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Introduction

The Department of English and Comparative Literature embraces the Program Planning process as an opportunity to re-evaluate its program and assess its future needs. The Department's curriculum committee, a large and representative body incorporating both new and established faculty, meet regularly throughout the academic year and is engaged continuously in reviewing and refining our degree programs. During 2005-2006 academic year, the committee addressed the demands of Program Planning and made a number or recommendations, including a survey of current undergraduate and undergraduate students. The committee also addressed once again the merits and design of the program, revising course requirements, and introducing a number of new courses to meet the increasing diversity of students on a campus where more than a hundred different languages are spoken.

In addition to an English major that includes a Career Writing concentration and a large Teacher Preparation component, the Department also has four minor programs and a massive General Education program offering about 100 sections of freshman composition courses every semester as well as courses in Critical Thinking and General Education. Some parts of this report, like faculty contributions to scholarship, are addressed in terms of the entire program; others, like student demand and quality of advising, are specific to components
of the program. We have tried to obey the guidelines while keeping repetition to a minimum.

A. CENTRALITY TO THE MISSION

The Department of English and Comparative Literature makes a critical contribution to the Mission of San Jose State University, which is “to enrich the lives of its student, to transmit knowledge to its students along with the necessary skills for applying it in the service of our society, and to expand the base of knowledge through research and scholarship.” The ability to read and to articulate understanding—in the broadest senses—forms the core of higher education. If you can think it, you say it; if you can say it, you can write it; and if you can write it, you can read it and explain it. Careful, articulate, often surprising writing is the real mark of the educated mind and of the distinctive cultural milieu of the University. We talk, we argue, we paint, we sculpt, we make films, crunch numbers, design buildings and businesses. But in the end we read and we write: faculty, students, and alumni.

The College of Humanities and the Arts (of which the Department of English and Comparative Literature is a part) has also adopted a Vision Statement with which English and Comparative Literature is in harmony:

Vision Statement:
College of Humanities and the Arts

Preamble

*The word “Metropolitan” meant “mother-city” in ancient Greece, and today the word “polis” still describes not simply a city, but a cultural community in which arts, letters, and sciences are essential. The metropolitan citizen is a cultural developed person, and the role of the “metropolitan university” is*
ultimately to make students socially and culturally aware in this sense.

Vision

The College of Humanities and the Arts keeps the great tradition of liberal Arts alive in a globally aware and technologically sophisticated era of information. It instills an understanding of human existence that is both tolerant and moral, and nurtures an appreciation of human creativity that gives depth and meaning to the lives its graduates will lead, in whatever profession or calling.

The College helps students to understand the human aspiration for beauty and truth by engaging students in the creation and analysis of the arts. Through its many professional arts programs, it enriches life in the Metropolitan University and its environs, and it cultivates educated minds that will create works expressing the values of a diverse heritage.

The College develops students' ability to think critically, communicate effectively, bridge linguistic barriers, and understand how culture shapes perceptions and beliefs. It helps students see their individuality in relation to a multi-ethnic culture in California and the United States, as well as to world culture.

Above all, the College of Humanities and the Arts engages students in defining and realizing full human potential in an age of information and technology. Its departments, schools, and centers offer programs in which students learn to think and feel in ways that make the present rich the future promising, inculcating intellectual integrity and a love of truth, wisdom, and beauty. It offers a self-renewing resource for creative research and teaching, taking advantage of opportunities afforded by emerging technologies. The College educates those who will contribute to the life of the community, and continually provides our community with a rich array of programs, public events, and advanced degrees.

The talents, insights, and skills instilled by the College are vital to the success of public and private endeavors in the Silicon Valley and beyond, as people ask not only “how” but also “why” we are building the future.

As this statement emphasizes, “the role of the metropolitan university is ultimately to make students socially and culturally aware,” and thus the College seeks to “instill an understanding of human existence that is both tolerant and
moral, and nurture an appreciation of human creativity that gives depth and meaning to the lives its graduates will lead, in whatever profession or calling."

The **Mission Statement** of the Department of English and Comparative Literature directly focuses on the central goals described in the University and College statements, and it has been reviewed and reaffirmed during the program planning process this year.

**Mission Statement: Department of English & Comparative Literature**

The mission of the Department of English & Comparative Literature is to work within the mission of the University and the mission of the College of Humanities and the Arts to develop the reading and writing skills, the interpretive ability, and the cultural awareness of its students by maintaining and enhancing a tradition of strong teaching, good scholarship, and vigorous support of creative literary activity. To fulfill this mission, the Department affirms these goals:

1.1 Develop students' literary understanding, including their reading ability, critical thinking, interpretive skills and historical knowledge of literature and language,

1.2 Deepen students' appreciation of diverse cultures and expand their view of the world through study of the written word.

1.3 Develop students' rhetorical and creative skills: ability to think, speak, listen, and write effectively.

1.4 Maintain a broad-based program of General Education courses at both the lower and upper-division levels.

1.5 Foster professional growth and development for the faculty.

1.6 Recruit and retain a diverse student and faculty population.

1.7 Develop and maintain excellent relations with and service to our wider Community, including alumni and emeritus faculty.

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. The subject matter of this program—imaginative literature and examples of the most polished and powerful uses of language—has traditionally formed the basis of the Humanities, and will continue to do so.

The study of imaginative literature in itself hones skills in communication and critical inquiry. To further develop these skills, the Department of English and Comparative Literature requires—and carefully evaluates—extensive 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). The Curriculum Coordinator evaluates all course syllabi to ascertain that writing requirements are being respected (the Composition Committee does the same monitoring of our freshman English 1A and 1B courses). In addition, the program offers several courses in specific forms of writing, including Speech Writing (English 134), Technical Writing (English 107), Poetry (English 131), Fiction and Nonfiction writing (English 130 and 135), even a new course on Writing for Youth (English 137). The program also requires all instructors of upper-division major courses to circulate our Student Learning Goals to their students (See Appendix A), and to exploit these goals in the design and teaching of their classes. Students are assessed in their mastery of these goals in the Department’s capstone course (English 193, Senior Seminar).

Further, the Department is very actively engaged in teacher preparation, and has one of the first programs submitted for renewal under the revised standards of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The program’s subject
matter preparation program in English fits completely within the major. Finally, with a wide selection of courses in early as well as modern literature, in ethnic literatures, and in literature in translation, the major presents multi-cultural and global perspectives and brings to life people of diverse economic and ethnic backgrounds with the force and immediacy that only great literature can provide. An understanding of ethical choices inherent in human development is the very essence of the materials students study in our program.

Just as important as the major, our General Education courses contribute directly to the University's mission. Our first- and second-semester freshman composition courses, required for graduation, concentrate on improving students' reading and writing abilities, but to this end they also require that students study and respond to many well-known, well-written texts that treat vital ethical and social issues and introduce students to diverse cultures and ideas. Our various general education courses introduce the non-major to some of the world's finest pieces of imaginative literature and offer an introduction to humanistic inquiry.

In all these various ways the English program contributes to the University's mission and touches nearly every student on campus.

Although the Department feels that it has always offered a strong major, it has exploited the Program Review to reevaluate every aspect of its program, seeking feedback from current students and faculty as well as from staff and administrators (between budgetary constraints and the thoroughness of our previous review's survey, we did not feel that it was necessary to poll alumni). The results of this and previous reviews have directed the Department in its
revision of the program, including the re-alignment of required courses and the addition of new ones. The Department has adopted these changes with the intention to

- encourage development of innovative new courses
- improve the focus and effectiveness of require courses
- engage students more in planning their own learning
- specify learning objectives for the major
- strengthen the assessment plan for the major.

B. QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

1. Description of the Program

   a. Major English and Comparative Literature (Teacher Preparation, Career Writing, Minors)

   Compared to other English major programs across the country, SJSU’s is rigorous both in terms of total units and specific courses required. Our program requires 48 units. Our closest sister campuses require fewer units and offer more varied options for completing their programs. For example, the English Major at Sacramento State requires 45 units; Sonoma State requires 40 units; Cal State East Bay requires the equivalent of 38 units; and San Francisco State requires 39 (see Appendix A for an overview of the English Major Requirements and a complete listing of SJSU English undergraduate courses).

   San Jose State University’s Major in English and Comparative Literature requires a minimum of one year of university foreign language study. Core
requirements demand that students choose three of five survey courses covering English, American, and European literature. Upper-division requirements include a course in writing in the discipline (English 100W), a course in Shakespeare, and a Senior Seminar capstone course asking students to assess fulfillment of their learning goals. Students must also choose one course among several in the following groups: early British Literature, later British Literature, American Literature, World Literature, and Language and Linguistics. In addition to these "guided electives," students have 12 units of free electives. This basic curricular structure, the result of extensive debate during our last program review in 1991-92 and revisited for the 2000 review, has served us reasonably well, as various measures discussed below will demonstrate.

Within its major, English and Comparative Literature offers one concentration: Career Writing. This concentration keeps the core major requirements but adds 18 units of required writing courses including an Internship Seminar.

The English Single-subject Preparation Program is another important strand of the major. Students selecting this strand are encouraged to take the second half of the English and American Literature surveys, ENGL 56B and 68B, respectively. In addition to the English courses required for those in the Literature strand of the major, English Single-subject candidates are required to take the following five upper-division courses:

- ENGL 103: Modern English Grammar
- ENGL 109: Writing and the Young Writer
- ENGL 112B: Literature for Young Adults
- ENGL 117: Film, Literature and Cultures
- ENGL 169: Ethnicity in American Literature

These five courses along with the other seven courses required of all English majors comprise the 36 core units needed to fulfill State requirements for English Single-subject Preparation Programs. The twelve units of Extended Study required by California for English Single-subject Preparation Programs can come from any of the other upper-division courses in the English major.

The Department's commitment to Teacher Preparation goes beyond subject matter preparation courses. We also offer Methods of Teaching English: ENED (English Education) 353, Seminar in English Education: ENED 365 for English Single-subject candidates completing their student teaching, and Supervision of Student Teachers in English: ENED 184YZ. In addition, Department faculty interview prospective candidates, advise and review transcripts for subject matter competency, and oversee the placement of student teachers in the field of English.

In addition to the major, the Department offers four minors: Literature, Comparative Literature, Creative Writing, and Professional and Technical Writing. As will be explained below, each of these minors serves specific audiences, mainly majors outside the Department. However, since all the courses that make up these minors exist within the major, it will usually be unnecessary to make specific reference to the minor programs in this report.

The Department also offers a Professional and Technical Communication Certificate that is aligned with its Minor Career Writing (see Appendix B for
overviews of the Concentration in Career Writing, the Teacher Preparation Program, and the Department’s minors).

**b. General Education (Composition, Literature, Critical Thinking)**

The Department of English and Comparative Literature’s commitment to General Education is extensive. To meet the demand for the two Written Communication courses required for graduation, the Department offers each semester around 100 sections of English 1A and 1B. It also offers multiple sections of courses in Critical Thinking (English 7) and an upper-division Writing Workshop (English 100W), and seven literature courses, some also in multiple sections, that meet the criteria for lower-and upper-division General Education, including newly approved courses on Contemporary World Fiction and Literature for Global Understanding:

**Engl 010: Great Works of Literature**

**Engl 040: Contemporary World Fiction (new)**

Engl 078: Introduction to Shakespeare's Drama

Engl 117: Film, Literature, and Cultures

**Engl 123A Literature for Global Understanding: The Americas**

**Engl 123B Literature for Global Understanding: Africa**

**Engl 123C Literature for Global Understanding: Oceania**

**Engl 123D Literature for Global Understanding: Asia**

Engl 169: Ethnicity in American Literature

Engl 174: Literature, Self, and Society

Engl 177: Twentieth Century Fiction
In addition, several English courses, like 169 (Ethnicity in American Literature), 112A (Children's Literature), and 103 (Modern English), serve as core courses in other programs like the multiple-subject credential preparation program. In sum, the Department's contributions to the University go far beyond its major offerings and support the University mission in manifold ways.

2. Quality of Academic Program

a. Assessment by the University Program Planning Process

In its last program review in 2000-2001 the outside reviewer praised the Department for initiatives to restructure both its major and its M.A. program, its addition of a new Master of Fine Arts program, and its dedicated and productive faculty. The reviewer also made some specific recommendations, the principal one being that the Department design a new and expanded Writing Center as an adjunct to its writing program. Unfortunately, the Department has moved in the opposite direction, budgetary restrictions having required us to close the Center (see Appendix C for a copy of the Department's last Program Review).

b. Faculty expertise and currency in their disciplines

Appendix D (Department CVs) details faculty productivity in scholarship and professional development. Since our last review, tenure-line faculty have written or edited 30 books, made 42 contributions to books (chapters, essays, sections), published 79 journal articles, 26 review essays, 7 nonfiction essays, 11 short stories, over a hundred poems, made over 225 presentations at conferences, and produced 6 digital media works. If these numbers are down slightly from our previous self-review, it is because our number of tenure-line faculty has shrunk


Department faculty have given presentations at meetings of such professional organizations as the American Comparative Literature Association, American Literature Association, Associated Writing Programs, Association of Asian American Studies, Association for the Study of Australian Literature, the U.S. Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies, California State University Council, California Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas at Austin, the Children's Literature Association, Conference for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature in the United States, Dictionary Society of North America, Early Modern Society, European Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies, Hawaii International Conference on Arts and Humanities, International Byron Symposium, International Society for the History of Rhetoric, Linguistic Society of America, Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association, the Modern Language Association, Northern Renaissance Conference, Renaissance Conference of Southern California, Renaissance Society of America, Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association, South Asian Literary Association, South-Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Southeastern Medieval Association, and the Western Jewish Studies Association.
The Department of English and Comparative Literature's 30 part-time/temporary faculty includes 4 who have earned an M.F.A. and 8 holders of the Ph.D. They have achieved a publication record that includes books with By-Line Press, University of Michigan Press, and Black Dirt Press.

The venues in which the articles, review essays and poems have appeared include such journals as Multi Ethnic Literature of the US (MELUS), Studies in American Jewish Literature, Western American Literature, Bilingual Review, Women's Studies International Forum, Theatre Journal, and Nineteenth-Century Contexts.

In addition, part-time/temporary faculty have made 42 conference presentations and given 12 public readings during the period since our last review. These presentations have occurred at meetings of such organizations as the Modern Language Association, regional MLA organizations (North Eastern MLA, Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association), the American Literature Association, the Wordsworth Summer Conference, and the American Culture Association. Readings have occurred at many bookstores and colloquia and symposia.

c. Library Resources

The library has a strong collection of American and British literature and criticism, especially California and Western writers. The Department has worked with the Library to make every effort to collect literature and criticism of multicultural authors. We have an adequate collection of world literature in English with some of the titles also in the original language. European literature
constitutes a significant portion of this part of the collection. In recent years the availability of English translations of other national literatures has made it possible to strengthen those collections. We have substantial material on folklore and myth.

The Library has collected material in a variety of formats in support of the teaching of English to native and non-native speakers. In addition, it has collected material on the linguistic, political, social and clinical (speech and reading disorder) aspects of language.

In addition to books and journals, we have collected audio and video materials, but holdings need great improvement. We subscribe to a number of electronic indexes and full text databases for literature and language arts, expanding this new aspect of our collection as funds allow. The Library has regularly provided instruction in Information Competence for targeted English courses so that lower division (Engl 1B), upper-division (Engl 100W), and graduate (Engl 201) students acquire research skills appropriate to the curriculum.

Both the Library and the Department of English and Comparative Literature provide links to library resources on their Web pages. The Department of English and Comparative Literature Web Page is maintained by professor Scott Rice:

(http://www2.sjsu.edu/depts/english/index.htm)

It includes a master set of links to informational and research Websites called “Literary Locales,” which has received wide recognition, including a laudatory
review in *The New York Times*. It has received over 197,000 visits as of this
review.

Despite the valiant efforts of faculty and library staff, book and periodical
budgets have been so seriously eroded that the collection is inadequate for
graduate and even undergraduate upper-division student research. The faculty
require much more support for their research, including on-line searching
capabilities that are not widely available or convenient. Many faculty and
students rely heavily on interlibrary loans, which can be time-consuming and
unreliable.

3. Quality of Instruction

   a. Evaluation of Faculty: SOTEs and Peer Evaluations

   The Department’s faculty are routinely evaluated by several measures. All
faculty are required to participate in the Student Opinion of Teaching
Effectiveness (SOTE) program. Each faculty member must have two courses
evaluated each year, and often faculty request that additional courses be
evaluated. These statistical evaluations are reported to the instructor and to the
Department. These written comment sheets are collected, collated, and
reviewed (along with the statistical summaries) by the Department Chair before
being returned to individual instructors. The information from the SOTE process
is then included routinely in all other reviews. Every semester, approximately
70% of all the courses offered by the Department of English and Comparative
Literature are evaluated by students—approximately 120 courses out of 170. The
Department’s SOTE scores have been, on average, within or above the “norm”
ranges (see Appendix E for evaluation tools in the Department of English and Comparative Literature).

Tenured faculty annually write peer evaluations for all probationary and temporary faculty. Tenure-line and tenured Assistant and Associate Professors also receive peer evaluations annually if not more often. Temporary faculty and tenure-line faculty in their first, third and fifth years of review must also submit an annual Summary of Achievements report. These other forms of evaluation become part of the Instructor's record for formal institutional reviews, which occur annually for all temporary and probationary faculty. Such reviews involve extensive documentation, and the reports are read and voted upon by the Department's Retention, Tenure, and Promotion Committee. Additionally, Associate and Full Professors undergo a post-tenure review at five-year intervals, submitting dossiers for evaluation by the RTP committee.

One consideration in assessing the effectiveness of a faculty is the degree to which it has succeeded in ameliorating historical patterns of bias against hiring women and minority candidates. The success of any program in coping with issues of hiring must be gauged within the context of the particular fields and the institutional and regional pressures that may affect a program's ability to attract and employ candidates.

In fall 2003, the latest date for which any figures are available, 59% of all SJSU "regular faculty" (tenure-line appointments) were male, and 41% were female. Figures for the College of Humanities and the Arts were almost identical: 58% male and 42% female regular faculty. In 2003, that percentage in English
and Comparative Literature was weighted slightly more toward men: 61% male and 39% female. Since 2003, however, the Department has hired four women and with the departure of one male department member and the retirement of another, in fall 2006 the gender division will be even, 13 men and 13 women. This parity is the culmination of the Department's long history of hiring women, one going back to at least the 1930s.

In fall 2003, the latest date for which any figures are available, 21% of all regular faculty in the School of Humanities and the Arts were members of minority groups. In English that figure was only 14%, a figure that still holds. Several factors have contributed to the relative decline in minority presence on the faculty. To begin with, the doctorate in English or Comparative Literature is not a popular choice among minority graduate students. Furthermore, competition for minority faculty is intense, and the Department competes at a substantial disadvantage in the hiring marketplace. Low salaries, combined with teaching and service loads that are as heavy as any state university system's (and heavier than the great majority) have frustrated efforts to hire minority candidates in tenure-line positions. Applicant pools have shrunk, and local university enrollments are stagnant or falling because of San Francisco Bay Area's punishing cost of living. Why should promising minority faculty embark on careers in a department where they can expect to be underpaid and overworked? Despite these challenges and obstacles, the Department continues to expend much effort in recruiting minority candidates. The problem is complicated by the modesty of our recruitment budget. Last year we were
allocated only $1,500 per position (as compared to $5,000 at institutions like Sacramento State and California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo). On such a meager budget we are expected to generate our initial pools and then bring at least four candidates to campus, often from as far away as the East Coast. In addition, our hiring cycle does not allow us to make position offers until March or April, several months behind many other institutions. Because our Fall semester ends before Christmas and Spring semester does not begin until the end of January, we cannot bring candidates to campus until early February. As a result, our pool of finalists has shrunken considerably by the time we can make choices and extend offers.

**b. Expectations of Student Achievement**

The Department of English and Comparative Literature has been a leader in the fight to hold down grade inflation within the College and the University. According to the most recent figures, Department of English and Comparative Literature Lower Division Courses average a 2.65 GPA on a scale of 4. These official statistics do not take into account the fact that more than one half of the classes we teach are graded A, B, C, and No Credit, with the “No Credit” grades not counting in GPA calculation. This means that students in our composition courses who would have gotten Ds and Fs (thus lowering the GPA for such courses) are receiving instead a “No Credit.” Taking this factor into consideration, our Lower Division GPA averages about 2.30. The average upper-division GPA for the Department was 2.88 in the latest available statistics.
The Department's GPA statistics are consistently below those of the College of Humanities and the Arts.

The variety and extent of student learning goals and their evaluation have been major foci of this program review. As a result, the Department adopted of a list of learning goals and a revised plan for assessment of the major. These plans are summarized in section "I" (page 42)

c. Effective Student Advising

Given the fact that many of our students are transfers (80% among majors), effective advising continues to be a daunting challenge. But the Department of English and Comparative Literature has met that challenge with considerable success. In accordance with University practice, The Department has created "roadmaps" to guide entering freshman who will major in English, English with a Concentration in Career Writing, and the English Subject-Matter Preparation Program (see Appendix A). It has also committed resources for a senior faculty member to devote substantial time to advising. This "Lead Advisor" takes responsibility for knowing the myriad details of special requirements and transfer agreements, acts as advisor to other advisors, is regularly available for at least six hours per week by appointment, and approves each major's official program.

Two other faculty members in the Department also receive release-time for the purpose of advising and other program duties: 1) The Teacher Education Program has a Coordinator who holds regular office hours, tracks the work of undergraduates and credential candidates, and maintains files. 2) The Career
and Professional Writing Program has a Coordinator who advises and answers inquiries. In addition, the Department has a Website created and maintained by a faculty member. The Website carries extensive information about all programs and degree requirements, including course descriptions and Student Learning Goals. It includes class schedules as well as an extensive list of “Literary Locales,” described previously. Yet another device for informing students about our program is our undergraduate *Newsletter*, a publication with course offerings and descriptions as well as stories about events and personalities in the Department (see Appendix A).

This commitment of resources has certainly paid dividends. Our recent survey of majors indicates that 70% of current students agreed or strongly agreed that “faculty advising was readily available and helpful.” The Department will try to ascertain why 30% did not agree but one explanation is that some students never seek help from an advisor, relying on printed advising materials alone to navigate their ways through the program.

**d. Student outcomes assessment**

Even before academia’s current assessment mania, the Department of English and Comparative Literature devoted considerable care to assessing student performance. In our freshman composition courses, English 1A and 1B, for over three decades we have undertaken the three recognized forms of assessment: preliminary, formative, and summative. First, however, the Department Composition and Curriculum Committees have developed course guidelines for each class (see Appendix F for examples). The two committees
and peer evaluators then monitor green sheets to insure that the guidelines are being respected. As a mode of preliminary assessment, we require all instructors to begin their classes with an in-class diagnostic essay (see Appendix F for examples). Upon on the basis of these essays, some students were once assigned to our departmental Writing Center, now defunct. If students write too poorly, usually because of ESL problems, we refer them to the Department of Linguistics and Language Development, which offers courses in Academic English for those not yet prepared to write at the college level. Those who seem marginally able to work at course level become the subject of the instructor’s more careful scrutiny.

As the primary method of formative assessment, students are assigned 8,000 words of in- and out-of-class writing, the latter of which we monitor through a service called Turnitin.com that enables us to identify most instances of plagiarism. Each essay is of course evaluated for form and content (and the confluence of both), the quality of thinking and writing being paramount. In the course of a semester, each student will write eight to ten essays. We are considering lowering this to six to eight but keeping the 8,000-word minimum.

For its summative assessment in Freshman Composition, the Department administers a final essay examination that every student must take and pass in order to receive credit for the course. The final examination is administered on the last Saturday before the end of the semester (see Appendix F for sample exams), then receives a blindfold holistic reading by the entire composition faculty. Each exam is read anonymously by two readers who assign a score on
Because they have an enrollment cap of 15, graduate Creative Writing workshops and literature seminars require a high level of student participation and interaction with peers. The M.F.A. core courses (ENGL 201C [Materials and Methods of Literary Research] and 204 [Seminar in Modern Approaches to Literature]) literature seminars encourage M.F.A. candidates to develop their skills in formal and informal oral presentations as well as in writing. The M.F.A. program has been large enough, combined with the population of M.A. students, to permit the Department to offer graduate workshops in each genre nearly every semester. M.F.A. candidates in screen and play writing take workshops in the Radio, Television, Film, and Theater Department. There are also an ample number of literature seminars offered each semester so that our students can take nearly all their required 48 units of course work in graduate seminars. The only exception is in the Professional Training segment of the curriculum, where if students wish to have experience editing and publishing a literary magazine, they take must ENGL 133: Reed Magazine.

2. Numbers sufficient to support program

The number of M.F.A. students in the program enrolled in courses (not counting those writing theses or studying for exams (activities which do not require continuous enrollment) is relatively stable year to year, remaining between 40 and 50 students. The size of the program is limited by the capacity of Creative Writing faculty to direct theses. Faculty are not allowed to direct more than six theses projects (ENGL 299) during a single semester, though they may be second or third readers on additional theses.
Since the first group of M.F.A. candidates were admitted to the program in Fall 2001, there have consistently been fewer available places in the program than there were qualified applicants. Generally, the M.F.A. program seeks to maintain stable enrollment numbers in the primary genres: 20 to 25 fiction writers; 12 to 20 poets; 4 to 8 creative nonfiction writers; and 2 to 6 playwrights and/or screenwriters. The creative nonfiction and playwriting/screenwriting workshops generally fill because the remaining seats are taken either by M.F.A. candidates fulfilling secondary genre workshop requirements or by qualified M.A. students of Television, Radio, Film, and Theater. Since 2001, the M.F.A. program has averaged about 55 applicants per year. On average, the program is able to enroll 10 to 15 new MFA students per year, space permitting. Space opens in the program for new students as current candidates complete their required units of course work, take their Comprehensive Exams, and complete their theses units—and then graduate. Or as students drop out of the program (as 2 or 3 students tend to do each year because of factors beyond the Department’s control).

In its offerings of 12 to 14 graduate courses per term, the Department is now able to offer each semester four or five M.F.A.-specific or recommended courses including ENGL 201C (offered only in the Fall semester) and ENGL 202 or 203, (Poetry Craft and Theory and Narrative Craft and Theory, which are recommended for M.F.A. students) as well as M.F.A. workshops ENGL 240, 241, and/or 242. The program and the course offerings are flexible enough to give M.F.A. candidates the opportunity to enroll in one or two M.F.A. creative writing
workshops and/or one or two literature seminars each semester and/or professional training courses each semester.

D. SOCIETAL NEED

The English M.F.A. program provides both a professional degree and a liberal education. The practice and study of creative writing is necessarily focused on fundamental creative skills combined with such intellectual skills as critical inquiry, aesthetic appreciation, and effective communication in speech and writing that are beneficial to all individuals and required for many professions. The primary goal of any M.F.A. Program is to produce candidates who write well enough to publish and have a careers as writers, poets, playwrights, and screenwriters. Many people seeking to enter a creative writing M.F.A. programs are not merely interested in careers as writers, which are economically often difficult to sustain. Many are seeking to explore their verbal talents, to fully engage themselves in the creative process, driven more by individual imagination more than by practical economic and vocational interests. That is why students at all stages of life seek to enter Creative Writing programs.

As a professional degree, the M.F.A. is the preferred degree for those who wish to teach Creative Writing at the community college or university level. Most graduate-level Creative Writing faculty themselves hold M.F.A. degrees in Creative Writing. According to the AWP (Association of Writers and Writing Programs) “creative writing classes have become among the most popular classes in the humanities. Many students, especially today’s students, feel that the world is not of their making, and not theirs to form or to reform.” And that
"creative writing classes often demonstrate the efficacy of the human will—that human experience can be shaped and directed for the good—aesthetically, socially, and politically. In creative writing classes, students learn about elements of literature from inside their own work, rather than from outside a text; and this has motivated many to gain greater command of rhetoric and communication skills in general."

As David Fenza, executive director of AWP has written: "it is an extremely challenging time to be a serious literary writer because the variety of our entertainments continue to grow and new arts and diversions threaten to displace the old." The academic pursuit of the Creative Writing discipline at the graduate level provides writers a period when they can concentrate on their work without outside cultural or economic forces significantly distracting them from exploring their individual vision and their creativity. This is especially true for students who come from traditionally under-represented backgrounds in American literary culture. Such backgrounds represent economic as well as cultural disenfranchisement. It is more likely than not that the next generation of great American writers will emerge from M.F.A. programs, because such programs are the training ground for our future Allen Ginsbergs, Khaled Hosseinis, Maxine Hong Kingstons, Arthur Millers, Toni Morrisons, Philip Roths, Amy Tans, Paul Theroux's, Wendy Wassersteins, and Luis Valdezes. San Jose State University's M.F.A. program, because of its relatively low-cost, its flexible and balanced curriculum, and its late afternoon and evening class schedules which cater to
working students, is a likely site from which such significant new literary voices and works will emerge.

E. FINANCIAL RESOURCE EFFECTIVENESS

1. Capacity successfully to meet goals with current resources

As with the M.A. program our current resources in the M.F.A. program are inadequate. Certainly we are able to staff our M.F.A. courses with experienced and well-qualified faculty—though it is evident that the system's high course load coupled with this area's frightening housing costs will make recruitment of tenure-line Creative Writing faculty continually more difficult. Looking beyond course-staffing to levels of support for the kinds of infrastructure necessary to sustain a terminal degree program, we have to admit that resources are not adequate. For several years library acquisitions have fallen and costs of materials have risen sharply. Sabbatical leaves have been chronically under-funded on our campus, research grants are few and small particularly for Creative Writing projects, and travel funds are a shamefully low. University money for guest lecturers and visiting writers is woeful. We would have no such funding except for the single, generous gift from Robert and Connie Lurie, which partially funds a visiting writer each Spring semester to hold the Lurie Chair, and the efforts of the Center for Literary Arts to fund short-residencies by major authors. Nor do we have the financial resources to offer first-year Creative Writing students fellowships or scholarships to attend the M.F.A. program, as do richer private and public universities in the Western U.S., with whom we compete for the most qualified students. And a particular sore point with graduate Creative Writing faculty—
there is no funding for thesis advising, nor is there funding for the training and supervision of Teaching Associates.

2. **Capacity to meet emerging trends in the field**

The Department Website continues to function adequately, thanks in part to its collaborative nature and periodic re-designs. The individual Web pages reflect the ongoing trends in the field toward multi-genre focus in M.F.A. programs. In that regard, the M.F.A. program reflects the evolution of other programs, including programs which started in the 1990s such as the M.F.A. program at the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Minnesota. We have used the Website to advertise the program successfully to prospective students, and to highlight the program's unique features and offerings. We have also used to Website to a limited extent to link to resources for Creative Writers at other universities and through Websites of magazines and quarterlies, online journals, and literary publishers. Those links need to be further developed in the future, as do our links (and interaction) with literary organizations in the nonprofit and government sectors.

Moreover, the program's capacity is not been fully realized as a site for hybrid-genre and electronic-based genre experimentation, such has been pursued by the M.F.A. program at Brown University. We are also hampered by the lack of computer technology, library resources, and most importantly support staff to free faculty from the more onerous routine duties of program administration. The AWP's published benchmarks for a successful M.F.A. program state that there should be available to the program “Internet access and
computer labs for research and training in computer skills, including those required for desktop publishing." Although the Center for Faculty Development makes a computer lab available for faculty, there is no dedicated facility for the English and Comparative Literature Department where graduate students and faculty can work on projects, including the production of a desktop or print literary journal.

The M.F.A. program also provides student editorial staff for Reed Magazine, a literary journal published by the department. However, Reed Magazine is supported with extremely meager resources which jeopardize the professional quality of the magazine itself. The AWP benchmarks for a successful M.F.A. program state that the program should have an “affiliation with a professional literary journal [which] allows students to observe and, for advanced students, to assist in the process of editing and managing the journal.” Reed Magazine, although the oldest college literary magazine published in the Western United States, is in continual jeopardy of not having the resources it needs to remain a viable professional literary journal. Moreover, Reed lacks sufficient resources to professionalize its production process because the Department does not access to state-of-the-art editing, layout, and publishing technology.

Finally, the M.F.A. program is limited by the lack of funding of travel and research grants for creative writing projects, which if available, would more fully connect the creative work of the faculty with the rapid evolution that is occurring within the field.
F. INTERDEPENDENCE OF PROGRAMS

Although the Creative Writing M.F.A. program shares a number of literature seminars and rhetoric/pedagogy courses with the English M.A. program, it is built upon a foundation of writing workshops and genre-centered craft and theory courses (ENGL 202: Poetry Craft and Theory; ENGL 203: Narrative Craft and Theory) whose curriculum is designed around topics and works of Modern and contemporary poets and writers that are central to the M.F.A. program. M.F.A. candidates have priority enrollment in the writing workshops (ENGL 240, 241, and 242). M.F.A. students are also required to take Modern Approaches to Literature (ENGL 204), an elective in the M.A. program.

The playwriting/screenwriting genre track of the M.F.A. program shares a number of performance, theory, and theater/film history courses with the Theatre Arts program in The Department of Radio, Television, Film, and Theatre. The English Department cross-lists courses with Theatre Arts for students pursuing M.F.A.'s in the playwriting/screenwriting genre. Prof. Scott Subtlett, a member of the playwriting/screenwriting faculty in the Theater Arts program of the RTVF Department, is an active member of the Creative Writing/M.F.A. program Committee in the English Department. And other Theater Arts faculty regularly sit on M.F.A. thesis committees for students in the playwriting/screenwriting genre.

The M.F.A. program will on occasion accept graduate-level work in foreign language literature courses as well as philosophy, history, and art history courses.
when these are relevant to a student's goals. None of the M.F.A. program's courses are required for another program, all are acceptable for English M.A. degree.

G. CAPACITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO AN ACADEMIC FIELD

Since the M.F.A. program opened in Fall 2001, well-publicized student and faculty open readings have been presented both on campus and in nearby off-campus venues scheduled two times or three times each semester. These readings were held first at on-campus locations such as the Spartan Chapel, and have been very well attended, with 10 to 15 faculty and student poets and writers reading on each occasion. Starting in Fall 2005, the venue moved off-campus to the Café Pomegranate (located on San Fernando Street across from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Library) in a revised format. The readings now consist of three featured readers chosen from among M.F.A. faculty and students, then followed by an open reading. These readings now regularly draw standing-room only audiences (the venue's capacity is approximately 85 people).

As has been noted in the M.A. section, The English Graduate Organization, a function of English M.A. and M.F.A. students has, for several years, provided a forum for the exchange of ideas between students and faculty and among graduate students themselves. The group has sponsored readings of scholarly and creative writings by graduate students and has occasionally hosted an interdisciplinary conference drawing participants from several fields and from several states.
1. Student Contributions

In addition, individual M.F.A. students have been successful in being invited to give readings at various venues in the Bay Area and to having their work accepted for publication or for presentation at scholarly conferences:

- C.J. Sage (M.F.A., Fall 2002) published a collection of poems titled *Let's Not Sleep* with Dream Horse Press (2003). She has given readings from her work at a variety of South Bay venues, including Barnes & Noble in San Jose, and on KKUP-FM. She is also the editor of the poetry anthology *We Are the Creatures: Fifty-one Contemporary American Poets on Animal Rights and Appreciation* (Dream Horse Press: 2003). She has a new collection of poetry *Odyessa* forthcoming from Turning Point Books early in 2007.

- Valerie Frankel (M.F.A., Fall '04) has published stories in a dozen literary journals and anthologies including *The Best of Scifantastic 2003*, *The Oklahoma Review*, and *Rosebud Magazine*. Valerie presented a paper titled "To Be Verbs and How Not to Use Them" at the 2004 Annual Conference of the AWP (Association of Writers and Writing Programs) in Chicago.

- Robin Somers (M.F.A. Spring '05) has given readings of her poetry and fiction at a variety of Bay Area and Santa Cruz venues including the annual Watershed Environmental Poetry Festival in Berkeley (organized by former U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Hass), the Monterey Bay Poetry
Festival, Poetry Center Santa Cruz, and on KUSP-FM. She has given a number of conference papers, including "An All-American Indian Pedagogy for English 1A" presented at the 2005 Annual Conference of the Popular Culture and American Culture Associations, which received the Charles Redd Center Award for Western Studies. And another paper accepted for the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association conference to be held in Tucson, Arizona: "Weather Report: Clearing Skies Over [Mary] Austin." Robin is coordinating the Teaching English session of the Rocky Mountain MLA, scheduled for October 12 – 14, 2006 in Tucson. Lara Gularte (M.F.A. Fall '06) published a chapbook of poems titled Days Between Dancing with Poet's Corner Press (2005). She has been given readings from her work on KKUP-FM, and at various venues in the Bay Area, in Chico.

- Neli Moody (M.F.A. Spring '06) has a collection of poems forthcoming from I. Reed Books in fall 2006. She has given readings at a number of Santa Cruz and South Bay venues including Barnes & Noble in San Jose and Poetry Center Santa Cruz, and on KUSP-FM.

In addition, the 4th international conference for the U.S. Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies accepted a proposed roundtable from Prof. Revathi Krishnaswamy involving two M.F.A. students: Stephanie Chan (M.F.A., Fall 2006) and Sayo Ogundiran (M.F.A., Spring 2006). The event will be held at Santa Clara University, October 27-29, 2006. Another graduate student, Laura Rose, had a paper accepted for another graduate
student conference, the UCLA Southland Graduate Conference, "the Embodied Canon," held May 19, 2006.

2. Faculty Contributions

Faculty contributions: As noted earlier in Section 2.a, the contributions of individual faculty members to their academic fields have been voluminous and of high quality. The following is a list of the most recent contributions of M.F.A. faculty to the Creative Writing Field.

- Kate Evans has a forthcoming collection of poems As We All Love from Q Press to be published in September 2006. In 2005 she was a semi-finalist for the Pratt Institute Prize in Poetry, and a finalist in the New Voices Poetry Contest. She has also been nominated for two Pushcart Prizes in poetry.

- Persis Karim has edited the anthology Let Me Tell You Where I've Been: New Writing by Women of the Iranian Diaspora from the University of Arkansas Press, published in June 2006. She is also co-editing a special issue of MELUS on emerging Iranian-American literature in North America, projected to be published in 2008.

- Cathleen Miller received travel grants from the Consortium Media Center and from the UN Foundation in Fall 2005 to complete research for Champion of Choice, a biography of Dr. Nafis Sadik, former executive director from the UN Population Fund, forthcoming from University of Nebraska Press in Fall 2007. She also received a prestigious 2005 Lowell Thomas Gold Prize by the Society of American
Travel Writers (SATW) for her work as editor-in-chief of the travel journalism Website WildWritingWomen.com. In addition, she has published an essay titled “The Sacrificial Lambs” in Salon.com in October 2005. She is a co-founder and a moderator of events at the Wild Women Writing literary salon which meets monthly in San Francisco.

- Alan Soldofsky published in 2003 a chapbook of poems titled Holding Adam (Apple Core Press). His unpublished collection of poems Bright Rubble was a semi-finalist for the 2005 Tupelo Press Dorset Prize. He had poems nominated in 2002 and 2006 for a Pushcart Prize. He essay “The Lyric Self: Authenticity and Artifice in Recent American Poetry” appeared in the May-June 2006 issue of The Writer’s Chronicle (published by AWP). In May 2005, he was invited to participate in the Third Annual Zhejiang International Writers Festival in Hangzhou, China. He has been invited to read his poems and also to give a paper titled “Just When I Though I Couldn’t Stand It: Embedded Political Vision in the Poetry of Elizabeth Bishop” at the Poetry & Politics Conference at Stirling University in Scotland, July 12 – 16, 2006.

Moreover, the contributions of holders of the Lurie Visiting Distinguished Professorship in Creative Writing have added immeasurably to the M.F.A. program’s contribution to the field. The holders of the Lurie Chair, are each
major literary figures with long publishing histories and lists of awards. The Lurie Chair has been held by the following writers, since its inception in 2000:

- **Al Young**, California Poet Laureate, and award-winning novelist and screenwriter (2002).
- **Simon Winchester**, best-selling creative nonfiction writer, journalist, and historian (2004).
- **Ishmael Reed**, American Book Award-winning novelist, essayist, and poet (2005).

**H. AVAILABILITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL ALTERNATIVES**

San Jose State University offers 48-unit studio/research M.F.A. degree that is unlike any M.F.A. programs within the CSU system or offered by private universities in the region. The major difference between the M.F.A. program at SJSU and others in the CSU and in the region is our program’s multiple genre focus. Most of the M.F.A. programs allow students the choice of a single genre
emphasis—usually fiction or poetry and/or sometimes playwriting. Other than our program, only the new M.F.A. program at U.C. Riverside requires students to complete a body of work in a second genre. Moreover, the M.F.A. program at SJSU is the only program in the region and in the CSU which offers students an opportunity to take a comprehensive curriculum of studio workshops (in a primary and secondary genre), craft and theory courses, literature seminars, rhetoric/pedagogy courses, and on- and off-campus internships.

In the Bay Area, San Francisco State University is the only public institution offering an M.F.A. program (requiring 54 semester-units). The other Bay Area universities offering M.F.A. programs are: California College of the Arts (60 semester-units); Mills College (44 semester-units); St. Mary’s College (36 semester-units); New College of California (54 semester-units); and the University of San Francisco (33 semester-units). These programs offer curriculum that varies considerably from that offered by SJSU, and because they are private universities, the cost per unit is considerably higher.

I. CHANGES: PAST AND FUTURE

Because the M.F.A. is only now in its fifth year, the curriculum has not been altered to any significant extent. The major change in the program was the addition of the Playwriting/Screenwriting track in Fall 2002. To include this track, the curriculum was expanded to accept more courses from the Radio, Television, Film, Theater department. The courses that were included in the studio workshops segment of the curriculum are Graduate Scriptwriting Seminar (TA 275), Advanced Film, and Television Writing (RTVF 175).
We do anticipate that the program’s curriculum will change slightly over the next several years. The changes that have been proposed will not alter the overall structure of the curriculum. However, the changes are designed to provide greater flexibility in the curriculum and to ensure that M.F.A. students have greater access to taking courses in genre craft and theory and to connect the candidate’s study of literature more directly to their own writing projects. The first change will be to require M.F.A. candidates to take three in the literature seminars curriculum component to take Poetry Craft and Theory (ENGL 202) or Narrative Craft and Theory (ENGL 203). The second change that has been proposed is for M.F.A. candidates to take a required three units of an independent study course that would be called M.F.A. Colloquium, designed as the capstone of the program’s 15-unit literature seminar component. In the M.F.A. Colloquium, students would produce a monograph-length study of a particular author, group of authors, theme, or literary movement, mentored by M.F.A. creative writing faculty. The study would then be presented to the department during a forum organized by the M.F.A. program, and which would be open to the public. The third change to the curriculum being proposed is for M.F.A. candidates to have the option of satisfying the Foreign Language requirement in the program by completing a 3-unit independent study project (within the literature study component) to translate work by a modern or contemporary writer from a foreign language into English.

As has already been mentioned, M.F.A. students will continue to take literature seminars along with M.A. students. The M.F.A. program is designed to
work symbiotically and cooperatively with M.A. program. M.F.A. faculty and curriculum will continue to overlap with the M.A. faculty and curriculum. Despite this overlap, the M.F.A. program has been planned to evolve in its own direction, independently from the M.A. program. The strength of both programs, as has been said in the M.A. portion of this self-study, is in how they have and will continue to cross-fertilize each other.
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B. QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

1. Description of Program

The most recent and momentous change in the English and Comparative Department's graduate program has been the approval of the Master of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing. Though this program had been approved up to the Chancellor's level over a decade ago, it languished there until the department re-submitted a refurbished proposal in Fall 2000. After some revisions, the M.F.A. was officially approved and enrolled its first students in fall 2001. The advent of the M.F.A. affected the M.A. program in several important ways. First, the Creative Writing track within the M.A. was discontinued. Students enrolling in fall 2000 were the last M.A. students to be admitted to the Creative Writing track.
Second, M.F.A. students are now taking literature seminars along with M.A. students, so M.A. courses have seen no loss of enrollment, but rather, an increase. We envisioned a cooperative relationship with M.A. and M.F.A. faculty and students, and this has come to pass. The two programs query, emulate, and nurture each other.

Students in the M.F.A. program are admitted to complete their degrees in one of the following four primary genres: Fiction, Creative Nonfiction, Poetry, or Screenwriting/Playwriting (with cooperation from the Radio, Television, Film, Theater Department). Students are not allowed to change the primary genres except under special circumstances, where they be permitted to petition to change genres through the advocacy of a Creative Writing faculty member who has agreed to become the student’s thesis director in the new genre, and with the consent of the Creative Writing/M.F.A. Committee and English and Comparative Literature Department Graduate Committee. Students may change their secondary genre concentration by petitioning the M.F.A. coordinator and receiving permission from the Creative Writing/M.F.A. Committee.

The M.F.A. at SJSU requires students to complete an equal amount of work in writing workshops and literature seminars. The program is designed to give students the opportunity to develop their talents in more than one genre while increasing their knowledge of modern and contemporary literature in a variety of forms and across a diverse range of cultural and critical perspectives. The program also features courses that provide hands-on preparation for beginning one’s writing career in a globalized, technologically enhanced world.
To enhance the instructional program offered by SJSU faculty, M.F.A. students regularly attend readings, lectures, and/or seminars presented by The Center for Literary Arts, which regularly schedules distinguished writers to come to the SJSU campus for short residencies. As part the CLA's Major Authors Series, visiting writers give numerous public readings, lectures, and/or seminars. Writers appearing in the series have included: Sherman Alexie, Isabel Allende, Margaret Atwood, John Barth, Ann Beattie, T. C. Boyle, Russell Banks, Ernesto Cardenal, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Michael Chabon, Carlos Fuentes, Allen Ginsberg, Mary Gordon, Maxine Hong Kingston, Robert Hass, Seamus Heaney, Norman Mailer, Peter Matthiessen, Arthur Miller, Czeslaw Milosz, Toni Morrison, Michael Ondaatje, Joyce Carol Oates, Grace Paley, Adrienne Rich, Gary Snyder, William Styron, Amy Tan, Paul Theroux, Luis Alberto Urrea, Luis Valdez, Gore Vidal, Yevgeny Yevtushenko, Derek Walcott, Wendy Wasserstein, John Wideman, and Tobias Wolff.

a. Admission Requirements

Application Deadline: **February 1 (annually)**

Applicants seeking admission to the MFA in Creative Writing must submit the following items:

1. **Portfolio** -- Applicants are welcome to submit portfolios in more than one genre.
   
   - Poetry: 10 - 15 pages, single-paced
• Fiction: Two short stories or excerpt from novel. No more than 50 pages (double-spaced)
• Non-fiction: Two short essays (double-spaced)
• Screenwriting/Playwriting:

2. Statement of Purpose

• Applicants should write an essay (no more than 750 words) introducing him/herself and his/her goals in pursuing the MFA degree in Creative Writing. An abbreviated version may be submitted with your online application.

3. Three Letters of Recommendation

• Letters of recommendation should come from current or former professors, editors, or individuals who can comment on the applicant's academic work and creative potential. Letters should be written on faculty or professional letterhead.

4. Official Transcripts

• Official transcripts of all your undergraduate and/or graduate course work directly to the Creative Writing Program and to the Office of Graduate Admissions.
5. Credits in Related Field

- Applicants must have an undergraduate major or minor in English or Creative Writing, or a minimum of 24 credit hours in literature and/or creative writing, with a grade point average of 3.0 or above.

6. Graduate School Application

- Like most universities, applicants must apply for admission as a graduate student when they apply to the Creative Writing Program. Failure to complete this application can delay acceptance. GRE scores are not required for admission to the Creative Writing Program; however, students with promising portfolios and grade point averages below the 3.0 minimum may be required to provide GRE scores.

Fulfillment of the above constitutes the minimum requirements and does not Guarantee admission to the Creative Writing Program. In general, the program seeks candidates who show an artistic commitment and literary promise in their writing. The most important factor in evaluating applicants is the quality and potential of the portfolio. With this in mind, applicants should take great care in preparing a manuscript which represents the writer’s finest work.
b. Curriculum: M.F.A. in Creative Writing

Core (6 units)

- 201C Materials and Methods of Literary Production (Must be taken within two semesters of admission to the program; co-requisite with writing workshops.) (3)
- 204 Seminar in Modern Approaches to Literature (3)

1. Writing Workshops (15 units) (All courses repeatable for credit. You must take 9 units in your primary genre; 6 units in your secondary genre. If 200-level courses are not available, you can take up to nine units of 100-level courses as equivalent.)

- 240 Seminar in Poetry Writing (3)
  (Or English 131: Poetry Writing)
- 241 Seminar in Fiction Writing (3)
  (Or English 130: Fiction Writing)
- 242 Seminar in Nonfiction Writing* (3)
  (Or English 135: Nonfiction Writing)

2. Literary Research (15 units)

- 202 Craft and Theory of Poetry (formerly Engl 200) (3)
- 203 Craft and Theory of Narrative (3)
- 208 Seminar in Comparative Literature (3)
- 211 Seminar in Twentieth-Century Poetry (3)
- 215 Seminar in Myth and Symbolism (3)
• 216 Seminar in Medieval English Literature (3)
• 217 Seminar in the English Renaissance (3)
• 225 Seminar in Shakespeare (3)
• 226 Seminar in Tragedy (3)
• 229 Seminar in Seventeenth-Century Literature (3)
• 230 Seminar in Eighteenth Century British Literature (3)
• 232 Seminar in Romanticism (3)
• 233 Seminar in the Victorian Period (3)
• 253 Seminar in Period Studies in American Literature (3)
• 254 Seminar in Genre Studies in American Literature (3)
• 255 Seminar in Thematic Studies in American Literature (3)
• 256 Seminar in Twentieth-Century British Literature (3)
• 298 Special Study: Literature (3)
• 139 Visiting Writer’s Seminar (3)
• (139 also satisfies Literary Research requirement: with the Director's and instructor's permission)

3. **Professional Training** (6 units)

• 257 Seminar in the History of Rhetoric (3)
• 259 Seminar in Composition Studies (3)
• 298 Special Study: Writing Internship and Seminar (3)
  (Business- or School-based Supervised Internship)
• 133 Reed Magazine (With Director's permission) (3)
Of the required minimum 48 units, candidates must take 15 units in writing workshops and 15 units in literature seminars (all courses count for 3 semester units). Nine of the writing workshop units must be taken in the candidate's primary genre—either poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction or scriptwriting. Six units must be taken in the candidate's secondary genre(s). Working closely with creative writing faculty, MFA students will demonstrate their mastery of a primary genre and show their proficiency in secondary genre(s). Once students have successfully completed the workshop requirement, they may then take 6 units (2 semesters) of thesis, working with a three-person faculty committee who will monitor the work in-progress. The final thesis manuscript will be a publishable work of poetry, collection of short stories, collection of creative nonfiction pieces, book-length work of nonfiction, or novel, written under the supervision of the committee. To complete the M.F.A. degree, students must also pass the M.F.A. exam.

c. Graduation Requirements

A candidate for the M.F.A. in Creative Writing must meet the following requirements in order to graduate from the program:

1. Successfully complete a minimum of 48 semester hours of graduate study (a maximum of 9 semester hours of graduate course credit may be transferred from another accredited institution in partial fulfillment of the M.F.A.).

2. Complete at least 9 semester hours of writing workshop in a primary genre and at least 6 in secondary genre(s).
3. Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in all graduate coursework.

4. Complete a book-length Thesis manuscript of literary merit and publishable quality. The manuscript must meet the specific format requirements of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

5. Pass the M.F.A. Comprehensive Examination during the penultimate semester of coursework.

6. Publicly read from and defend Thesis manuscript.

7. Demonstrate preparation through the intermediate level of a foreign language or proficiency therein.

8. (Note: All requirements must be completed within seven calendar years.)

2. Quality of Program

   a. Faculty expertise and currency in their disciplines

   The San José State University's Master of Fine Arts Program employs eight faculty members: Professors Berman (Fiction), Engell (Fiction), Fink (Fiction), Karim (Fiction and Poetry), Maio (Poetry), Miller (Nonfiction), Rico (Nonfiction), and Soldofsky (Poetry) [see Appendix D for their Curricula Vitae]. Since the institution of the M.F.A. program in 2001, this faculty has been remarkably productive. They have published or have forthcoming 9 books, 15 short stories, 20 poems, 28 reviews and articles, and made 67 presentations at conferences. They have edited or co-edited such publications as Reed Magazine, Steinbeck Studies, The Cream City Review, and their work has appeared in such

As mentioned above, the M.F.A. Program also offers courses taught annually by a distinguished writer-in-residence who join the faculty as the Lurie Distinguished Visiting Professor of Creative Writing. In the years between 1999 and 2006, Ursula K. LeGuin, Carolyn Kizer, Al Young, Molly Giles, Simon Winchester, Ishmael Reed, and Santa Cruz-based novelist and nonfiction author James D. Houston have been Lurie Professors. The Lurie Chair in Spring 2007
is scheduled to be Scottish novelist and Booker Prize winner James Kelman. By bringing internationally applauded authors to the M.F.A. Program, the Lurie Chair has contributed greatly to its reputation, something reflected in the increased number of applicants who apply each year. In the short time of the Program's existence, its graduates have begun to compile a promising publication record.

**b. Library Resources**

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Library has a large and diverse collection of literary works written since 1900 in the genres of fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, and screenwriting and playwriting representing major and minor American, British, and World authors (in English translation and also written in English). The department has worked with the library to expand its collection of works by contemporary authors, particularly in fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry. The library also subscribes to over five dozen literary journals and quarterlies.

Because of CSU budget limitations, the San Jose City Library collection in contemporary creative nonfiction, fiction, and poetry is growing more rapidly than the University collection. It is a benefit to M.F.A. students and M.F.A. faculty that the City of San Jose is acquiring works of contemporary fiction, creative nonfiction, and poetry. It would be encouraging to see growth in the University collection commensurate with the growth in publishing, particularly works published by independent presses and also university presses, many of whom are located on the West Coast and publish a diverse cultural and stylistic range
of authors, wider ranging than what it published by established New York-based literary publishing houses. However, the library continues to subscribe to important literary journals and quarterlies, in some of which M.F.A. students and M.F.A. faculty are publishing creative works.

In addition to books and journals, the library has collected a reasonably good collection audio and video materials, though the holdings could be greatly increased. Both the Library and the Department of English and Comparative Literature provide links to literary resources on their Web pages. The Department of English and Comparative Literature’s M.F.A. Web site includes links to a dozen or so literary journals that provide text of poetry, creative nonfiction, and fiction online. The Department’s “Literary Locales” Web site on the main English and Comparative Literature Web page has received wide recognition, including a laudatory review in the New York Times.

As previously reported in the M.A. section, despite the valiant efforts of faculty and library staff, book and periodical budgets have been so seriously eroded that the collection is inadequate for graduate student research. Both students and faculty require much more library support for their research.

3. Quality of Instruction

a. Evaluation of Faculty

All faculty are required to participate in the Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) program. Each faculty member must have two courses evaluated each year, and many request that their graduate courses be evaluated. These statistical evaluations are reported to the instructor and to the
Department. In addition, the Department of English and Comparative Literature requires a separate evaluation form be distributed in each class being evaluated. These comment sheets are collected and collated and reviewed (along with the statistical summaries) by the Department Chair before being returned to the instructor. Department norms on SOTE scores are generally high, and those for graduate creative writing workshops and literature seminars are even higher.

**b. Effective Student Advising**

General advising for all M.F.A. students is the responsibility of the program coordinator (currently Prof. Alan Soldofsky). The coordinator's duties include having contact with all M.F.A. applicants during the application process; providing an orientation meeting for all new students; publicizing program requirements and deadlines; writing and updating information for the quarterly *Graduate English Newsletter*; writing and updating information for the M.F.A. Web site; approving each student's official program of study; coordinating and recording the results of the M.F.A. comprehensive and foreign language examinations; coordinating and monitoring the progress of all M.F.A. thesis projects (required of students in the M.F.A. program); and ensuring that information on each student's progress is forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. In addition, the coordinator provides individual counsel as necessary. On a recent questionnaire (see *Appendix J*), current students overwhelmingly "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that "faculty advising is readily available and effective." The questionnaire also revealed that most students who wrote theses found the thesis advising process helpful.
c. Student Outcomes Assessment

The M.F.A. thesis project and the M.F.A. Comprehensive Exam constitute the principal summative assessments of students in the M.F.A. program. M.F.A. theses when completed, must be certified as being of publishable quality in the genre of fiction, creative nonfiction, poetry, or screen or play writing. The thesis must be approved by two members of the Creative Writing faculty and a third reader from the general faculty of the English and Comparative Literature Department (or Radio, Television, Film, Theater department if such expertise is more appropriate). After a candidate’s thesis is approved by his/her Department thesis committee, he/she must give a brief public reading from the thesis as well as defend the thesis by answering questions from faculty members and fellow students (see Appendix M for M.F.A. Thesis project requirements).

The M.F.A. Comprehensive Exam must be read and passed with a grade of B or higher by the candidate’s M.F.A. Thesis director and his/her second and third thesis readers. The Comprehensive Exam consists of three 2,000-word essays that the candidate must write at home during a timed three-day (weekend) period. Two of the essays pertain to the candidate’s primary genre emphasis. One of the essays pertains to the candidate’s secondary genre emphasis. If a candidate does not receive a passing grade on the first attempt of taking the Comprehensive Exam, he/she may re-take the exam two more times. Through taking Comprehensive Exam, M.F.A. candidates are expected to demonstrate their having attained: 1) Expertise in literary history, literary theory, and craft and theory of creative writing; 2) Critical and analytical skills in the evaluation and
interpretation of literary texts; 3) Command of written academic English, including the abilities to a) organize and present material in a cogent fashion, b) formulate and defend original arguments, c) employ effectively the language of their discipline and d) write under time constraints (see Appendix M for information and sample questions pertaining to the M.F.A. Comprehensive Exam).

M.F.A. candidates also must demonstrate a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language. This requirement can be satisfied by 1) Completion of the fourth semester of an approved university-level foreign language course with a grade of B or better. 2) Satisfactory completion of an examination administered by the Foreign Language Department. Or 2) Provide the M.F.A. program coordinator and the English and Comparative Literature Department Graduate Committee evidence of a first-language literacy other than English.

M.F.A. candidates also have the option to demonstrate their readiness to enter careers in literary editing and publishing, non-profit arts administration, community arts development, or teaching creative writing, literature, and composition at the college and university level, or in a community college or high school. Candidates may satisfy one of several options by satisfying a 6-unit requirement in the Professional Training segment of the M.F.A. curriculum, or by begin selected to participate in the Graduate Assistant or Student Assistant programs where they will receive further training for an academic career.

In another form of outcomes assessment, the Department also conducted a survey of its graduate students in Spring 2006 (see Appendix J for the questions and graphs summarizing the results). The questions directly addressed the
quality of instruction. Virtually all respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” on issues most critical to the Program: that the workshops and seminars were “well taught and intellectually stimulating,” that there were regular opportunities “available for faculty/student interaction,” that “faculty advising is readily available and effective,” and that “the intellectual challenge of assignments and the quantity of work are the level of the courses” was appropriate. And perhaps the most desirable outcome, a large majority of respondents indicated that they would recommend the Program to others.

A few students have responded that the requirement to take 15 units of literary seminars can cause conflicts with the time they have available to work on their creative writing projects. However, a majority of students in an informal survey have reported that they feel their creative writing projects are enriched through taking literary seminars.

4. Benefit to Students

a. Student Awards

The Department gives three student awards specific to the M.F.A. program. Two, the Mara Steffey Award and the Dorret Sibley Award for Excellence in the Writing of Poetry, carry a cash prize. Each year the Department also selects the Outstanding M.F.A. thesis. This project is then entered into competition for the College-level Outstanding Thesis award, and the winner of that award in turn competes at the University level.

In addition, M.F.A. students are encouraged to compete for Department-wide awards such as Marjorie M. Folendorf Award for Creative Writing, the Virginia de
Araujo/Academy of American Poets Prize, the Bonita M. Cox Award for Creative Nonfiction, and the Lois King Thore Scholarship (for an outstanding writer of short stories), and the generous James Phelan Creative Writing awards in numerous categories, several of which provide separate a separate competition for graduate students. In these competitions, M.F.A. students have been quite successful.

At the university-level, three M.F.A. students have received prestigious Bertha Kalm Fellowships: Marilyn Benson in 2002; Robin Somers in 2004, and Stephanie Chan in 2005. In national Creative Writing competitions, two M.F.A. students have received the prestigious INTRO Award given by the Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP). In 2002, Eran Williams received an INTRO Award for his short story “The Swap Meet,” which was published in The Crab Orchard Review; in 2006, Jennifer de Guzman received an INTRO Award for her short story "Panchita's Sea Lion," which will be published in the Summer 2006 issue of The Colorado Review. In 2002, Robin Somers received a prestigious Alice Longon Award for women writing about the Southwest.

b. Success of Graduates

The M.F.A. program has only been in existence for five years, but in that short time we have already seen student success. Success can be determined by three different sets of criteria. The first is success in finding employment either in publishing, editing, public affairs/public relations (in either the nonprofit or commercial sector), or government or higher education. The second is gaining admission to a Ph.D. program in English, Creative Writing, or Cultural Studies.
The third is publication success, as well as securing the representation of a literary agent (for fiction, creative nonfiction, and screen/play writers).

Five M.F.A. candidates (three of whom are now alumni), even before receiving their degrees, found employment as writers, editors, publishers, or managers in the nonprofit, government, or commercial sectors. Ten M.F.A. alumni have found employment as lecturers at community colleges and universities (including SJSU) in the region. One M.F.A. alumni has been promoted to Department Chair of his high school English Department. One M.F.A. candidate has gained admission to the Ph.D. program in Cultural Studies at U.C. Santa Cruz.

Four M.F.A. students have published poetry collections or have poetry collections forthcoming. C.J. Sage (M.F.A., Spring 2002) has published a poetry collection titled *Let's Not Sleep* with Dream Horse Press (2002), and has another poetry collection forthcoming titled *Odyssey* from Turning Point books (2006). Lara Gularte (MFA, Fall 2006) has published a chapbook of poems, titled *Days Between Dancing* (2005) with Poet's Corner Press. Kate Evans (M.F.A., Fall 2004) has a poetry collection forthcoming titled *Like All We Love* forthcoming in Summer 2006 from Q Press. Neli Moody (M.F.A., Spring 2006), has a poetry collection forthcoming titled *After Altamira* from I. Reed Books in Fall 2006. Kate Evans also has secured the representation of a New York literary agent for her novel and collection of short stories.

Although no books of fiction or creative nonfiction have been published yet by alumni of the M.F.A. program, a total of five M.F.A. alumni and one current

c. **Graduation Rates**

The Department of English and Comparative Literature has been offering an M.F.A. in Creative Writing only since 2001. Since the first graduates completed the program in 2003, the program has graduated 22 M.F.A. candidates (including Spring 2006 graduates). The program averages 5 to 6 graduates per year.
Since 2003, the students have received M.F.A. degrees in the following genre emphases (including Spring 2006): 12 in Fiction; 2 in Creative nonfiction; 7 in Poetry; 1 in Screenwriting.

Because almost all of our students work full- or part-time, they take only two or three seminars per semester. We estimate that the average student takes three to four years to complete the program. Lack of available course offerings is never a problem. All our workshops and seminars are offered in late afternoons or evenings to accommodate our working students. Furthermore, newly admitted M.F.A. candidates have weaker claims to seats in high-demand workshops than students who have earned more units in the program. If an M.F.A. candidate cannot enroll in ENGL 240 (Poetry Writing Workshop), 241 (Fiction Writing Workshop), or 242 (Nonfiction Writing Workshop) because the workshop is already full, he/she can a substitute ENGL 130 (Writing Fiction), 131 (Writing Poetry), or 135 (Writing Nonfiction) and do an extra project or assignment for credit towards the M.F.A. degree. Also, to give the program added flexibility, students are encouraged to take ENGL 298 Individual Studies units, in which they undertake on- and off-campus internships or complete literary research (supervised by a faculty member) comparable to curriculum in a Department seminar which is not offered during that particular semester.

C. STUDENT DEMAND

1. Course enrollments appropriate to method of instruction and discipline
features of this university's mission, the program meets the needs of all these students.

B. QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

1. Description of the Program

The M.A. program requires 30 semester units of course work beyond the B.A. While this is the standard number of units required for nearly all M.A. programs, ours is more than usually rigorous in at least three respects. First, all students must pass a six-hour, two-part written examination based on a reading list which includes not only major literary works but representative works in critical theory, composition theory, and the history of English (see Appendix L for sample exams). This is in addition to the 30 units of course work. Students may substitute six units of thesis work for six units of course work (and about a third of our students do this), but no student is exempt from any part of the comprehensive examination. (Many programs allow a thesis in lieu of an exam.) Second, all students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of a second language, a requirement no longer universal among English M.A. programs. Third, although the university allows M.A. students to count as many as nine undergraduate units toward the M.A., our program has been large enough to be able to offer several graduate seminars every semester. As a result, nearly all of our students take their entire 30-unit program in graduate seminars. We feel the seminar format, which requires a high level of student participation and offers the stimulation of working with advanced fellow students, provides the ideal graduate-level education. Although we have only one required course, the
reading list and the comprehensive exams give the program cohesion and focus (see Appendix L).

A significant feature of the M.A. is our Teaching Associate program. Because many of our students are aiming to become teachers at the community college or university levels, it is important that they receive training and practice in teaching in addition to their course work. Indeed, almost all community colleges require job applicants to have already had some teaching experience. Initially, students may apply to become Graduate Assistants who are paid to work a semester or two as assistants to professors in composition courses or large-section literature courses. Thereafter, they may apply to become Teaching Associates. Those selected are paid to teach two sections of composition each semester under the guidance of the TA Coordinator (currently Professor John Engell). In addition to taking a seminar in teaching composition, Teaching Associates meet frequently as a group with the TA Coordinator to select textbooks, develop syllabi, and discuss teaching and grading problems. They also visit one another’s classes and are visited by the TA Coordinator. We are currently able to offer the opportunity to serve as a Teaching Associate to as many as 12 to 14 of our best students each year, and we find from class observations and SOTE scores that carefully selected and well-supervised Teaching Associates are highly effective composition instructors. Both our composition students and our M.A. candidates profit from this valuable program.

2. Quality of the Program

a. Faculty expertise and currency in their disciplines
The graduate program of San José State University’s MA Program in English employs approximately twenty faculty members, including Professors Berman, Brada-Williams, Cox, Cullen, Douglass, Eastwood, Engell, Fleck, Harris, Karim, Keesey, Krishnaswamy, Maio, Miller, Mitchell, Pollock, Rice, Shillinglaw, Soldofsky, Stork, and Wilson (see Appendix D for their Curricula Vitae). Over the past ten years, this faculty has been remarkably productive. It has published 35 books, 103 articles in refereed journals, and 45 review articles. It has also given over 260 public readings and papers at conferences, including many international symposia and the Modern Language Association and its regional affiliate organizations. Six of the graduate faculty are creative writers, and have published in this same period 24 short stories and 87 poems, in addition to anthologies and poetry collections included in the number of books already listed above.

In addition to the tenure-line faculty, the department has benefited from the presence of visiting professors. Over the past few years, it has hosted a distinguished creative writer/scholar each spring, including Ursula K. Le Guin, Carolyn Kizer, Al Young (currently poet laureate of the State of California), Molly Giles, Ishmael Reed, James D. Houston, and (for spring 2007) Scotland’s Booker Prize Winner James Kelman. These productive and renowned writers have enriched the graduate experience for our MA candidates immeasurably. All have been brought to campus through the generosity of Connie and Robert Lurie, who set up the visiting professorship seven years ago.
c. Library Resources

The library has a strong collection of American and British literature and criticism, with an emphasis on California and Western writers. The Department has worked with the Library to make every effort to collect literature and criticism of multicultural authors. We have a good collection of world literature in English with some of the titles also in the original language. European literature is a portion of this collection. In recent years the availability of English translations of other national literatures has made it possible to strengthen those collections. We have substantial material on folklore and myth.

In addition to books and journals, we have collected audio and video materials, though the holdings could be greatly increased. We subscribe to a number of electronic indexes and full text databases for literature and language arts, expanding this new aspect of our collection as funds allow. Both the Library and the Department of English and Comparative Literature provide links to library resources on their Web pages. The Department of English and Comparative Literature Web Page includes a master set of links to informational and research Websites called “Literary Locales” that has received wide recognition, including a half-page review in the Technology section of The New York Times.

Despite the valiant efforts of faculty and library staff, book and periodical budgets have been so seriously eroded that the collection is inadequate for graduate student research. Both students and faculty require much more library support for their research.
3. **Quality of Instruction**

   **a. Evaluation of Faculty**

   All faculty are required to participate in the Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) program. Each faculty member must have two courses evaluated each year, and many request that their graduate courses be evaluated. These statistical evaluations are reported to the instructor and to the Department. In addition, the Department of English and Comparative Literature requires a separate evaluation form be distributed in each class being evaluated. These comment sheets are collected and collated and reviewed (along with the statistical summaries) by the Department Chair before being returned to the instructor. Department norms on SOTE scores are generally high, and those for graduate seminars are even higher. The Teaching Associate Program has also contributed scores that are above the norms for the university, the college, and the Department.

   **b. Effective Student Advising**

   General advising for all M.A. students is the responsibility of the program coordinator. The coordinator's duties include meeting all new students, publicizing requirements and deadlines, writing and distributing the quarterly *Graduate English Newsletter*, approving each student's official program of study, coordinating and recording the results of the comprehensive and foreign English language examinations, serving as third reader on all M.A. theses, and ensuring that information on each student's progress is forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. In addition, the coordinator provides individual
c. **Student Outcomes Assessment**

In spring of 2006 the Department adopted a list of Outcomes and Methods of Assessment for students in our M.A. Program (see Appendix L). The principal summative assessment of students in our M.A. program is the six-hour final exam but in another form of outcomes assessment, the Department also conducted a survey of its graduate students in Spring 2006 (see Appendix J for the questions and graphs summarizing the results). The questions directly addressed the quality of instruction. Virtually all respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” on issues most critical to the Program: that the seminars were “well taught and intellectually stimulating,” that there were regular opportunities “available for faculty/student interaction,” that “faculty advising is readily available and effective,” and that “the intellectual challenge of assignments and the quantity of work are the level of the courses” was appropriate. And perhaps the most desirable outcome, a large majority of respondents indicated that they would recommend the Program to others.
In some categories, though, students expressed concerns that the Department will have to review. For one, the majority of respondents disagreed that the Program should continue requiring a reading knowledge of a foreign language, results mirroring those of the 2000 survey. The 2000 questionnaire, however, was also completed by alumni, and they were overwhelmingly in favor of the foreign language requirement. This response seems to vindicate the requirement, suggesting that their "life experience" impresses upon graduates the value of having a reading knowledge of another tongue, something less apparent to current students stressing over their abilities to meet the requirement.

On another issue, although a majority found that the Program "offers sufficient variety and types of concentrations," about a third of respondents disagreed. One natural response will be to poll current students on this very issue and ask what kind of additional courses they would like to see offered. Depending on the uniformity or the fragmentation of responses, the Department may be able to expand the diversity of its offerings, depending on what enrollment will permit. Neither our graduate nor our undergraduate programs can afford to offer many under-enrolled courses.

4. Benefit to Students

a. Student Awards

The department gives three student awards specific to the M.A. program. Two, the Mara Steffey Award and the Harvey Birenbaum Award for Excellence in the Graduate Study of Literature, carry cash prizes. Each year the Department
also selects the Outstanding M.A. thesis. This is entered into competition for the College-level Outstanding Thesis award, and the winner of that award in turn competes at the University level. In 2003, Denise Millstein won the College’s Outstanding Thesis Award for her “Fame, Sexuality, and Exile: Lord Byron’s Influence on Oscar Wilde.” In previous years, a Department of English and Comparative Literature nominee won Outstanding Thesis honors at both the College and University levels and achieved further recognition in the state-wide CSU competition.

In addition, M.A. students are allowed to compete for Department-wide awards such as the Anne Lillis and Marjorie M. Folendorf awards for Creative Writing and the generous James Phelan Creative Writing awards in numerous categories. In these competitions, M.A. students have outstanding records.

b. Success of Graduates

Many of our students intend to become community college English instructors, and experience indicate that many will achieve that aim. In fact, a comparison of the goals of current students with the careers of alumni shows that there has been a high correlation between student career plans and their actual careers. Alumni have traditionally verified that the Program prepared them for their chosen careers. Students who have applied to Ph.D. programs have also had success, despite the often keen competition for admission. Recent graduates have been accepted in doctoral programs at UC Davis, UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, UC Riverside, UC Santa Cruz, University of Washington,
University of Oregon, Florida State University, Louisiana State University, Northwestern, NYU, CUNY, Columbia, and Arizona State University.

c. Graduation Rates

The program has averaged 20+ graduates per year over the last 10 years. Although it is possible to complete 30 units and pass the comprehensive and foreign language exams within three semesters, very few students move at this rate. Almost all of our students work full- or part-time, so they take only two or three seminars per semester. We estimate that the average student takes about four years to complete the program. Lack of available course offerings is never a problem. The program has only one required course, and we offer all our seminars in late afternoons or evenings to accommodate our working students. Our survey of six years ago shows that alumni and current students were satisfied that seminars are offered at convenient times and in sufficient variety.

C. STUDENT DEMAND

1. Course enrollments appropriate to method of instruction and discipline

Because the graduate seminar, with an enrollment cap of 15, requires a high level of student participation and interaction with peers and also allows students to develop their skills in formal and informal oral presentations as well as in writing, we consider it the ideal format for graduate instruction in English. Fortunately, our program has been large enough to permit us to offer enough
seminars each semester that nearly all of our students take their entire 30 units of course work in graduate seminars.

2. Numbers sufficient to support program

By the single measure of number of M.A. students enrolled in courses (not counting those writing theses or studying for exams, activities which do not require continuous enrollment), we find that the program has remained at roughly the same level it achieved about a decade ago: approximately 120 students. To put these numbers in perspective, it is well to remember that our program is strictly an English M.A. In many departments of English and Comparative Literature, the graduate program includes degrees in Linguistics and TESOL. On our campus these degrees are offered in a separate department.

We are now able consistently to offer 11 or 12 seminars each semester, and sometimes more, which means almost all our catalogue listings can be given once a year, and some once each semester. Our program is not unique in this respect. The attractiveness of literary study and the demand for teachers at all levels remain high. Our program is so flexible that we can easily adjust the number of seminars to demand and space out their offerings to once every three or four semesters, thus still affording every student the opportunity to take any course.

D. SOCIETAL NEED

The English M.A. program provides both a professional degree and a liberal education. The study of literature is necessarily focused on fundamental intellectual skills such as critical inquiry, aesthetic appreciation, creativity, and
effective communication in speech and writing that are beneficial to all individuals and required for many professions. Moreover, the works studied in English courses are called “great” works of literature precisely because they present profound portraits of human possibilities and powerful images of ethical and moral choices. As such, they provide knowledge about people and society that contributes to broad social understanding and facilitates responsible citizenship. Pursuit of the English M.A. entails advanced acquisition of such knowledge and understanding.

As a professional degree, the M.A. is the required degree for those who wish to become community college English teachers, and a highly desirable degree for high school English teachers who wish to increase their knowledge and sharpen their skills. Clearly, having well trained teachers at these levels is vital to the educational foundations of this metropolitan region, and the largest number of our graduates find employment in these positions. A fair number also go on to study for the Ph.D. and become university-level teachers, and many others find employment in fields outside of education where their liberal arts background and communication skills are important to their jobs.

E. FINANCIAL RESOURCE EFFECTIVENESS

1. Capacity successfully to meet goals with current resources

Current resources are inadequate. Certainly we are able to staff our courses with experienced and well-qualified faculty—though we fear that the system’s high course load coupled with this area’s frightening housing costs will make recruitment continually more difficult. But when we look beyond course-staffing
to levels of support for the kinds of research necessary to a graduate program, we have to admit that resources are not adequate. For several years library acquisitions have fallen and costs of materials have risen sharply. Sabbatical leaves have been chronically under-funded on this campus, research grants are few and small, and travel funds are a shamefully low. University money for guest lecturers and visiting scholars is non-existent and—a particular sore point with graduate faculty—there is no funding for thesis advising, nor is there funding for the training and supervision of Teaching Associates.

2. Capacity to meet emerging trends in the field

The Department Website continues to function adequately, thanks in part to its collaborative nature and periodic re-designs. We are continually exploring its potential for advertising and dramatizing our Department’s offerings. But the faculty’s ability to meet emerging trends in scholarship is limited by the lack of computer technology and support staff and, even more severely, by the lack of library resources, research grants, and travel funds remarked in the previous paragraph.

F. INTERDEPENDENCE OF PROGRAMS

The English M.A. program is largely independent of other programs, with the exception of the Theatre Arts program in the Department of Radio, Television, Film, and Theatre. We have long cross-listed courses with Theatre Arts, and we accept graduate-level work in foreign language literature courses and in philosophy, history, and art history courses when these are relevant to a student’s goals. From the other side, none of the MA program’s courses is
required for another program, though some are acceptable for Theatre Arts
degrees.

G. CAPACITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO AN ACADEMIC FIELD

The English Graduate Organization, a function of English M.A. and M.F.A.
students, has for several years provided a forum for the exchange of ideas
between students and faculty and among graduate students themselves. The
group has sponsored readings of scholarly and creative writings by graduate
students and has occasionally hosted an interdisciplinary conference drawing
participants from several fields and from several states. In addition, individual
graduate students have been successful in having their scholarly work accepted
for publication or for presentation at scholarly conferences. In Spring 2006 four
graduate students were invited to speak at “Significations,” a graduate student
conference sponsored by the Department of English and Comparative Literature
at CSU, Los Angeles: Ben Dondero, “Practical Teachings Gleaned from Sir
Gawain through Three Centuries of Arthurian Literature and Medieval Life”; Jill
Hertzer, “Vivian: Through the Author’s Looking Glass”; Michelle Perry, “Merlin: A
Man for All Occasions”; and Rob Swart, “From the Mouths of Kings.” In addition,
the 4th international conference for the U.S. Association for Commonwealth
Literature and Language Studies accepted a proposed roundtable from Revathi
Krishnaswamy involving five of our students: Stephanie Chan, Angela Moore,
Andrea Lampert, Sayo Ogundiran, and Angela Cunningham. The event will be
held at Santa Clara University, October 27-29, 2006. Another graduate student,
Laura Rose, had a paper accepted for another graduate student conference, the
UCLA Southland Graduate Conference, "The Embodied Canon," held May 19, 2006. In addition, a recent graduate, Robin Somers, had a paper accepted for the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association conference to be held in Tucson, Arizona: "Weather Report: Clearing Skies Over [Mary] Austin." She was also selected to chair the Rocky Mountain MLA's "Teaching English" section.

Faculty contributions: As noted above, the contributions of individual faculty members to their academic fields have been voluminous and of high quality.

The graduate program of San José State University's MA Program in English employs approximately twenty faculty members, including Professors Berman, Brada-Williams, Cox, Cullen, Douglass, Eastwood, Engell, Fleck, Harris, Karim, Keesey, Krishnaswamy, Maio, Miller, Mitchell, Pollock, Rice, Shillinglaw, Soldofsky, Stork, and Wilson (see Appendix D for their Curricula Vitae). Over the past ten years, this faculty has been remarkably productive. It has published 35 books, 103 articles in refereed journals, and 45 review articles. It has also given over 260 public readings and papers at conferences, including many international symposia and the Modern Language Association and its regional affiliate organizations. Six of the graduate faculty are creative writers, and they have published in this same period 24 short stories and 87 poems, in addition to anthologies and poetry collections included in the number of books already listed above.

In addition to the tenure-line faculty, the department has benefited from the presence of visiting professors. Over the past few years, it has hosted a
distinguished creative writer/scholar each spring, including Ursula K. Le Guin, Carolyn Kizer, Al Young (currently poet laureate of the State of California), Molly Giles, Ishmael Reed, James D. Houston, and (in 2007) Booker Prize Winner James Kelman. These productive and renowned writers have enriched the graduate experience for our MA candidates immeasurably. All have been brought to campus through the generosity of Connie and Robert Lurie, who set up the visiting professorship seven years ago.

H. AVAILABILITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL ALTERNATIVES

For students seeking an M.A. in English, there are few alternative programs readily available. UC-Berkeley, UC-Santa Cruz, and Stanford largely restrict their graduate work in English to those admitted to their small and highly selective Ph.D. programs. CSU-Monterey Bay and Santa Clara University offer no graduate work in English at all. CSU-Hayward has only a small M.A. program. Consequently, San Jose State must serve the needs of all those in the entire South Bay-Monterey Bay region who wish to pursue directly the M.A. in English.

I. CHANGES: PAST AND FUTURE

A thorough examination of the M.A. program was conducted in 1992. As a result of that review, the department decided to reduce the program's three required courses to a single required course—"Materials and Methods of Literary Study."

We reasoned that while all students could profit from, say, a graduate course in Shakespeare, a student who had taken two undergraduate courses in Shakespeare might do better to choose a seminar in another field. The same could be said of a course in Milton, or in literary theory, or in any other subject
that would make a plausible requirement for some students, but not necessarily
for all. At the same time, we specified that all students would take all parts of the
comprehensive examination, and would, therefore, be responsible for mastering
the materials on an extensive reading list covering literary masterpieces and key
texts in literary criticism, rhetoric, and the history of the English language. The
reading list and the comprehensive exams, we felt, would give the program
sufficient coherence and focus while freeing students to take seminars as their
diverse backgrounds and interests dictated. We feel the change in requirements
has been successful. At the same time we increased the number of American
literature seminars to three, and subsequently we have added seminars in
Medieval Literature and in Comedy, thereby further increasing student choice.

In 1995-96, the program underwent another review as part of a campus-wide
effort to eliminate multiple or little-used degree tracks. Arguing that under-
enrolled programs led to inefficient use of resources, since often either required
classes would have to be held despite very low enrollments or else students
would have to delay graduation, a university-level committee urged all
departments to consider eliminating little-used degrees. In response, the
Department of English and Comparative Literature decided to eliminate the
Technical Writing track in the M.A. Though the track was offered to meet what
was assumed to be a considerable demand, we found that from as far back as
1979 that track had produced on average only two degrees per year. At that
rate, it would not really justify holding a required seminar more than once every
four or five years, clearly an untenable practice. The creative writing track, which
had steadily accounted for 10-15% of our students, was kept, but the department decided it would better reflect the comprehensive nature of our program and also better serve our students if we were to eliminate separate degree designations: "English" or "literature" or "writing." Since 1996, all our graduates receive simply an M.A. in "English."
Kristin Gamo '98 graduated from UCLA in 2003 and has been working in medical research in Brighton, England, Grenoble, France and the UCLA School of Medicine. The focus of her research is DNA repair and related disorders associated with cancer or severe immunodeficiency. Currently, Kristin is performing diagnostic testing for ataxia-telangiesctasia, a rare genetic disease that is presently incurable but, she writes, "is relentlessly studied in hopes of improving treatment for affected children."
III. PROGRAM PLAN: ENGLISH & COMPARATIVE LITERATURE MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CREATIVE WRITING

A. CENTRALITY TO THE MISSION

The mission of San Jose State University is “to enrich the lives of its students, to transmit knowledge to its students along with the necessary skills for applying it in the service of our society, and to expand the base of knowledge through research and scholarship.” The Department of English and Comparative Literature’s M.F.A. new program, implemented in Fall 2001, is central to the university’s mission and important to the educational structure of this metropolitan region. The program’s central goal is to educate professional creative writers, providing them with both hands-on “studio” writing instruction and an equal amount of instruction in the advanced study of literature. The MFA program makes a broad commitment to the professional literary aspirations of the students and thus provides state-of-the-art professional creative writing instruction. The M.F.A. degree is viewed in the Creative Writing field as a terminal degree, equivalent to the doctoral degree in the scholarly fields within English and Comparative Literature.

The program’s graduates are being prepared for employment in a variety of roles in the public and private sector as well as in higher education. There are numerous public and private entities in the region in need of publicity materials, company and organizational histories, advertising plans, articles, poems, stories,
comprehensive examination, and would, therefore, be responsible for mastering the materials on an extensive reading list covering literary masterpieces and key texts in literary criticism, rhetoric, and the history of the English language. The reading list and the comprehensive exams, we felt, would give the program sufficient coherence and focus while freeing students to take seminars as their diverse backgrounds and interests dictated. We feel the change in requirements has been successful. At the same time we increased the number of American literature seminars to three, and subsequently we have added seminars in Medieval Literature and in Comedy, thereby further increasing student choice.

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III. PROGRAM PLAN: ENGLISH & COMPARATIVE LITERATURE MASTER OF FINE ARTS IN CREATIVE WRITING

QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

1. Description of Program

The most recent and momentous change in the program has been the approval of the Master of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing. Though this program had been approved up to the Chancellor's level over a decade ago, it languished there until the department decided to urge our request once more. After some revisions, the M.F.A. was officially approved and in Fall 2001 enrolled its first students. The advent of the M.F.A. affected the M.A. program in several important ways. First, the Creative Writing track within the M.A. was discontinued. Students enrolling in fall 2000 were the last M.A. students to be admitted to the Creative Writing track. Second, M.F.A. students are now taking literature seminars along with M.A. students, so M.A. courses have seen no loss of enrollment, but rather, an increase. We envisioned a cooperative relationship with M.A. and M.F.A. faculty and students, and this has come to pass. The two programs query, stimulate, and nurture each other.

The M.F.A. at SJSU requires students to complete an equal amount of work in writing workshops and literature seminars. The program is designed to give students the opportunity to develop their talents in more than one genre while increasing their knowledge of modern and contemporary literature in a variety of
forms and across a diverse range of cultural and critical perspectives. The program also features courses that provide hands-on preparation for beginning one's writing career in a globalized, technologically enhanced world.


2. Admission Requirements

Application Deadline: **February 1**

Applicants seeking admission to the MFA in Creative Writing must submit the following items:

1. **Portfolio** -- Applicants are welcome to submit portfolios in more than one genre.
   - Poetry: 10 - 15 pages, single-paced
• Fiction: Two short stories or excerpt from novel. No more than 50 pages (double-paced)

• Non-fiction: Two short essays (double-spaced)

• Screenwriting/Playwriting:

2. Statement of Purpose

• You should write an essay (no more than 750 words) including an introduction of yourself and your goals in pursuing the MFA degree in Creative Writing. This essay is a crucial portion of your application package, and one of our main sources of information about you. An abbreviated version may be submitted with your grad school application.

3. Three Letters of Recommendation

• Your letters of recommendation should come from current or former professors, editors, or individuals who can comment on your academic work and creative potential. Letters should be written on faculty or professional letterhead.

4. Official Transcripts

• Please send official transcripts of all your undergraduate and/or graduate course work directly to the Creative Writing Program.

5. Credits in Related Field
• Applicants must have an undergraduate major or minor in English or Creative Writing, or a minimum of 24 credit hours in literature and/or creative writing, with a grade point average of 3.0 or above.

6. Graduate School Application

• Like most universities, you must apply for admission (http://www2.sjsu.edu/gradstudies/) as a graduate student when you apply to the Creative Writing Program. Failure to complete this application can delay acceptance. GRE scores are not required for admission to the Creative Writing Program; however, students with promising portfolios and grade point averages below the 3.0 minimum may be required to provide GRE scores.

Fulfillment of the above constitutes the minimum requirements and does not Guarantee admission to the Creative Writing Program. In general, we are seeking candidates who show an artistic commitment and literary promise in their writing. The most important factor in evaluating applicants is the quality and potential of the portfolio. With this in mind, applicants should take great care in preparing a manuscript which represents the writer's finest work.
3. Curriculum: M.F.A. in Creative Writing

Core (6 units)

- 201C Materials and Methods of Literary Production (Must be taken within two semesters of admission to the program; co-requisite with writing workshops.) (3)
- 204 Seminar in Modern Approaches to Literature (3)

1. **Writing Workshops** (15 units) (All courses repeatable for credit. You must take 9 units in your primary genre; 6 units in your secondary genre. If 200-level courses are not available, you can take up to nine units of 100-level courses as equivalent.)

- 240 Seminar in Poetry Writing (3)
  
  (Or English 131: Poetry Writing)
- 241 Seminar in Fiction Writing (3)
  
  (Or English 130: Fiction Writing)
- 242 Seminar in Nonfiction Writing* (3)
  
  (Or English 135: Nonfiction Writing)

2. **Literary Research** (15 units)

- 202 Craft and Theory of Poetry (formerly Engl 200) (3)
- 203 Craft and Theory of Narrative (3)
- 208 Seminar in Comparative Literature (3)
- 211 Seminar in Twentieth-Century Poetry (3)
• 215 Seminar in Myth and Symbolism (3)
• 216 Seminar in Medieval English Literature (3)
• 217 Seminar in the English Renaissance (3)
• 225 Seminar in Shakespeare (3)
• 226 Seminar in Tragedy (3)
• 229 Seminar in Seventeenth-Century Literature (3)
• 230 Seminar in Eighteenth Century British Literature (3)
• 232 Seminar in Romanticism (3)
• 233 Seminar in the Victorian Period (3)
• 253 Seminar in Early American Literature (3)
• 254 Seminar in Nineteenth-Century American Lit. (3)
• 255 Seminar in Twentieth-Century American Lit. (3)
• 256 Seminar in Twentieth-Century British Literature (3)
• 298 Special Study: Literature (3)
• 139 Montalvo Seminar (3)
• (139 also satisfies Literary Research requirement: with the Director's and instructor's permission)

3. **Professional Training** (6 units)

• 257 Seminar in the History of Rhetoric (3)
• 259 Seminar in Composition Studies (3)
• 298 Special Study: Writing Internship and Seminar (3)
(Business- or School-based Supervised Internship)

- 133 Reed Magazine (With Director's permission) (3)

Of the required minimum 48 units, students must take 15 units in writing workshops and 15 units in literature seminars (all courses count for 3 semester units). Nine of the writing workshop units must be taken in the student's primary genre—either poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction or scriptwriting. Six units must be taken in the student's secondary genre(s). Working closely with creative writing faculty, students will demonstrate their mastery of a primary genre and show their proficiency in secondary genre(s). Once students have successfully completed the workshop requirement, they may then take 6 units (2 semesters) of thesis, working with a three-person faculty committee who will monitor the work in-progress. The final thesis manuscript will be a publishable work of poetry, collection of short stories, collection of creative nonfiction pieces, book-length work of nonfiction, or novel, written under the supervision of the committee. To complete the M.F.A. degree, students must also pass the M.F.A. exam.

4. Graduation Requirements

A candidate for the M.F.A. in Creative Writing must meet the following requirements in order to graduate from the program:

1. Successfully complete a minimum of 48 semester hours of graduate study (a maximum of 9 semester hours of graduate course credit may be transferred from another accredited institution in partial fulfillment of the M.F.A.).[ADS1]
2. Complete at least 9 semester hours of writing workshop in a primary genre and at least 6 in secondary genre(s). [ADS2]

3. Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) in all graduate coursework.

4. Complete a book-length Thesis Manuscript of literary merit and publishable quality. The manuscript must meet the specific format requirements of the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

5. Pass the M.F.A. Comprehensive Examination during the penultimate semester of coursework.


7. Demonstrate preparation through the intermediate level of a foreign language or proficiency therein. [ADS3]

8. (Note: All requirements must be completed within seven calendar years.)

5. Quality of Program

1. Faculty expertise and currency in their disciplines

The San José State University’s Master of Fine Arts Program eight faculty members: Professors Berman (Fiction), Engell (Fiction), Fink (Fiction), Karim (Fiction and Poetry), Maio (Poetry), Miller (Nonfiction), Rico (Nonfiction), and Soldofsky (Poetry) [see Appendix D for their Curricula Vitae]. Since the institution of the M.F.A. program in 2000, this faculty has been remarkably productive. They have published or have forthcoming 9 books, 15 short stories, 20 poems, 28 reviews and articles, and made 67 presentations at conferences.

As mentioned above, the M.F.A. Program also offers courses taught annually by a distinguished writer-in-residence who join the faculty as the Lurie Distinguished Visiting Professor of Creative Writing. In the years between 1999 and 2006, Ursula K. LeGuin, Carolyn Kizer, Al Young, Molly Giles, Simon
Winchester, Ishmael Reed, and Santa Cruz-based novelist and nonfiction author James D. Houston have been Lurie Professors. The Lurie Chair in Spring 2007 is scheduled to be Scottish novelist and Booker Prize winner James Kelman. By bringing internationally applauded authors to the M.F.A. Program, the Lurie Chair has contributed greatly to its reputation, something reflected in the increased number of applicants who apply each year. In the short time of the Program's existence, its graduates have begun to compile a promising publication record.
II. PROGRAM PLAN: ENGLISH & COMPARATIVE LITERATURE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM

A. CENTRALITY TO THE MISSION

The mission of San Jose State University is “to enrich the lives of its students, to transmit knowledge to its students along with the necessary skills for applying it in the service of our society, and to expand the base of knowledge through research and scholarship.” The Department of English and Comparative Literature’s Master of Arts program is central to the university’s mission and important to the educational structure of this metropolitan region. Most of our M.A. students are aiming for careers in teaching. The M.A. is the required degree for those who plan to teach at the community college, the goal of many of our students. Others are secondary-school teachers who are seeking to increase knowledge of their subject area. Still others take the M.A. as the stepping stone to a Ph.D. program with university teaching and research as their ultimate goal.

While those planning to become teachers at these several levels make up the majority of our students, many others take jobs in local businesses and industries where their writing skills and liberal arts background are essential to their work. A number of our graduates are technical and marketing writers and some are editors for professional journals or textbook companies. And we always have quite a few students who continue the formal study of literature simply because it enriches their lives. By maintaining a focus on the central
features of this university's mission, the program meets the needs of all these students.

B. QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

1. Description of the Program

The M.A. program requires 30 semester units of course work beyond the B.A. While this is the standard number of units required for nearly all M.A. programs, ours is more than usually rigorous in at least three respects. First, all students must pass a six-hour, two-part written examination based on a reading list which includes not only major literary works but representative works in critical theory, composition theory, and the history of English (see Appendix L for sample exams). This is in addition to the 30 units of course work. Students may substitute six units of thesis work for six units of course work (and about a third of our students do this), but no student is exempt from any part of the comprehensive examination. (Many programs allow a thesis in lieu of an exam.) Second, all students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of a second language, a requirement no longer universal among English M.A. programs. Third, although the university allows M.A. students to count as many as nine undergraduate units toward the M.A., our program has been large enough to be able to offer several graduate seminars every semester. As a result, nearly all of our students take their entire 30-unit program in graduate seminars. We feel the seminar format, which requires a high level of student participation and offers the stimulation of working with advanced fellow students, provides the ideal graduate-level education. Although we have only one required course, the
reading list and the comprehensive exams give the program cohesion and focus (see Appendix L).

A significant feature of the M.A. is our Teaching Associate program. Because many of our students are aiming to become teachers at the community college or university levels, it is important that they receive training and practice in teaching in addition to their course work. Indeed, almost all community colleges require job applicants to have already had some teaching experience. Initially, students may apply to become Graduate Assistants who are paid to work a semester or two as assistants to professors in composition courses or large-section literature courses. Thereafter, they may apply to become Teaching Associates. Those selected are paid to teach two sections of composition each semester under the guidance of the TA Coordinator (currently Professor John Engell). In addition to taking a seminar in teaching composition, Teaching Associates meet frequently as a group with the TA Coordinator to select textbooks, develop syllabi, and discuss teaching and grading problems. They also visit one another's classes and are visited by the TA Coordinator. We are currently able to offer the opportunity to serve as a Teaching Associate to as many as 12 to 14 of our best students each year, and we find from class observations and SOTE scores that carefully selected and well-supervised Teaching Associates are highly effective composition instructors. Both our composition students and our M.A. candidates profit from this valuable program.

2. Quality of the Program
   a. Faculty expertise and currency in their disciplines
The graduate program of San José State University's MA Program in English employs approximately twenty faculty members, including Professors Berman, Brada-Williams, Cox, Cullen, Douglass, Eastwood, Engell, Fleck, Harris, Karim, Keesey, Krishnaswamy, Maio, Miller, Mitchell, Pollock, Rice, Shillinglaw, Soldofsky, Stork, and Wilson (see Appendix D for their Curricula Vitae). Over the past ten years, this faculty has been remarkably productive. It has published 35 books, 103 articles in refereed journals, and 45 review articles. It has also given over 260 public readings and papers at conferences, including many international symposia and the Modern Language Association and its regional affiliate organizations. Six of the graduate faculty are creative writers, and have published in this same period 24 short stories and 87 poems, in addition to anthologies and poetry collections included in the number of books already listed above.

In addition to the tenure-line faculty, the department has benefited from the presence of visiting professors. Over the past few years, it has hosted a distinguished creative writer/scholar each spring, including Ursula K. Le Guin, Carolyn Kizer, Al Young (currently poet laureate of the State of California), Molly Giles, Ishmael Reed, James D. Houston, and (for spring 2007) Scotland's Booker Prize Winner James Kelman. These productive and renowned writers have enriched the graduate experience for our MA candidates immeasurably. All have been brought to campus through the generosity of Connie and Robert Lurie, who set up the visiting professorship seven years ago.
c. Library Resources

The library has a strong collection of American and British literature and criticism, with an emphasis on California and Western writers. The Department has worked with the Library to make every effort to collect literature and criticism of multicultural authors. We have a good collection of world literature in English with some of the titles also in the original language. European literature is a portion of this collection. In recent years the availability of English translations of other national literatures has made it possible to strengthen those collections. We have substantial material on folklore and myth.

In addition to books and journals, we have collected audio and video materials, though the holdings could be greatly increased. We subscribe to a number of electronic indexes and full text databases for literature and language arts, expanding this new aspect of our collection as funds allow. Both the Library and the Department of English and Comparative Literature provide links to library resources on their Web pages. The Department of English and Comparative Literature Web Page includes a master set of links to informational and research Websites called "Literary Locales" that has received wide recognition, including a half-page review in the Technology section of The New York Times.

Despite the valiant efforts of faculty and library staff, book and periodical budgets have been so seriously eroded that the collection is inadequate for graduate student research. Both students and faculty require much more library support for their research.
3. **Quality of Instruction**
   
   **a. Evaluation of Faculty**

   All faculty are required to participate in the Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) program. Each faculty member must have two courses evaluated each year, and many request that their graduate courses be evaluated. These statistical evaluations are reported to the instructor and to the Department. In addition, the Department of English and Comparative Literature requires a separate evaluation form be distributed in each class being evaluated. These comment sheets are collected and collated and reviewed (along with the statistical summaries) by the Department Chair before being returned to the instructor. Department norms on SOTE scores are generally high, and those for graduate seminars are even higher. The Teaching Associate Program has also contributed scores that are above the norms for the university, the college, and the Department.

   **b. Effective Student Advising**

   General advising for all M.A. students is the responsibility of the program coordinator. The coordinator’s duties include meeting all new students, publicizing requirements and deadlines, writing and distributing the quarterly *Graduate English Newsletter*, approving each student’s official program of study, coordinating and recording the results of the comprehensive and foreign English language examinations, serving as third reader on all M.A. theses, and ensuring that information on each student’s progress is forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. In addition, the coordinator provides individual
c. Student Outcomes Assessment

In spring of 2006 the Department adopted a list of Outcomes and Methods of Assessment for students in our M.A. Program (see Appendix L). The principal summative assessment of students in our M.A. program is the six-hour final exam but in another form of outcomes assessment, the Department also conducted a survey of its graduate students in Spring 2006 (see Appendix J for the questions and graphs summarizing the results). The questions directly addressed the quality of instruction. Virtually all respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” on issues most critical to the Program: that the seminars were “well taught and intellectually stimulating,” that there were regular opportunities “available for faculty/student interaction,” that “faculty advising is readily available and effective,” and that “the intellectual challenge of assignments and the quantity of work are the level of the courses” was appropriate. And perhaps the most desirable outcome, a large majority of respondents indicated that they would recommend the Program to others.
In some categories, though, students expressed concerns that the Department will have to review. For one, the majority of respondents disagreed that the Program should continue requiring a reading knowledge of a foreign language, results mirroring those of the 2000 survey. The 2000 questionnaire, however, was also completed by alumni, and they were overwhelmingly in favor of the foreign language requirement. This response seems to vindicate the requirement, suggesting that their "life experience" impresses upon graduates the value of having a reading knowledge of another tongue, something less apparent to current students stressing over their abilities to meet the requirement.

On another issue, although a majority found that the Program "offers sufficient variety and types of concentrations," about a third of respondents disagreed. One natural response will be to poll current students on this very issue and ask what kind of additional courses they would like to see offered. Depending on the uniformity or the fragmentation of responses, the Department may be able to expand the diversity of its offerings, depending on what enrollment will permit. Neither our graduate nor our undergraduate programs can afford to offer many under-enrolled courses.

4. Benefit to Students
   a. Student Awards

The department gives three student awards specific to the M.A. program. Two, the Mara Steffey Award and the Harvey Birenbaum Award for Excellence in the Graduate Study of Literature, carry cash prizes. Each year the Department
also selects the Outstanding M.A. thesis. This is entered into competition for the College-level Outstanding Thesis award, and the winner of that award in turn competes at the University level. In 2003, Denise Millstein won the College’s Outstanding Thesis Award for her “Fame, Sexuality, and Exile: Lord Byron’s Influence on Oscar Wilde.” In previous years, a Department of English and Comparative Literature nominee won Outstanding Thesis honors at both the College and University levels and achieved further recognition in the state-wide CSU competition.

In addition, M.A. students are allowed to compete for Department-wide awards such as the Anne Lillis and Marjorie M. Folendorf awards for Creative Writing and the generous James Phelan Creative Writing awards in numerous categories. In these competitions, M.A. students have outstanding records.

b. Success of Graduates

Many of our students intend to become community college English instructors, and experience indicate that many will achieve that aim. In fact, a comparison of the goals of current students with the careers of alumni shows that there has been a high correlation between student career plans and their actual careers. Alumni have traditionally verified that the Program prepared them for their chosen careers. Students who have applied to Ph.D. programs have also had success, despite the often keen competition for admission. Recent graduates have been accepted in doctoral programs at UC Davis, UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, UC Riverside, UC Santa Cruz, University of Washington,
University of Oregon, Florida State University, Louisiana State University, Northwestern, NYU, CUNY, Columbia, and Arizona State University.

c. Graduation Rates

The program has averaged 20+ graduates per year over the last 10 years. Although it is possible to complete 30 units and pass the comprehensive and foreign language exams within three semesters, very few students move at this rate. Almost all of our students work full- or part-time, so they take only two or three seminars per semester. We estimate that the average student takes about four years to complete the program. Lack of available course offerings is never a problem. The program has only one required course, and we offer all our seminars in late afternoons or evenings to accommodate our working students. Our survey of six years ago shows that alumni and current students were satisfied that seminars are offered at convenient times and in sufficient variety.

C. STUDENT DEMAND

1. Course enrollments appropriate to method of instruction and discipline

Because the graduate seminar, with an enrollment cap of 15, requires a high level of student participation and interaction with peers and also allows students to develop their skills in formal and informal oral presentations as well as in writing, we consider it the ideal format for graduate instruction in English. Fortunately, our program has been large enough to permit us to offer enough
seminars each semester that nearly all of our students take their entire 30 units of course work in graduate seminars.

2. **Numbers sufficient to support program**

By the single measure of number of M.A. students enrolled in courses (not counting those writing theses or studying for exams, activities which do not require continuous enrollment), we find that the program has remained at roughly the same level it achieved about a decade ago: approximately 120 students. To put these numbers in perspective, it is well to remember that our program is strictly an English M.A. In many departments of English and Comparative Literature, the graduate program includes degrees in Linguistics and TESOL. On our campus these degrees are offered in a separate department.

We are now able consistently to offer 11 or 12 seminars each semester, and sometimes more, which means almost all our catalogue listings can be given once a year, and some once each semester. Our program is not unique in this respect. The attractiveness of literary study and the demand for teachers at all levels remain high. Our program is so flexible that we can easily adjust the number of seminars to demand and space out their offerings to once every three or four semesters, thus still affording every student the opportunity to take any course.

D. **SOCIETAL NEED**

The English M.A. program provides both a professional degree and a liberal education. The study of literature is necessarily focused on fundamental intellectual skills such as critical inquiry, aesthetic appreciation, creativity, and
effective communication in speech and writing that are beneficial to all individuals and required for many professions. Moreover, the works studied in English courses are called “great” works of literature precisely because they present profound portraits of human possibilities and powerful images of ethical and moral choices. As such, they provide knowledge about people and society that contributes to broad social understanding and facilitates responsible citizenship. Pursuit of the English M.A. entails advanced acquisition of such knowledge and understanding.

As a professional degree, the M.A. is the required degree for those who wish to become community college English teachers, and a highly desirable degree for high school English teachers who wish to increase their knowledge and sharpen their skills. Clearly, having well trained teachers at these levels is vital to the educational foundations of this metropolitan region, and the largest number of our graduates find employment in these positions. A fair number also go on to study for the Ph.D. and become university-level teachers, and many others find employment in fields outside of education where their liberal arts background and communication skills are important to their jobs.

E. FINANCIAL RESOURCE EFFECTIVENESS

1. Capacity successfully to meet goals with current resources

Current resources are inadequate. Certainly we are able to staff our courses with experienced and well-qualified faculty—though we fear that the system’s high course load coupled with this area’s frightening housing costs will make recruitment continually more difficult. But when we look beyond course-staffing
to levels of support for the kinds of research necessary to a graduate program, we have to admit that resources are not adequate. For several years library acquisitions have fallen and costs of materials have risen sharply. Sabbatical leaves have been chronically under-funded on this campus, research grants are few and small, and travel funds are a shamefully low. University money for guest lecturers and visiting scholars is non-existent and— a particular sore point with graduate faculty—there is no funding for thesis advising, nor is there funding for the training and supervision of Teaching Associates.

2. Capacity to meet emerging trends in the field

The Department Website continues to function adequately, thanks in part to its collaborative nature and periodic re-designs. We are continually exploring its potential for advertising and dramatizing our Department's offerings. But the faculty's ability to meet emerging trends in scholarship is limited by the lack of computer technology and support staff and, even more severely, by the lack of library resources, research grants, and travel funds remarked in the previous paragraph.

F. INTERDEPENDENCE OF PROGRAMS

The English M.A. program is largely independent of other programs, with the exception of the Theatre Arts program in the Department of Radio, Television, Film, and Theatre. We have long cross-listed courses with Theatre Arts, and we accept graduate-level work in foreign language literature courses and in philosophy, history, and art history courses when these are relevant to a student's goals. From the other side, none of the MA program's courses is
required for another program, though some are acceptable for Theatre Arts degrees.

G. CAPACITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO AN ACADEMIC FIELD

The English Graduate Organization, a function of English M.A. and M.F.A. students, has for several years provided a forum for the exchange of ideas between students and faculty and among graduate students themselves. The group has sponsored readings of scholarly and creative writings by graduate students and has occasionally hosted an interdisciplinary conference drawing participants from several fields and from several states. In addition, individual graduate students have been successful in having their scholarly work accepted for publication or for presentation at scholarly conferences. In Spring 2006 four graduate students were invited to speak at “Significations,” a graduate student conference sponsored by the Department of English and Comparative Literature at CSU, Los Angeles: Ben Dondero, “Practical Teachings Gleaned from Sir Gawain through Three Centuries of Arthurian Literature and Medieval Life”; Jill Hertzer, “Vivian: Through the Author’s Looking Glass”; Michelle Perry, “Merlin: A Man for All Occasions”; and Rob Swart, “From the Mouths of Kings.” In addition, the 4th international conference for the U.S. Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies accepted a proposed roundtable from Revathi Krishnaswamy involving five of our students: Stephanie Chan, Angela Moore, Andrea Lampert, Sayo Ogundiran, and Angela Cunningham. The event will be held at Santa Clara University, October 27-29, 2006. Another graduate student, Laura Rose, had a paper accepted for another graduate student conference, the
UCLA Southland Graduate Conference, "The Embodied Canon," held May 19, 2006. In addition, a recent graduate, Robin Somers, had a paper accepted for the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association conference to be held in Tucson, Arizona: "Weather Report: Clearing Skies Over [Mary] Austin." She was also selected to chair the Rocky Mountain MLA's "Teaching English" section.

Faculty contributions: As noted above, the contributions of individual faculty members to their academic fields have been voluminous and of high quality.

The graduate program of San José State University's MA Program in English employs approximately twenty faculty members, including Professors Berman, Brada-Williams, Cox, Cullen, Douglass, Eastwood, Engell, Fleck, Harris, Karim, Keesey, Krishnaswamy, Maio, Miller, Mitchell, Pollock, Rice, Shillinglaw, Soldofsky, Stork, and Wilson (see Appendix D for their Curricula Vitae). Over the past ten years, this faculty has been remarkably productive. It has published 35 books, 103 articles in refereed journals, and 45 review articles. It has also given over 260 public readings and papers at conferences, including many international symposia and the Modern Language Association and its regional affiliate organizations. Six of the graduate faculty are creative writers, and they have published in this same period 24 short stories and 87 poems, in addition to anthologies and poetry collections included in the number of books already listed above.

In addition to the tenure-line faculty, the department has benefited from the presence of visiting professors. Over the past few years, it has hosted a
distinguished creative writer/scholar each spring, including Ursula K. Le Guin, Carolyn Kizer, Al Young (currently poet laureate of the State of California), Molly Giles, Ishmael Reed, James D. Houston, and (in 2007) Booker Prize Winner James Kelman. These productive and renowned writers have enriched the graduate experience for our MA candidates immeasurably. All have been brought to campus through the generosity of Connie and Robert Lurie, who set up the visiting professorship seven years ago.

H. AVAILABILITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL ALTERNATIVES

For students seeking an M.A. in English, there are few alternative programs readily available. UC-Berkeley, UC-Santa Cruz, and Stanford largely restrict their graduate work in English to those admitted to their small and highly selective Ph.D. programs. CSU-Monterey Bay and Santa Clara University offer no graduate work in English at all. CSU-Hayward has only a small M.A. program. Consequently, San Jose State must serve the needs of all those in the entire South Bay-Monterey Bay region who wish to pursue directly the M.A. in English.

I. CHANGES: PAST AND FUTURE

A thorough examination of the M.A. program was conducted in 1992. As a result of that review, the department decided to reduce the program's three required courses to a single required course—"Materials and Methods of Literary Study."

We reasoned that while all students could profit from, say, a graduate course in Shakespeare, a student who had taken two undergraduate courses in Shakespeare might do better to choose a seminar in another field. The same could be said of a course in Milton, or in literary theory, or in any other subject
that would make a plausible requirement for some students, but not necessarily for all. At the same time, we specified that all students would take all parts of the comprehensive examination, and would, therefore, be responsible for mastering the materials on an extensive reading list covering literary masterpieces and key texts in literary criticism, rhetoric, and the history of the English language. The reading list and the comprehensive exams, we felt, would give the program sufficient coherence and focus while freeing students to take seminars as their diverse backgrounds and interests dictated. We feel the change in requirements has been successful. At the same time we increased the number of American literature seminars to three, and subsequently we have added seminars in Medieval Literature and in Comedy, thereby further increasing student choice.

In 1995-96, the program underwent another review as part of a campus-wide effort to eliminate multiple or little-used degree tracks. Arguing that under-enrolled programs led to inefficient use of resources, since often either required classes would have to be held despite very low enrollments or else students would have to delay graduation, a university-level committee urged all departments to consider eliminating little-used degrees. In response, the Department of English and Comparative Literature decided to eliminate the Technical Writing track in the M.A. Though the track was offered to meet what was assumed to be a considerable demand, we found that from as far back as 1979 that track had produced on average only two degrees per year. At that rate, it would not really justify holding a required seminar more than once every four or five years, clearly an untenable practice. The creative writing track, which
had steadily accounted for 10-15% of our students, was kept, but the department decided it would better reflect the comprehensive nature of our program and also better serve our students if we were to eliminate separate degree designations: "English" or "literature" or "writing." Since 1996, all our graduates receive simply an M.A. in "English."
II. PROGRAM PLAN: ENGLISH & COMPARATIVE LITERATURE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM

A. CENTRALITY TO THE MISSION

The mission of San Jose State University is “to enrich the lives of its students, to transmit knowledge to its students along with the necessary skills for applying it in the service of our society, and to expand the base of knowledge through research and scholarship.” The Department of English and Comparative Literature’s Master of Arts program is central to the university’s mission and important to the educational structure of this metropolitan region. Most of our M.A. students are aiming for careers in teaching. The M.A. is the required degree for those who plan to teach at the community college, the goal of many of our students. Others are secondary-school teachers who are seeking to increase knowledge of their subject area. Still others take the M.A. as the stepping stone to a Ph.D. program with university teaching and research as their ultimate goal.

While those planning to become teachers at these several levels make up the majority of our students, many others take jobs in local businesses and industries where their writing skills and liberal arts background are essential to their work. A number of our graduates are technical and marketing writers and some are editors for professional journals or textbook companies. And we always have quite a few students who continue the formal study of literature simply because it enriches their lives. By maintaining a focus on the central
I. CHANGES: PAST AND FUTURE

In previous reviews, the Department of English and Comparative Literature endured a lengthy struggle with the structure of the English major. The outcome was a carefully crafted and continually negotiated set of requirements that allow students limited choices within certain areas, while dictating particular courses in others. The patterns established in curricular revisions have reinforced the study of literature by periods and nationalities: American, British, European, and "World." Three out of five survey courses in American, British and European Literature were mandated, as was a course in Shakespeare and another in world literature. An additional requirement in Language and Linguistics was also adopted, giving students a choice of four courses. A Senior Seminar was redesigned to function as a course in Literary Theory as well as a capstone experience. A suggestion to create two different sets of courses—one for literature students and another for students interested in writing—was dropped in favor of a unified major with the same requirements for all. A requirement that students take two courses in Critical Writing (Poetry in one, Drama and Fiction in the other) was also dropped. The Department’s 100W course, which meets the University’s junior-level writing requirement, was to pick up the slack in this area by teaching research methods, a practice adopted as well in some other departments such as History.

Over the course of the last eight years, the Department has seen that this curriculum has some substantial strengths. It has given our graduates a very solid traditional foundation in literary studies, and the feedback we have
traditionally received from alumni indicates their appreciation. However, there have been some problems that were not effectively addressed by recent curricular reforms.

One is the need for more systematic study of writing and language. Like University students across the country, ours need to write better. The lack of the Critical Writing requirement was not adequately supplied by English 100W. Another problem was that the Senior Seminar proved awkward. An introductory course in Literary Theory, it was placed at the end of the major. The assessment component in the seminar was underdeveloped, and so little useful feedback was obtained about student performance. Finally, the Department seemed to have trapped itself into a potentially stagnant curriculum. Since 1992, the number and nature of undergraduate courses offered in the department has been modified only slightly, and curricular decisions have been guided by the principles of period and nationality inherent in the major’s structure. So-called “experimental” or “slot” courses with different organizational principles or variable content languished and were cancelled for lack of enrollment, and courses not specifically listed as fulfilling requirements often suffered similarly.

In an effort to ameliorate these problems without sacrificing the strength of the traditionally organized major, the Department set about crafting new guidelines. Because assessment of the major’s effectiveness was a primary goal, and because that assessment needed to be both rigorous and broadly based, a great deal of initial discussion focused on our core beliefs, hopes, and objectives in our
teaching. As a result of these discussions, a set of Student Learning Goals was adopted by the Department Curriculum Committee.

The major was then thoroughly reviewed in light of the goals we had adopted, and a number of changes were planned for implementation in fall 2001, including a redesigned Senior Seminar, a new course in literary criticism set earlier in the curricular sequence, and the requirement of a writing course in addition to English 100W. But the most important revision of the major was to reduce the period and nationality requirements to those of the early-era survey courses in British, American, and European Literature, and a course in Shakespeare. This created the opportunity to allow students to select from a wide array of electives for the balance of their program. It is the Department’s fervent hope and strong belief that this change has inaugurated a period of curricular consolidation and renewal in which strong period, nationality, and major authors courses will be accompanied by a variety of theme, cross-national, and genre courses, enriching the experiences of both students and faculty, and perhaps attracting new students to the English major. One important effect of this reform will be that students interested in creative or career writing will no longer face the burden of taking extra courses in order to complete their concentration as desired. Here follows a summary of the significant changes implemented in fall 2001.

1. Adoption of Student Learning Goals

In its discussion of the future of the English Major, the Department drafted and adopted a comprehensive list of goals for student learning, divided into four categories: “Skills,” “Knowledge,” “Experiences,” and “Understandings, Interests,
and Values" (referenced above under "Student outcomes assessment, 23). The
goals represent the outcomes the Department Faculty have agreed upon as
desirable for the students in the English program, and include basic abilities in
reading, writing, interpreting and analyzing, as well as knowledge of language
and literature. The goals also include items relating to the pedagogies to be
employed and the enduring effect the Department hopes to have upon the
interests and understandings of its majors. Here are the goals that were agreed
upon and will be made known to all faculty and students.

I. Skills

- Ability to read texts closely and to articulate the value of close reading in the
  study of literature and rhetoric.
- Ability to explicate texts written in a wide variety of forms, styles, structures,
  and modes.
- Ability to recognize and appreciate the importance of major literary genres,
  subgenres, and periods.
- Ability to respond imaginatively to the content and style of texts.
- Ability to write clearly, effectively, and imaginatively, and to adjust writing
  style appropriately to audience, content, and subject.
- Ability to develop and carry out research projects and to articulate them
  within appropriate conceptual and methodological frameworks, including the
  ability to recognize when information is needed, and to locate, evaluate,
  organize, and incorporate information effectively.
- Ability to analyze texts other than literary or rhetorical: for example, political,
  journalistic, commercial, technical, etc.
- Ability to read and speak a language other than English.

II. Knowledge

- Understanding of the historical development of the English language and of
  literature written in English from Old English to the present.
- Understanding of the relations between culture, history and texts, including
  ideological and political aspects of representation, economic processes of
  textual production, dissemination and reception, and cross-fertilization of
  textual representations by those of other arts: architecture, sculpture, music,
  film, painting, dance, and theatre.
• Understanding of the twofold nature of textual analysis: 1) objective study from varied analytical perspectives; 2) subjective experience of the aesthetic reality of the text.
• Familiarity with a wide range of British and American literary works, as well as with selected authors and works of other literatures, including folk and popular forms.
• Familiarity with a wide range of literary terms and categories relating to literary history, theory, and criticism, including figurative language and prosody.
• Familiarity with the nature of the canon and of canon-formation, including issues of culture, history, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.
• Familiarity with basic practices of literary research and documentation, including using the library and electronic forms of information retrieval and communication.

III. Experiences

• Face-to-face exchange of ideas with faculty and fellow students in the classroom, in office visits, and in shared activities on and off campus.
• Cooperative projects with other students in discussion groups, writing activities, and study sessions.
• Cultural resources of the University: interest groups, public lectures, readings by creative writers, theatrical productions, music and dance performances.
• Involvement in the life of the University, connection with its physical environs, participation in a dynamic, rich, diverse intellectual community.
• Achievement of independently-conceived research projects, including the stating of a problem or issue and all steps involved in organizing, synthesizing, summarizing, and analyzing information in order to communicate conclusions.

IV. Understandings, Interests, and Values

• An enduring interest in language and literature.
• A sense of the presence of the literary and rhetorical past.
• Greater awareness of the depth and complexity of human existence, perceived across the boundaries of time, place, culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.
• Long-term interest and involvement in aesthetic, cultural, and intellectual matters as well as in social and political issues.
• Understanding of the ability of great literature and of concentrated language study to awaken and challenge readers and auditors to struggle with profound questions of human identity and values.
• A personal critical perspective, and a sense of intellectual independence and momentum.
2. Revision of Major Requirements

The revised major consists of a core and of electives:

**The Core: 8 Required Courses (24 Units)**

- Engl 56A English Literature—Old English to the Renaissance
- Engl 68A American Literature—1600-1860
- Engl 100W Writing Workshop (Concentration on Poetry)
- Engl 101 Writing Criticism (Intro. To Literary Criticism—Concentration on Fiction and Drama)
- Engl 102 History and Structure of the English Language
- Engl 125A European Literature—Homer to Dante (or English 122 Topics in Comparative Literature; or English 123A-D Literature for Global Understanding [adopted Spring 2006])
- Engl 144 Shakespeare
- Engl 193 Senior Seminar: The Literature of Reflection and Self-Evaluation

**The Electives (24 Units).** Any 8 Courses (7 must be Upper-division)

**Foreign Language Requirement.** One year of college level study or its equivalent.

3. Institution of Assessment Program for the English Major

Consistent with the goals set for the Department’s Curriculum, a plan has been created for assessment in the capstone course, a new one focusing on Self-Evaluation. Majors will be given the list of goals as soon as they declare,
and those goals will be used to structure a portfolio of work to be submitted at
the conclusion of the Senior Seminar.

4. Revision of the Professional and Technical Writing Programs:

In order to streamline the department's several minor programs in writing,
and to solve problems created by the usurpation of the Technical Writing
Certificate Program by an Off-Campus Professional Development Center, the
Department made the following changes:

- Renamed the Technical Writing Minor as the Career Writing Minor,
dropping the prerequisites in Engineering and Math.

- Rethought the Career Writing Concentration so that it requires no
courses outside the Department of English and Comparative Literature
and broadens its focus to include more creative writing options.

- Aligned the Concentration with the Minor as closely as possible.

- Renamed Engl. 106 as “Editing for Writers” (currently “Technical
  Editing”).

- Revised, rethought, or eliminated any courses that seemed
  inappropriate in their current form for the Career Writing Program as
  revised: e.g., Engl 106, 129, 134.

5. Creation of Department Policy Manual:

In order to ensure continuity and consistency in the functions of the
Department, a comprehensive Policy manual was compiled and adopted in fall
2000 and subsequently reviewed in following academic years. Please see
Appendix H for a copy of the Manual.
II. PROGRAM PLAN: ENGLISH & COMPARATIVE LITERATURE M.A. PROGRAM

A. CENTRALITY TO THE MISSION

The mission of San Jose State University is “to enrich the lives of its students, to transmit knowledge to its students along with the necessary skills for applying it in the service of our society, and to expand the base of knowledge through research and scholarship.” The Department of English and Comparative Literature’s Master of Arts program is central to the university’s mission and important to the educational structure of this metropolitan region. Most of our M.A. students are aiming for careers in teaching. The M.A. is the required degree for those who plan to teach at the community college, the goal of many of our students. Others are secondary-school teachers who are seeking to increase knowledge of their subject area. Still others take the M.A. as the stepping stone to a Ph.D. program with university teaching and research as their ultimate goal.

While those planning to become teachers at these several levels make up the majority of our students, many others take jobs in local businesses and industries where their writing skills and liberal arts background are essential to their work. A number of our graduates are technical and marketing writers and some are editors for professional journals or textbook companies. And we always have quite a few students who continue the formal study of literature simply because it enriches their lives. By maintaining a focus on the central
features of this university's mission, the program meets the needs of all these students.

B. QUALITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

1. Description of the Program

The M.A. program requires 30 semester units of course work beyond the B.A. While this is the standard number of units required for nearly all M.A. programs, ours is more than usually rigorous in at least three respects. First, all students must pass a six-hour, two-part written examination based on a reading list which includes not only major literary works but representative works in critical theory, composition theory, and the history of English (see Appendix L for sample exams). This is in addition to the 30 units of course work. Students may substitute six units of thesis work for six units of course work (and about a third of our students do this), but no student is exempt from any part of the comprehensive examination. (Many programs allow a thesis in lieu of an exam.) Second, all students must demonstrate a reading knowledge of a second language, a requirement no longer universal among English M.A. programs. Third, although the university allows M.A. students to count as many as nine undergraduate units toward the M.A., our program has been large enough to be able to offer several graduate seminars every semester. As a result, nearly all of our students take their entire 30-unit program in graduate seminars. We feel the seminar format, which requires a high level of student participation and offers the stimulation of working with advanced fellow students, provides the ideal graduate-level education. Although we have only one required course, the
reading list and the comprehensive exams give the program cohesion and focus (see Appendix L).

A significant feature of the M.A. is our Teaching Associate program. Because many of our students are aiming to become teachers at the community college or university levels, it is important that they receive training and practice in teaching in addition to their course work. Indeed, almost all community colleges require job applicants to have already had some teaching experience. Initially, students may apply to become Graduate Assistants who are paid to work a semester or two as assistants to professors in composition courses or large-section literature courses. Thereafter, they may apply to become Teaching Associates. Those selected are paid to teach two sections of composition each semester under the guidance of the TA Coordinator (currently Professor John Engell). In addition to taking a seminar in teaching composition, Teaching Associates meet frequently as a group with the TA Coordinator to select textbooks, develop syllabi, and discuss teaching and grading problems. They also visit one another's classes and are visited by the TA Coordinator. We are currently able to offer the opportunity to serve as a Teaching Associate to as many as 12 to 14 of our best students each year, and we find from class observations and SOTE scores that carefully selected and well-supervised Teaching Associates are highly effective composition instructors. Both our composition students and our M.A. candidates profit from this valuable program.

2. Quality of the Program
   a. Faculty expertise and currency in their disciplines
The graduate program of San José State University's MA Program in English employs approximately twenty faculty members, including Professors Berman, Brada-Williams, Cox, Cullen, Douglass, Eastwood, Engell, Fleck, Harris, Karim, Keesey, Krishnaswamy, Maio, Miller, Mitchell, Pollock, Rice, Shillinglaw, Soldofsky, Stork, and Wilson (see Appendix D for their Curricula Vitae). Over the past ten years, this faculty has been remarkably productive. It has published 35 books, 103 articles in refereed journals, and 45 review articles. It has also given over 260 public readings and papers at conferences, including many international symposia and the Modern Language Association and its regional affiliate organizations. Six of the graduate faculty are creative writers, and have published in this same period 24 short stories and 87 poems, in addition to anthologies and poetry collections included in the number of books already listed above.

In addition to the tenure-line faculty, the department has benefited from the presence of visiting professors. Over the past few years, it has hosted a distinguished creative writer/scholar each spring, including Ursula K. Le Guin, Carolyn Kizer, Al Young (currently poet laureate of the State of California), Molly Giles, Ishmael Reed, James D. Houston, and (for spring 2007) Scotland's Booker Prize Winner James Kelman. These productive and renowned writers have enriched the graduate experience for our MA candidates immeasurably. All have been brought to campus through the generosity of Connie and Robert Lurie, who set up the visiting professorship seven years ago.
c. Library Resources

The library has a strong collection of American and British literature and criticism, with an emphasis on California and Western writers. The Department has worked with the Library to make every effort to collect literature and criticism of multicultural authors. We have a good collection of world literature in English with some of the titles also in the original language. European literature is a portion of this collection. In recent years the availability of English translations of other national literatures has made it possible to strengthen those collections. We have substantial material on folklore and myth.

In addition to books and journals, we have collected audio and video materials, though the holdings could be greatly increased. We subscribe to a number of electronic indexes and full text databases for literature and language arts, expanding this new aspect of our collection as funds allow. Both the Library and the Department of English and Comparative Literature provide links to library resources on their Web pages. The Department of English and Comparative Literature Web Page includes a master set of links to informational and research Websites called “Literary Locales” that has received wide recognition, including a half-page review in the Technology section of The New York Times.

Despite the valiant efforts of faculty and library staff, book and periodical budgets have been so seriously eroded that the collection is inadequate for graduate student research. Both students and faculty require much more library support for their research.
3. Quality of Instruction

a. Evaluation of Faculty

All faculty are required to participate in the Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness (SOTE) program. Each faculty member must have two courses evaluated each year, and many request that their graduate courses be evaluated. These statistical evaluations are reported to the instructor and to the Department. In addition, the Department of English and Comparative Literature requires a separate evaluation form be distributed in each class being evaluated. These comment sheets are collected and collated and reviewed (along with the statistical summaries) by the Department Chair before being returned to the instructor. Department norms on SOTE scores are generally high, and those for graduate seminars are even higher. The Teaching Associate Program has also contributed scores that are above the norms for the university, the college, and the Department.

b. Effective Student Advising

General advising for all M.A. students is the responsibility of the program coordinator. The coordinator’s duties include meeting all new students, publicizing requirements and deadlines, writing and distributing the quarterly Graduate English Newsletter, approving each student’s official program of study, coordinating and recording the results of the comprehensive and foreign English language examinations, serving as third reader on all M.A. theses, and ensuring that information on each student’s progress is forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. In addition, the coordinator provides individual
c. Student Outcomes Assessment

In spring of 2006 the Department adopted a list of Outcomes and Methods of Assessment for students in our M.A. Program (see Appendix L). The principal summative assessment of students in our M.A. program is the six-hour final exam but in another form of outcomes assessment, the Department also conducted a survey of its graduate students in Spring 2006 (see Appendix J for the questions and graphs summarizing the results). The questions directly addressed the quality of instruction. Virtually all respondents “agreed” or “strongly agreed” on issues most critical to the Program: that the seminars were “well taught and intellectually stimulating,” that there were regular opportunities “available for faculty/student interaction,” that “faculty advising is readily available and effective,” and that “the intellectual challenge of assignments and the quantity of work are the level of the courses” was appropriate. And perhaps the most desirable outcome, a large majority of respondents indicated that they would recommend the Program to others.
In some categories, though, students expressed concerns that the Department will have to review. For one, the majority of respondents disagreed that the Program should continue requiring a reading knowledge of a foreign language, results mirroring those of the 2000 survey. The 2000 questionnaire, however, was also completed by alumni, and they were overwhelmingly in favor of the foreign language requirement. This response seems to vindicate the requirement, suggesting that their “life experience” impresses upon graduates the value of having a reading knowledge of another tongue, something less apparent to current students stressing over their abilities to meet the requirement.

On another issue, although a majority found that the Program “offers sufficient variety and types of concentrations,” about a third of respondents disagreed. One natural response will be to poll current students on this very issue and ask what kind of additional courses they would like to see offered. Depending on the uniformity or the fragmentation of responses, the Department may be able to expand the diversity of its offerings, depending on what enrollment will permit. Neither our graduate nor our undergraduate programs can afford to offer many under-enrolled courses.

4. Benefit to Students

a. Student Awards

The department gives three student awards specific to the M.A. program. Two, the Mara Steffey Award and the Harvey Birenbaum Award for Excellence in the Graduate Study of Literature, carry cash prizes. Each year the Department
also selects the Outstanding M.A. thesis. This is entered into competition for the College-level Outstanding Thesis award, and the winner of that award in turn competes at the University level. In 2003, Denise Millstein won the College's Outstanding Thesis Award for her "Fame, Sexuality, and Exile: Lord Byron's Influence on Oscar Wilde." In previous years, a Department of English and Comparative Literature nominee won Outstanding Thesis honors at both the College and University levels and achieved further recognition in the state-wide CSU competition.

In addition, M.A. students are allowed to compete for Department-wide awards such as the Anne Lillis and Marjorie M. Folendorf awards for Creative Writing and the generous James Phelan Creative Writing awards in numerous categories. In these competitions, M.A. students have outstanding records.

b. Success of Graduates

Many of our students intend to become community college English instructors, and experience indicate that many will achieve that aim. In fact, a comparison of the goals of current students with the careers of alumni shows that there has been a high correlation between student career plans and their actual careers. Alumni have traditionally verified that the Program prepared them for their chosen careers. Students who have applied to Ph.D. programs have also had success, despite the often keen competition for admission. Recent graduates have been accepted in doctoral programs at UC Davis, UC Santa Barbara, UC Irvine, UC Riverside, UC Santa Cruz, University of Washington,
c. Graduation Rates

The program has averaged 20+ graduates per year over the last 10 years. Although it is possible to complete 30 units and pass the comprehensive and foreign language exams within three semesters, very few students move at this rate. Almost all of our students work full- or part-time, so they take only two or three seminars per semester. We estimate that the average student takes about four years to complete the program. Lack of available course offerings is never a problem. The program has only one required course, and we offer all our seminars in late afternoons or evenings to accommodate our working students. Our survey of six years ago shows that alumni and current students were satisfied that seminars are offered at convenient times and in sufficient variety.

C. STUDENT DEMAND

1. Course enrollments appropriate to method of instruction and discipline

Because the graduate seminar, with an enrollment cap of 15, requires a high level of student participation and interaction with peers and also allows students to develop their skills in formal and informal oral presentations as well as in writing, we consider it the ideal format for graduate instruction in English. Fortunately, our program has been large enough to permit us to offer enough seminars each semester that nearly all of our students take their entire 30 units of course work in graduate seminars.
2. Numbers sufficient to support program

By the single measure of number of M.A. students enrolled in courses (not counting those writing theses or studying for exams, activities which do not require continuous enrollment), we find that the program has remained at roughly the same level it achieved about a decade ago: approximately 120 students. To put these numbers in perspective, it is well to remember that our program is strictly an English M.A. In many departments of English and Comparative Literature, the graduate program includes degrees in Linguistics and TESOL. On our campus these degrees are offered in a separate department.

We are now able consistently to offer 11 or 12 seminars each semester, and sometimes more, which means almost all our catalogue listings can be given once a year, and some once each semester. Our program is not unique in this respect. The attractiveness of literary study and the demand for teachers at all levels remain high. Our program is so flexible that we can easily adjust the number of seminars to demand and space out their offerings to once every three or four semesters, thus still affording every student the opportunity to take any course.

D. SOCIETAL NEED

The English M.A. program provides both a professional degree and a liberal education. The study of literature is necessarily focused on fundamental intellectual skills such as critical inquiry, aesthetic appreciation, creativity, and effective communication in speech and writing that are beneficial to all individuals and required for many professions. Moreover, the works studied in English
courses are called “great” works of literature precisely because they present profound portraits of human possibilities and powerful images of ethical and moral choices. As such, they provide knowledge about people and society that contributes to broad social understanding and facilitates responsible citizenship. Pursuit of the English M.A. entails advanced acquisition of such knowledge and understanding.

As a professional degree, the M.A. is the required degree for those who wish to become community college English teachers, and a highly desirable degree for high school English teachers who wish to increase their knowledge and sharpen their skills. Clearly, having well trained teachers at these levels is vital to the educational foundations of this metropolitan region, and the largest number of our graduates find employment in these positions. A fair number also go on to study for the Ph.D. and become university-level teachers, and many others find employment in fields outside of education where their liberal arts background and communication skills are important to their jobs.

E. FINANCIAL RESOURCE EFFECTIVENESS

1. Capacity successfully to meet goals with current resources

Current resources are inadequate. Certainly we are able to staff our courses with experienced and well-qualified faculty—though we fear that the system’s high course load coupled with this area’s frightening housing costs will make recruitment continually more difficult. But when we look beyond course-staffing to levels of support for the kinds of research necessary to a graduate program, we have to admit that resources are not adequate. For several years library
acquisitions have fallen and costs of materials have risen sharply. Sabbatical leaves have been chronically under-funded on this campus, research grants are few and small, and travel funds are a shamefully low. University money for guest lecturers and visiting scholars is non-existent and— a particular sore point with graduate faculty—there is no funding for thesis advising, nor is there funding for the training and supervision of Teaching Associates.

2. Capacity to meet emerging trends in the field

The Department Website continues to function adequately, thanks in part to its collaborative nature and periodic re-designs. We are continually exploring its potential for advertising and dramatizing our Department’s offerings. But the faculty’s ability to meet emerging trends in scholarship is limited by the lack of computer technology and support staff and, even more severely, by the lack of library resources, research grants, and travel funds remarked in the previous paragraph.

F. INTERDEPENDENCE OF PROGRAMS

The English M.A. program is largely independent of other programs, with the exception of the Theatre Arts program in the Department of Radio, Television, Film, and Theatre. We have long cross-listed courses with Theatre Arts, and we accept graduate-level work in foreign language literature courses and in philosophy, history, and art history courses when these are relevant to a student’s goals. From the other side, none of the MA program’s courses is required for another program, though some are acceptable for Theatre Arts degrees.
G. CAPACITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO AN ACADEMIC FIELD

The English Graduate Organization, a function of English M.A. and M.F.A. students, has for several years provided a forum for the exchange of ideas between students and faculty and among graduate students themselves. The group has sponsored readings of scholarly and creative writings by graduate students and has occasionally hosted an interdisciplinary conference drawing participants from several fields and from several states. In addition, individual graduate students have been successful in having their scholarly work accepted for publication or for presentation at scholarly conferences. In Spring 2006 four graduate students were invited to speak at “Significations,” a graduate student conference sponsored by the Department of English and Comparative Literature at CSU, Los Angeles: Ben Dondero, “Practical Teachings Gleaned from Sir Gawain through Three Centuries of Arthurian Literature and Medieval Life”; Jill Hertzer, “Vivian: Through the Author’s Looking Glass”; Michelle Perry, “Merlin: A Man for All Occasions”; and Rob Swart, “From the Mouths of Kings.” In addition, the 4th international conference for the U.S. Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies accepted a proposed roundtable from Revathi Krishnaswamy involving five of our students: Stephanie Chan, Angela Moore, Andrea Lampert, Sayo Ogundiran, and Angela Cunningham. The event will be held at Santa Clara University, October 27-29, 2006. Another graduate student, Laura Rose, had a paper accepted for another graduate student conference, the UCLA Southland Graduate Conference, “The Embodied Canon,” held May 19, 2006. In addition, a recent graduate, Robin Somers, had a paper accepted for
the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association conference to be held in Tucson, Arizona: "Weather Report: Clearing Skies Over [Mary] Austin." She was also selected to chair the Rocky Mountain MLA's "Teaching English" section.

Faculty contributions: As noted above, the contributions of individual faculty members to their academic fields have been voluminous and of high quality.

The graduate program of San José State University's MA Program in English employs approximately twenty faculty members, including Professors Berman, Brada-Williams, Cox, Cullen, Douglass, Eastwood, Engell, Fleck, Harris, Karim, Keese, Krishnaswamy, Maio, Miller, Mitchell, Pollock, Rice, Shillinglaw, Soldofsky, Stork, and Wilson (see Appendix D for their Curricula Vitae). Over the past ten years, this faculty has been remarkably productive. It has published 35 books, 103 articles in refereed journals, and 45 review articles. It has also given over 260 public readings and papers at conferences, including many international symposia and the Modern Language Association and its regional affiliate organizations. Six of the graduate faculty are creative writers, and they have published in this same period 24 short stories and 87 poems, in addition to anthologies and poetry collections included in the number of books already listed above.

In addition to the tenure-line faculty, the department has benefited from the presence of visiting professors. Over the past few years, it has hosted a distinguished creative writer/scholar each spring, including Ursula K. Le Guin, Carolyn Kizer, Al Young (currently poet laureate of the State of California), Molly
Giles, Ishmael Reed, James D. Houston, and (in 2007) Booker Prize Winner James Kelman. These productive and renowned writers have enriched the graduate experience for our MA candidates immeasurably. All have been brought to campus through the generosity of Connie and Robert Lurie, who set up the visiting professorship seven years ago.

H. AVAILABILITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL ALTERNATIVES

For students seeking an M.A. in English, there are few alternative programs readily available. UC-Berkeley, UC-Santa Cruz, and Stanford largely restrict their graduate work in English to those admitted to their small and highly selective Ph.D. programs. CSU-Monterey Bay and Santa Clara University offer no graduate work in English at all. CSU-Hayward has only a small M.A. program. Consequently, San Jose State must serve the needs of all those in the entire South Bay-Monterey Bay region who wish to pursue directly the M.A. in English.

I. CHANGES: PAST AND FUTURE

A thorough examination of the M.A. program was conducted in 1992. As a result of that review, the department decided to reduce the program's three required courses to a single required course—"Materials and Methods of Literary Study."

We reasoned that while all students could profit from, say, a graduate course in Shakespeare, a student who had taken two undergraduate courses in Shakespeare might do better to choose a seminar in another field. The same could be said of a course in Milton, or in literary theory, or in any other subject that would make a plausible requirement for some students, but not necessarily for all. At the same time, we specified that all students would take all parts of the
a scale from 0 to 6, 0 being a no-response and 6 signifying the highest level of performance. To prepare for the reading, graders familiarize themselves with a scoring rubric that has been developed and refined through semesters of experience (see Appendix F). This rubric takes into account the terms under which the essay was produced—30 minutes to ponder the essay prompt, 60 minutes to write the essay. In other words, readers apply standards appropriate to a first draft (these are not essays that students have had a week to complete outside of class and revise and proofread). The grades are then combined for the student's final exam score (if there are discrepancies—a disagreement of more than 1, say, a 3 and 5—there is a reconciliation reading). As a final step, the holistic reading director tabulates all the scores to establish the distribution, then assigns grades. For example, in Fall 2005 1165 students took the 1A final exam. 5% received an A on the exam, 29.6% received a B, 53% received a C, 11.3% received a D, and 0.9% received an F (see Appendix F for the Fall 2005 grade distributions). 938 took the 1B final and 1.7% received an A, 16.6% a B, 51% a C, 25.4% a D, and 5.1% an F.

The holistic exam score must count for no less than 20% of the final course grade. To monitor adherence to this guideline, the Department asks instructors to submit a data sheet showing each student's final essay exam score and the student's final course grade (see Appendix F for sample data sheets).

As an incentive for instructors to maintain standards, English 1A and 1B students are graded A, B, C, No Credit. We do this to make it easier for
instructors to ask a student to repeat the course without giving him or her a GPA-threatening D or F.

The Department also has a program of continuous assessment for its majors, beginning with the distribution of *Course Guidelines* to all faculty and *Student Learning Goals* to all majors (see Appendix F), including display on our Web site (http://www2.sjsu.edu/depts/english/Learning%20goals.htm). In their course materials instructors are asked to list the ways in which the course will help students meet some or all of the goals. They are also asked to remind students periodically of their need to meet these goals and of the need to save syllabi, papers, exams, and course notes in anticipation of the final review, the portfolio that seniors are asked to submit for the capstone seminar (English 193). In addition to the continual evaluation of the 5,000 words of written work that is required in all upper-division classes, as well as of participation in group discussion, oral presentations, and other group and individual projects, the portfolio constitutes the centerpiece of the English 193 as well as the principal and *summative assessment* tool for our major. These portfolios consist of six critical/research papers produced in major courses, either core or elective. Each paper represents an example of student performance and achievement and is assessed and graded in relationship to the Student Learning Goals at the time of its original submission. The capstone seminar asks them to read and reflect on their six papers and on their satisfaction of specific Learning Goals, then write an introduction to the portfolio that comments on its contents and reflects on the student’s experience within the major. The purpose of the English 193 Portfolio
is to demonstrate the ways in which students have met the Department of English and Comparative Literature's *Learning Goals* (see Appendix F for a sample 193 greensheet and Portfolio Guidelines).

Annually the Department's Curriculum Committee revisits our program of outcomes assessment, reviewing course materials and interviewing instructors and students. Both groups appear grateful for the focus and continuity supplied by the *Learning Goals*. From the first moment that an instructor begins planning a course, to the final sentence that a student writes for the capstone seminar, all parties are working in concert to achieve a set of clearly defined outcomes.

At the same time that the Department is proud of its record of assessing student performance and maintaining standards, it also hopes that the assessment drive will not continue its current trajectory and require increasingly detailed and allegedly "objective" forms of evaluation. For example, our Department has 26 student learning goals. We do not want to see the day when we are pressured to assess every single student paper or exam for its success in achieving each of the 26 points, something that could be impressively (if misleadingly) displayed in the grid format that is becoming increasingly popular with assessment advocates. In keeping with the nature of our liberal arts discipline, our Department's learning goals are broad, abstract, and overlapping, making numerical assessment a chimera. A Chemistry department can assess its students' familiarity with the Periodic Table of Elements. A student who knows only 97 of the 109 elements can receive a mark of 89%. Our department, however, cannot honestly say that a student has an 89% ability "to read texts
closely and to articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature and rhetoric," our first Learning Goal. Nor can we say that another student has an 89% or 90% "awareness of the depth and complexity of human existence, perceived across the boundaries of time, place, culture, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation," another Learning Goal. And how and when do we ever measure a student’s “enduring interest in language and literature,” yet another goal?

The general sense of the Department is that we have profited from having to identify learning goals, organize our classes around them, and promulgate them to students to help them plan and conduct their courses of study. And by having to respect the established mechanisms for assessment, we keep ourselves honest. At the same time, we think that we serve our students better by focusing our energies on course preparation and conduct and not on habitual, perpetual, and unending assessment. The Department consensus seems to be that assessment has gone about as far as it can before morphing into a time-cannibalizing nuisance.

In another form of self-assessment, the Department also conducted a survey of its current students in Spring 2006 (see Appendix G for the questions and graphs summarizing the results).

We distributed 400 surveys in undergraduate and graduate classes, and received 240 responses. We learned that 55% of our students were drawn to the major because of their interest in literature and/or teaching. The remaining students were motivated by the desire to pursue the study of creative or
professional writing. In general, our majors expect to go on to graduate study, teaching, or careers as creative or professional writers. These expectations are borne out, in general, but at the same time, our inquiries reveal that a substantial number of alumni have entered other fields: human resources, public relations, law, medicine, administration of public or private organizations, marketing, parenthood, and so forth. In the most recent survey of alumni, 79% our alumni overwhelmingly agreed or strongly agreed (79% to 21%) that the English program prepared them well for their careers.

The survey asked for responses to seventeen numbered questions. In general, students seem to think highly of the major as a program that prepares them to do the following:

- Move into a Career.
- Write and Read with Critical and Analytical Skill.
- Understand and Apply Rules of Grammar, Punctuation, Syntax and Diction.
- Move to Upper-division Coursework with a Solid Foundation.
- Enhance their Intellectual and Aesthetic Lives Beyond Their Careers.

The Major also seemed to be well-designed in that it provided the following:

- Effective Faculty Advising.
- Varied Electives.
- A Free Exchange of Ideas and Points of View Between Professors and Students.
- Opportunity to Work With Fellow-Students.
• Fair and Appropriate Grading.
• Appropriate Intellectual Challenge and Quantity of Work.

Students did express desire for change in some areas. Some felt that they were not given ample opportunity to choose electives (we include here the significant number that said they "could not evaluate" the question—probably students in their first semester). Such a complaint is also a perennial one from students in a structured program. Some simply want to take only their favorite courses from their favorite professors. Respondents also had some reservations about the Department's ability to offer instruction in many different kinds of writing and to expose students to information and literature representing other cultures and ethnic groups, although the majority clearly still agreed or strongly agreed that the Department did accomplish this goal.

According to our students, of the options presented (in question 16) regarding a culminating senior project or experience, the most desirable was a portfolio of work, and the second most desirable was a senior thesis. The Department's accepted this recommendation and a portfolio has become the central project in our senior capstone course, English 193. The most reassuring outcome of the survey was that the overwhelming majority of respondents to the questionnaire (93%) said that they would recommend the English major to others.

4. Benefit to students
   a. Personal and professional advantages
An English major offers numerous personal and professional advantages, the first of which is advanced literacy: the ability to read critically and discerningly and to write clearly and persuasively. Such an ability (and habit) is crucial if students are to continue to educate themselves after graduation, and if they are to contribute meaningfully in the community and workplace. The major lays a groundwork for such continued growth by exposing students to a wealth of historically and culturally varied readings, and by offering opportunities to write in a cross-section of genres. Whether deciphering complex texts, or arranging and presenting ideas and information into informative and convincing documents of their own, English majors possess the versatility and adaptability that have become requisite in our increasingly specialized culture.

b. Graduation rates

On average (taking figures from the last five years), each year the Department enrolls more than 400 students in its program leading to a baccalaureate degree in English. Annually, the average number of graduating English majors is 55. Students’ enrollment patterns are complex. Three quarters of SJSU students have transferred from other institutions—usually local community colleges. Students rarely enroll full-time, and they take five to eight years to complete baccalaureate programs. Therefore we have no reliable data on graduation rates specific to the English Major. We can say, however, that we make concerted and sustained efforts to provide effective advising, liberal acceptance of transfer courses, and varied scheduling to accommodate part-time and evening-only students. As a result, our students are rarely shut out of required courses.
c. **Student awards**

The Department of English and Comparative Literature gives a wide array of awards for excellence in writing criticism, poetry, and fiction. All the awards carry cash prizes that are derived from endowment income. The prizes in Creative Writing alone exceed $6,000 annually. In the past three years, an average of 50 separate awards have been given, each with a cash prize.

Awards include:

- The James O. Phelan Awards in Creative Writing:
  - Metrical Verse
  - Free Verse
  - Short Story
  - Humor and Satire
  - Familiar Essay
  - Critical Essay
- Bonita Cox Award for Classical and Medieval Studies
- Schelby Sweeney Beowulf Prize
- Bonita Cox Award for Creative Nonfiction
- Bonita Cox Award for Medieval Literature
- Courtney E. Cox Chaucer Prize
- Anne Lillis Award in Creative Writing
- Marjorie M. Folendorf Award for Creative Writing
- Shirley Nelson Iverson Award for Future English Teacher
- Dorothy Wright Children’s Literature Award
- Roberta Holloway Undergraduate Award
- Dorrit Sibley Award for Outstanding Achievement in Writing and Study of Poetry
- Mara Steffey Award for M.A. in Literature
• Catherine Urban Scholarship for Undergraduates Displaying Promise in Writing
• James O. Wood Shakespeare Award
• Robert Woodward American Literature Award
• Harvey Birenbaum Award for Excellence in the Graduate Study of Literature

In addition, the Department of English and Comparative Literature gives awards for excellence in teaching to High School and Middle School Faculty in the region. Annually the Department presents the Dorothy Wright Outstanding Teaching Awards, based upon nominations submitted by English students who want to express their gratitude to the teachers who have done the best job of preparing them for college. Each spring, approximately thirty teachers receive the award. Not only does this award help maintain an effective outreach to local secondary schools, it is an effective morale-booster for over-worked and under-appreciated secondary school instructors. Not least of all, it reassures aspiring teachers in our single-subject preparation program of our institutional respect for their chosen careers.

**d. Student Organizations**

The Department of English and Comparative Literature Serves as home to an English Society and a Student Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication. The English Society, our social organization for English majors with its own lounge in the Faculty Office Building, plans activities, including meetings with faculty and students, afternoon social gatherings (like the annual Spring tea honoring the Lurie Fellow), and most important, the annual
Departmental Graduation Celebration, which honors all graduating students and their families and friends. The Student Society for Technical Communication brings in a guest speaker from the professional community each semester.

C. STUDENT DEMAND

1. Course Enrollments Appropriate to Method of Instruction and Discipline

The Department's courses have been given enrollment caps that are consistent with and appropriate to their level and subject matter. Within the major, course enrollments for survey and other foundational courses are limited to 40, while many upper-division courses are limited to 30 or 35. Creative writing and senior seminar courses have lower caps (20). Composition courses are limited to 25, consistent with their writing-intensive nature. This issue is currently being revisited by the Department in concert with attempts at the School and University levels to redefine faculty workloads, that is, to readjust responsibilities so that faculty teach the three courses a semester that is closer to the norm at comparable institutions. The obvious mathematical solution is simply to increase enrollment caps, creating larger classes so that faculty can teach fewer sections. So far, the will of the Department seems to be that this expediency is unacceptable, the common sentiment being that students will not be as well served in the more impersonal setting of mammoth sections.

2. Numbers Sufficient to Support Program Offerings

The Department rarely runs low-enrolled undergraduate courses—and then only when the course is absolutely essential for students to finish their programs.
In general, there appear to be sufficient numbers to support the Major Program, and more than enough demand for the composition program. The gender and ethnicity distribution of students in our composition program is not available in the University's statistical abstract, but is probably very similar to the overall distribution: in fall 2004 72% members of ethnic minorities and 50.5% female. There were 385 English majors in Fall 2004. Of these, 25% were members of ethnic minority groups, and 63% were female (information drawn from the University's Statistical Abstract for 2000/1 to 2004/5, available at http://www.ipar.sjsu.edu/Data & Reporting/Statistical_Absolute.cfm).

3. Total Number of Students Served

Department of English and Comparative Literature enrollments have dipped slightly over the last three years. For the 2005/2006 academic year the Department met only 94% the FTES goals assigned to it—a goal, however, that had been increased by 5% from the previous year and that will be increased at least another 2.5% for 2006/2007. The Department's annualized FTES has fluctuated in the period between 2000 and 2005: 786, 812, 905, 815, and 781. Of that figure, approximately half is generated by a healthy and growing composition program. Enrollments in the major have been weak in some areas and soft overall, but generally adequate to support the total program.

The number of majors has declined from a high of 380 in Spring 2003 (the highest enrollment since 2001) to 367 in Spring 2005. Institutional history shows that such fluctuations are to be expected. Nevertheless, in response to this minor and perhaps temporary decline, the Department has embarked for the first
time on a serious recruiting campaign that involves reaching out both to students in the region and to those in Southern California. This recruitment has entailed participating in University-organized events as well as sending mail-outs to applicants indicating interest in our program. Initial signs indicate that the effort will have some success.

D. SOCIETAL NEED

The English major conferred by the Department of English and Comparative Literature

1. Teaches fundamental intellectual skills, such as critical inquiry, aesthetics, creativity, communication that are necessary or beneficial for all individuals, and

2. Provides knowledge about society that facilitates responsible citizenship, such as civics, ethics, history, global and multi-cultural perspectives, and all forms of knowledge that contribute to broad social understanding

The works studied in most English courses are called “great works of literature” precisely because they present profound portraits of human possibilities and powerful images of ethical and moral choice. In an age when “information” is instantly outmoded and many graduates can expect to change careers two or three times (according to one survey, ten years after graduation 80% of college graduates are doing work outside their degree areas), it may be argued that acquiring these habits of mind and these fundamental intellectual
skills—an understanding of how to learn and a passion to go on learning—is the most practical and "utilitarian" education one can receive.

3. **Prepares students to apply knowledge and skills in the service of their society and the solution of its problems**

Consequent upon the information reviewed under 1 and 2 above, the English major serves as an excellent preparation for a great many vocations, especially including teaching and professional writing, and for professional study in areas such as medicine and law (see Appendix G for responses to our survey of undergraduate students).

4. **Hiring of graduates by the private, public, and non-profit sectors**

Previous inquiries indicate that our alumni have been hired into jobs in private corporations and schools, public institutions, and nonprofit organizations. One alumnus even became CEO of an electronics firm. Our placement into teaching jobs of students from our credential program is 100%, and many of our graduates now live and work in the area. This is also true of the many placements we have made with companies in need of writers.

5. **Responsiveness to challenges facing society and the economy with attention to regional needs.**

The Department assumes a special responsibility for preparing teachers. Current projections indicate a burgeoning and ultimately overwhelming need for teacher preparation in the region, especially at a time when demographics indicate that the teaching profession is about to face a major wave of retirements.

In addition to supporting the major and credential preparation, the Department
serves as home to an important professional development program for Teachers:
the San Jose Area Writing Project. This program, under the direction of
Professors Jonathan Lovell and Mary Warner, is an affiliate of the National
Writing Project and California Writing Project. As it announces on its Web site,
“an organization of, by, and for teachers, SJAWP is dedicated to improving the
teaching and uses of writing at all grade levels (K-16) and in all disciplines”
(http://www.sjawp.org/). The Program draws on the practices of successful
classroom teachers, inviting them to participate in an Invitation Summer Institute,
an intensive five-week program where teachers

- Read and discuss research on teaching English Language Arts
- Share writing in response groups
- Explore the relationships among writing, reading, thinking and learning in
disparate subject areas
- Demonstrate successful teaching practices
- Develop professional leadership roles as practitioners, researchers,
  writers, and inservice providers

Participants in the Invitational Summer Institute go on to become project Teacher
Consultants (TCs). With these Teacher Consultants, the SJAWP works directly
with the schools to improve student writing and reading skills by teaching
teachers to examine their language arts programs, students' work, and own
teaching practices. SJAWP maintains that significant change happens over time
rather than offering prepackaged formulas.
The San Jose Area Writing Project is in the forefront of efforts to improve teacher training throughout the public school system. Because of the importance of literacy to education and public policy at all levels, the importance of teacher education cannot be overstressed. The Department considers it a privilege to be connected with the SJAWP.

At the same time, the Department of English plays a critical role in training the writers who work in Silicon Valley's high-tech businesses and nonprofit organizations. Through our baccalaureate degree that provides a Concentration in Career Writing, we have educated students who now work in such businesses as Cisco Systems, Applied Materials, Cadence, Inprise, Siemens, Compuware, Compaq, IBM, Mercury Business Technology, Packeteer, Synopsys, Inreach, Hitachi, and Lucent Technologies.

6. Development of students into individuals able to view critically and appreciate their society and fully participate as democratic citizens

In its general education courses as well as in its major courses, the program seeks to develop those habits of the mind—tolerance, self-reflection, informed inquiry, and the ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing—that are the mark of a liberal education.

7. Community service by faculty and/or students

Many faculty are involved in their communities in a variety of roles, some political, some charitable, some focused on presentations in the arts. Several faculty who live in the campus neighborhood have worked in the election campaigns of city council members. Others have worked in the campaigns of
candidates for state offices like the Legislature and the Senate. The Department as a whole has formed a partnership with San Jose Unified Schools, and it supports the activities of the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies, which is heavily involved in the local schools. Furthermore, on May 5 and 6, 2006, Professor Mary Warner arranged to bring to campus the well-known young adult literature author Chris Crutcher. In connection with his visit, he made several presentations at James Lick High School where students received him both enthusiastically and gratefully. He also appeared at a local children’s literature book store, Hicklebees, where he spoke to many adolescent readers from the local area.

The Center for Literary Arts also connects the Department to its community and local secondary schools. One of its premier activities is the Mt. Pleasant Series where writers from the CLA Major Authors and Emerging Authors Series visit Mt. Pleasant High School to give readings and sit in on creative writing workshops taught by professors and M.F.A. students in San José State University’s Creative Writing Program. Among well-received writers who visited Mt. Pleasant High school are Simon Winchester, Li-Young Lee, and Ishmael Reed.

Within the University Community as well as the larger national community, many members of the Department have played leadership roles:

- Paul Douglass is director of the Martha Heasley Cox Center for Steinbeck Studies that is housed in our new Martin Luther King, Jr. Library.
Founded in 1973, the Center for Steinbeck Studies at San Jose State University is now the largest Steinbeck archive in the world.

- David Mesher and John Pollock participated in the Institute for Teaching and Learning, a system-wide enterprise committed to excellence in teaching, learning, and research.
- Professors Mesher and Soldofsky have been instrumental in the Department’s experimentation with Distance Learning.
- Andrew Fleck is the liaison from the Milton Society of America to the Pacific Ancient and Modern Language Association (PAMLA), our regional MLA. This means that he solicits the papers and make up the panels for Milton sessions at PAMLA each Fall. In Spring 2006 he was also elected to the Board of Directors for the Southern California Renaissance Conference (the regional affiliate of the Renaissance Society of America). He will begin by serving at treasurer and over the next four years will eventually become president of the regional society.
- Sam Maio was a founding board member of The Southwell Institute, which promotes the Catholic arts. Also, for several years prior to its demise, he was an Associate Editor of The Formalist: A Journal of Metrical Poetry.
- Susan Shillinglaw is Scholar in Residence at the National Steinbeck Center.
- Mary Warner serves on the All University Teacher Education Committee (AUTEC) and is an English Education Program Reviewer for NCTE (Nat.
Council of Teacher of English)/NCATE (Nat. Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education). This involvement constitutes service to the profession of English education at the national level. To date, she has reviewed about ten institutions, the most recent being the University of Texas, Permian Basin.

- William Wilson chairs the University’s the Board of Academic Freedom and Professional Responsibility.

- One of our lecturers, Ed Sams, is on the Board of Trustees at Walter State Community College, Morristown, Tennessee, and another, Robin Somers, will be a section chair at the Fall 2006 meeting of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association.

- Additionally, a number of Department of English and Comparative Literature faculty have served as mentors to at-risk students: Nancy Stork, Linda Mitchell, Balance Chow, and Noelle Brada-Williams, among others. All these individuals have made a commitment to improving the broader community’s intellectual and social environment, and they serve as an example to their colleagues and students.

E. FINANCIAL RESOURCE EFFECTIVENESS

1. Capacity to meet goals successfully with current resources

Current resources are inadequate. If the goals of the department are defined narrowly as serving 781 full-time equivalent undergraduate students in our freshman composition program and the major, including minors in Literature, Comparative Literature, or Professional and Technical Writing, then the
Department may be said to have barely adequate resources. However, the Department faces serious resource problems in every single area of its endeavor. Merely placing people in classrooms and pushing paper through committees does not make a good program, and the efforts necessary to compensate for the lack of resources are exhausting.

For example, for freshman composition, the university provides no funding for a writing laboratory that supports freshman composition, much less for the general writing instruction needs of the University population. The campus desperately needs such a facility, and the Departments of English and Comparative Literature and of Linguistics and Language Development would be the natural developers of such a support system. For a time the Department juggled its meager supplies and services budget and stole from its salary allocation to furnish, fit, and staff a writing center capable of meeting the needs of less than 20% of the students in our freshman composition program. Now, even that meager accommodation is no longer feasible. Imagine a Biology program without a lab, an Art program with no studio, or a Journalism program with no publications. Everyone in the University recognizes the importance of writing to the entire curriculum, and indeed to the production of educated individuals. Facilities and resources must be provided to meet the goal upon which we all agree, a need that every other institution in the California State University acknowledges by supplying their students with writing centers. The Department of English and Comparative Literature is currently supporting an initiative to
create a campus-wide writing center although the success of the endeavor is highly problematic.

Similarly, everyone is aware of the critical need for excellent teachers at all levels of the public schools. The Department of English and Comparative Literature has a large, successful, and also very expensive teacher education program, but it receives virtually no specific support beyond the salary allocation to teach the classes. No funding for coordination or for curricular materials, and no recognition of the importance and time-consuming nature of teacher supervision. Here is another crucial area in need of budgetary augmentation.

Faculty work load is another problem area. The lion's share of writing instruction falls to the faculty of two departments, English and Comparative Literature and the Linguistics and Language Development. Abandonment of class-size formulas has left us with a huge burden. While our colleagues in other departments can run larger classes, the labor-intensive nature of writing instruction does not permit us this luxury. While our colleagues can structure learning experiences that do not require the meticulous grading of piles of essays every week, we cannot. As it is, we have an enrollment cap of 25 in our composition classes when the optimum number is closer to 15 or 18. Our budget depends upon exactly the same FTES formulae as if we were instructing an aerobics or retail advertising class. The injustice of this situation, about which many others in the Humanities might complain, cannot be resolved unless the University officially recognizes the comparatively greater labor involved in writing
instruction—and its importance to the integrity of the phrase “university-
educated.”

Because of low budgets in supplies and services, lack of technology, lack of
support for travel, and lack of a writing center accessible to all English students
(let alone all university students), teaching well confronts faculty with an almost
insurmountable challenge.

2. Capacity to meet enrollment and service goals established by the
university

The enrollment targets and faculty service goals set by the university are not
governed by set rules in relation to resources. Therefore, any answer to this
question must be made provisionally. Currently, the Department of English and
Comparative Literature has a responsibility to meet enrollment targets which the
Dean finds it necessary to assign in order to meet the targets of the College and
aid in the whole University’s efforts to meet the arbitrary goals set by the system,
a predicament worsened by current enrollment patterns in the CSU that leave
southern campuses “impacted” while the northern campuses must race to meet
ever-increasing enrollment goals lest their budgets suffer.

Service requirements are another matter. They are ever-escalating, and
represent a real threat to the teaching effectiveness and even the mental health
of the faculty. Initiatives to strengthen the Department’s relationship to its
community emerge each year from the natural processes of curricular and other
deliberation, and many of these are flowering, including partnerships with the
San Jose Unified Schools. However, the amount and quality of such work is
constantly limited and deflected by the demands of the CSU system, which are in turn visited upon the Colleges and Departments. Committee work at the Department, College, and University levels constantly threatens to overwhelm everything else. At the same time, the University has continued to ratchet up publication demands.

3. Capacity to meet emerging trends in the field

The Department has an information-laden Website and is now linked to the Internet via backbone connections in offices. But the ability of the faculty of English and Comparative Literature to meet emerging trends in literary scholarship and composition studies, let alone career writing, is severely limited by the lack of computer technology and support staff. Efforts toward implementing distance learning (if this pedagogy proves itself) and online support activities for regular courses have languished for the same reasons: lack of hardware, software, and technical support staff. The lack of a writing laboratory, already alluded to, is in part due to the lack of resources for equipment and support.

We in English and Comparative Literature often remark on the irony that SJSU, sitting in the middle of Silicon Valley, lags so far behind other universities around the country in technological support of instruction. The ability to meet emerging trends requires access to current research tools and adequate travel budgets to allow participation in conferences and pursuit of scholarship at libraries, special collections, and other centers for the dissemination of
knowledge. These we do not have, a situation that reflects poorly upon the institution when we seek to recruit and retain students and faculty.

4. Relationship of SFR to Actual SFR established for the program

Official Student Faculty Ratio figures show that over the past five years the Department of English and Comparative Literature has held at about 16.5, while the University’s average has increased from 17.34 to 19.73, and the School of Humanities and Arts has increased from 16.36 to 18.36 (information drawn from the University’s Statistical Abstract for 2000/1 to 2004/5, available at http://www.ipar.sjsu.edu/Data & Reporting/Statistical_Abstract.cfm).

The Department of English and Comparative Literature has held the ratio steady because of its commitment to smaller classes, resisting pressures to offer larger, more impersonal classes where Department faculty feel that students are not as well served. Budgetary pressures will determine whether the Department can continue in this posture.


The Department’s needs include:

- Improved support for teacher education.
- Improved funding for faculty travel, scholarship, and research.
- Relief from excessive service requirements from the University.
- Improved support for technology, including tech. assistants.
- Increased funding for supplies and services.

F. INTERDEPENDENCE OF PROGRAMS

With the exception of a few elective courses cross-listed with Theatre Arts and a one-year Foreign Language requirement for all its majors, the English and
Comparative Literature Program does not depend upon courses offered by other departments. It is, however, a large provider of general education courses and required courses for single- and multiple-subject credential programs. In addition to offering the two required Written Communication I courses for the entire University, the Department offers courses in Modern English, Children's Literature, Ethnic Literature, and other literatures for programs that prepare elementary school teachers. And the Department offers the 30-units of core English courses for all other programs, such as Theatre Arts or Communications Studies, which also prepare middle and high school teachers for the English single-subject credential. As a provider of these courses, then, the English and Comparative Literature program is highly interdependent and very much part of the fabric of the university’s total program.

G. CAPACITY TO CONTRIBUTE TO AN ACADEMIC FIELD

1. Collective contributions by the program, such as professional journals, symposia, research activity, and events in the public interest sponsored by the program

The Department has sponsored the following events and publications during the last year:

• Dorothy Wright Outstanding Teaching Awards Ceremony for Area Secondary School Teachers

• Annual publication of Reed Magazine, a literary journal

• Public Reading by James D. Houston, Lurie Professor of Creative Writing
• Bi-Monthly Department Social Hour/Tea
• Twice a semester: Faculty Lectures on Current Research with Potluck Dinner
• San Jose Area Writing Project Workshops and Seminars for Teachers
• California Reading and Literature Project Workshops for Teachers

2. Individual contributions by faculty and students such as publications, contributions to the community, etc.

As already explained, tenure-line faculty have produced a great deal of scholarship, and our part-time faculty have contributed in good measure to our success in this area (see Appendix D).

H. AVAILABILITY OF INSTRUCTIONAL ALTERNATIVES

Obviously, our General Education courses and our many support courses are crucial to the total University program and to many specific programs. For all these contributions there are no instructional alternatives within the University.

Regarding the major, teacher preparation program, minors, and certificate: Nearby institutions Stanford and Santa Clara Universities are beyond the financial reach of most area students. Within our immediate region (the Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, San Benito and Monterey Counties) SJSU's English and Comparative Literature program is the only practical alternative for students of average and below-average financial means.