First, the course caps are too high. Second, the program has no regular access to teaching with technology, a vital component of 21st century writing. Third, the curriculum and SLOs have not been revised in some time. Some SLOs no longer accurately describe what faculty do/should do in the courses.

11.1.3. Trends
The overwhelming majority of courses in the program (almost 95%) are taught by part-time, contingent faculty. While they are good teachers, many of them teach elsewhere as well, meaning they do not have the time/inclination to stay on campus for unpaid professional development workshops. (The community colleges, where many members of our faculty also work, pay teachers to attend on-campus professional development workshops and occasionally pay for faculty to travel to conferences and workshops.)

11.1.4. Needs/Plans
We have just added a new course, English 100A, which we intend to develop and strengthen after initial assessment. This course serves as writing instruction for upper-division students who do not pass the Writing Skills Test (WST); passing the class with a C or better satisfies the GWAR in the same way the WST does. We have also recommended a large-scale overhaul of the composition program, featuring everything from rewriting the SLOs to expanding the options for the culminating assessment. The 19-page proposal is attached (Appendix P).

12. General Education (GE)

The GE courses offered by the English department effectively advance GE Program Objectives by helping students to develop (a) advanced communication skills, (b) analytical, critical and creative thinking skills, and (c) multi-cultural, global perspectives through the study of literature.

12.2.1. List of GE Courses offered:

Lower Division:

- English 1A, Composition I (A2)
- English 1B, Composition II (C3)
- English 7, Critical Thinking (A3)
- English 10, Great Works of Literature (C2)
- English 22, Science Fiction & Fantasy (C2)
- English 40, Contemporary World Fiction (C2)
- English 71, Creative Writing (C2)
- English 78, Introduction to Shakespeare’s Drama (C2)

Upper Division:

- English 100W, Writing Workshop (Z)
- English 100WB, Writing Workshop (Z)
- English 117A, American Film, Literature, and Culture (S) (New Course)
- English 117B, Global Film, Literature, and Culture (V)
- English 123A: Literature for Global Understanding: The Americas (V)
- English 123B: Literature for Global Understanding: Africa (V)
- English 123C: Literature for Global Understanding: Oceania (V)
- English 123D: Literature for Global Understanding: Asia (V)
- English 126: Holocaust Literature (Area V)
- English 169, Ethnicity in American Society (S)
- English 174, Literature, Self, and Society (S) (Deactivated Fall 2011)

12.2.2. Assessment Schedules, Reports, and Syllabi: The Department has established a clear schedule for the assessment of all its GE courses (Appendix Q). Following this schedule, the Department files annual assessment reports for each course. An
Assessment Summary Statement for each course is provided in Appendix R. A sample syllabus for each GE course listed above is also included in Appendix S.

13. WASC Program Outcomes Rubric

Using the WASC rubric as a guideline, the English Department held several meetings to discuss progress in assessing students in each program. An attempt was made to locate each program’s level of performance on the WASC rubric and to indicate steps to be taken to move to the next level. The table below shows each program’s placement on the WASC rubric:

<table>
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<th>WASC Categories</th>
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<th>B.A. CW</th>
<th>M.A.</th>
<th>M.F.A.</th>
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For full WASC Program Outcomes Rubric Assessment Reports, see Appendix T.

14. Student Learning

Recognizing the importance of Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) with quantitative as well as qualitative measurements, the Department of English & Comparative Literature has restructured and reformulated the list of outcomes for the English major program to better reflect departmental goals as well as national disciplinary standards. Since these SLOs have only recently been adopted, the assessment process is still being fully worked out. Below is a summary of the five SLOs and their assessment.

13.1. SLO1: Students will demonstrate the ability to read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric.

Assessment: SLO1 is assessed by focusing on the final exam in 100W, the required junior-level writing course. The exam requires students to explicate a literary text, focusing on both content as well as form. The exam is anonymously graded by two different instructors using a holistic rubric. Student performance data was collected over a five-year period (Fall 2007-Fall 2011). Out of 417 students, the following percentages demonstrated the achievement of
SLO #1 at a high level, 33%; at an average level, 38%, at a marginal level, 16%, and failed to do so, 13%. Approximately 20% of the 417 students were not English majors.

13.2. SLO2: Students will show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature.

**Assessment:** All majors are required to take two surveys in British literature (56A, 56B) and two surveys in American literature (68A, 68B) as well as one course in World literature (123a,b,c,d; d; 125) in which major literary works from each significant literary period are studied in depth and presented within their critical contexts. We have tried using final course grades from these classes to measure SLO2. (For instance, in 56A, Spring 2010 21 out of 35 students achieved a final grade above 75%). We also tried to use a self-reported survey questionnaire administered in English 193, the culminating Capstone Seminar for English majors. But the data collected using these methods have not proved very reliable or useful.

The English Department therefore plans to improve the assessment of SLO2 by using the portfolio assignment in Engl 193. Since all majors are required to take two survey courses in British literature (56A and 56B), two in American literature (68 A and 68B) and one in World Literature (123A, B, C, D, or 125), the Department plans to require one graded essay from each of these classes be made part of the portfolio. Since the portfolio also requires revision and reflection on previously completed work, it may be possible to get better feedback on how well students on doing in relation to SLO2.

13.3. SLO3: Students will demonstrate the ability to write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.

**Assessment:** In order to assess SLO 3, students in 100W are asked to write six essays that vary in subject, content, purpose, and intended audience. A Fall 2011 section of 100W with 22 students wrote two poetic explications, two critical essays, and two bibliographic essays in which they were asked explicitly to define the “subject, occasion, audience, purpose—and the particular conversation in which you are engaging your audience as they contemplate your subject.” Of the 22 students in the class, 15 received 75% or above, demonstrating average to high levels of achievement. The remaining 7 failed to demonstrate achievement of SLO3.

13.4. SLO4: Students will develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.

**Assessment:** SLO4 is measured by success on written assignments in 100W requiring students to conduct thorough research on the critical conversation surrounding a particular topic. A Fall 2011 section of 100W with 22 students wrote two essays in which they were asked to “summarize the critical conversation” on a particular text under study. In order to achieve this goal, students had to research their topic thoroughly, using books, articles, and databases available to them through the SJSU library. Of the 22 students in the class, 14 received 75% or above on this assignment, demonstrating average to high levels of achievement. The remaining 8 failed to demonstrate achievement of SLO4.

13.5. SLO5:

Students will articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.
SLO 5 is difficult to measure, but it important because it is the driving pedagogy behind many of our courses in the major. Each lecture and class discussion, particularly in upper division electives in the major, is framed by such relationships, and each text is presented to students, as much as possible, within such frameworks. Student success in this area is determined by their ability to comprehend literary material in its contexts and to then be able to discuss these relationships. For example, in ENGL 145, students were asked to actively participate in classroom discussions, and graded on their participation. A grade of 90% or better in participation in ENGL 145 would indicate student success in SLO 5. In Spring of 2011, out of 29 students enrolled in the course, 16 students achieved an A in this area. In Engl 125, the instructor used a written Reader Response assignment that required students to articulate the relations among culture, history and text to measure SLO5. The following percentages were reported for this class in achievement of SLO5: at a high level, 40%; at an average level, 40%; at a marginal level, 4%; and 16% failed to do so. Approximately 10% of the 32 students were not English majors.

Here again, the Department is in the process of improving the assessment process. The plan is to make better use of the data from Engl 193 (portfolio; questionnaire) to measure SLO5.

15. RDE: (Appendix A)

16. Strategic Planning Goals

The Department of English & Comparative Literature is committed to promoting SJSU’s strategic goals of integrative learning, inclusive excellence and community connections. Despite the static environment, the Department has continued to attract high enrollment and managed to provide high quality instruction in all its programs. However, heavy workload and scarcity of resources limit what the Department is able to do to further SJSU’s strategic goals.

17. Summary

The Department of English & Comparative Literature has the potential to be a vibrant center of educational excellence and scholarly activity in the Bay Area. With strategic investments in human resources and facilities, the Department can achieve this ambitious goal. Most students graduating from the Department become successful teachers in schools and community colleges in the area; many go on to attend graduate school; several emerge as published authors. To ensure student success and enhance student achievement, the Department offers programs aimed at providing students with a solid foundation in literary studies, a keen understanding of the issues and trends within their field of concentration, a sophisticated awareness of global culture, advanced critical/creative thinking skills, and effective communication skills. The Department further ensures that the learning outcomes adopted by the programs reflect the highest disciplinary standards while also taking into account the changing needs of global citizenship. As the field of literary studies expands to become more interdisciplinary and global in scope, the Department of English &
Comparatives Literature seeks to strengthen those parts of its programs that advance these particular goals while maintaining its commitment to teaching a solid core curriculum. Toward this end, the Department plans to promote interdisciplinarity and collaboration (in learning/teaching as well as scholarly/creative activity) though curricular revision and institutional support.