

Strategic Planning Document
Department of English
Marquette University
(Submitted March 15, 2005)

I. Informational Analysis

√ **Mission Statement:** The Department's mission statement, which dates to the 1997 external review, reads as follows:

The Department of English derives its primary mission from its place and purpose in the design of undergraduate education as this is understood and implemented at Marquette University. The traditional Jesuit conception of liberal education forms the foundation of the curriculum of the College of Arts and Sciences, and within this curriculum, inspired by St. Ignatius and formalized in The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus, the study of "humane letters" is accorded a central and indispensable place. According to The Constitutions (in Chapter 12: "The Subjects Which Should Be Taught in the Universities of the Society"): "under the heading of humane letters is understood, in addition to grammar, what pertains to rhetoric, poetry, and history." In these divisions we may discern in our own day the student outcomes that are embedded in our approach to the study of English.

Implications for Student Learning. Based on the principles articulated in this mission statement, students in English classes will achieve the following outcomes:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the nature of language, in its origin and development, in its structure and system, in its social dynamics, in its use and abuse.
- Demonstrate an understanding of and mastery of the art of rhetoric, of skill in recognizing rhetorical strategies of other writers and skill in developing a mature and individual voice and style for the presentation of clear and cogent arguments.
- Demonstrate the habits of logical thinking, proceeding from the identification of evidence, through the construction of hypotheses, to the identification of conclusions.
- Demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the tradition of literature in the English language, primarily British and American.
- Demonstrate a set of skills for critical and aesthetic appreciation of this literature.
- Demonstrate an understanding of how the imaginative constructs of fiction, poetry and drama illuminate the most fundamental questions of human experience.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of sources in the past that contribute to the richness and complexity of our present culture.

Implications for Hiring and Curriculum.

- This statement appears on the Departmental Web site and, along with the University mission statement, is distributed to all candidates interviewed for permanent positions.

- The common objective of all that the Department does in curriculum and staffing is a *flexibility* that enables it to realize two objectives: to offer strong courses both in traditional areas of the literary canon (such as Chaucer and Shakespeare) and in areas that reflect the growth and transformation of literary studies over the years (such as women's studies and ethnic literature)
- By appealing to cutting-edge interests as well as those that are timeless, we offer students a broader range of courses than is the case in Departments that have had to choose one approach over another, and this breadth and flexibility are distinctive and attractive hallmarks of our Department in comparison to others in the area.
 - our popular and growing Writing Intensive track has originated in this way, as has a cluster of multicultural courses made possible by hires in American Studies, Post-colonial literature, and African American literature
 - at the same time, hires in American literature and early modern literature have allowed us to continue to offer canonical courses, all the while maintaining a professionally active and publishing faculty.
- The Department's most general long-term strategic plan, guiding both hiring and course offerings, is to remain in a position where it could maintain this flexibility

II. Mission, Goals, and Academic Strategies

✓ **Research.** To develop, support, and promote high quality research, the Department will continue to pursue several strategies:

- Implement a thorough and careful hiring process involving three committees (screening, interview, and Executive) and as many members of the Department as possible, the goal of which is to identify, preeminently, candidates
 - whose teaching and research interests strengthen and expand those of the rest of the Department
 - who show promise of sustained publication leading to tenure and promotion, whatever the specific topics of the publications
 - and who demonstrate a particular interest in the missions of Marquette and the English Department
- Mentor untenured assistant professors by monitoring their teaching, service, and research through annual reviews, as specified in the Department's "Departmental Procedures for Tenure and Promotion of Regular, Tenure-Track Faculty" (unanimously approved on 17 November 1999)
- Implement the recently established paid semester-release from teaching for assistant professors who have completed a successful three-year review
- Mentor tenured faculty through similar monitoring of teaching, service and research, in the case of associate professors, through triennial reviews
- Encourage faculty to apply for internal and external sources of funding for faculty research that support travel, course release, and materials acquisition.

- Direct as much of the operating budget as possible to faculty development in the form of money for conference travel, for research agenda, and for research supplies
- Bring in speakers and sponsoring colloquia as ways of stimulating research activity
- Promote interdisciplinary research undertaken by our faculty and foster new interdisciplinary projects by featuring such work on the Department website and in colloquia for A&S students and faculty

√ **Undergraduate Education.** To increase the quality of undergraduate education, the Department will continue to pursue several strategies:

First-Year English (FYE) Program

- Preserve the integrity of First-Year English as a two-course sequence that teaches students to write and speak as university students (English 1) and as public citizens (English 2)
- Respond to the needs of its University constituency by including on the First Year English Committee members of other colleges
- Monitor the adjunct faculty (including teaching assistants) in the FYE program by funding a two-week orientation for new assistants; requiring of all new assistants a weekly practicum and first-semester graduate course in rhetoric; and generally maintaining a program through template syllabi, supervision and visitation by the FYE Committee, and periodic meetings of the entire First Year staff
- Carefully screen and hire adjunct faculty
- Employ a comprehensive peer visitation policy (unanimously approved on 3 March 2003), designed to both evaluate instructors' classroom efforts and also to foster their development as professionals
- Maintain and increase the quality of this program in three specific new ways:
 - maintenance of 20 students as the enrollment cap in English 1 and 2
 - coordination by the University's higher administration to balance the number of spring English 2 sections with fall English 1 sections, as this will allow the Department to hire the strongest faculty for the entire year
 - extension of the 2-1 teaching load currently allotted to first year teaching assistants to all teaching assistants

Lower Division (Introductory Literature) Courses

- Offer 9 different introductory classes (including 2 that have been recently developed) covering a range of periods and genres and allowing faculty to tailor the courses to their own interests (Note: all are approved as UCCS courses)
- As a rule, have all regular faculty (save those in writing) annually teach at least one introductory literature course, and several teach two courses

- Maintain and increase the quality of this program in two specific new ways:
 - reduction to 30 students as the enrollment cap; with the decrease in sections brought on by the University Core's decrease in emphasis on literacy and with the importance (as always) of full-year positions for the hiring of the best adjunct faculty, such a reduction would be useful in both pedagogy and staffing, i. e., it would distribute students taking the courses between the first and second semesters
 - continued involvement of regular faculty in the introductory courses, as means to both maintain the strength of the program and attract students to upper-division courses, whether taken for the major or for elective credit

Upper-division Literature Courses

- Implement enrollment caps for upper-division courses in accordance with national standards that vary by discipline: 15 in writing courses, 30 in most literature courses, and 35 in linguistics courses (enrollments in upper-division courses are up @ 100 students/semester as of 2004-1).
- Distribute courses and class times so as to respond to student and faculty interests and to maintain curricula diversity
- With attention to flexibility of traditional and non-canonical kinds of literary studies, encourage general rise in enrollments in upper-division courses that has occurred during the past several years: 2000-1 573; 2000-2 588; 2001-1 604; 2001-2 614; 2002-1 600; 2002-2 603; 2003-1 551; 2003-2 586; 2004-1 686; 2004-2 678
- Maintain and increase the quality of this program in two specific new ways:
 - maintenance of enrollment caps
 - maintenance of curricular flexibility in view of not only the Department's own curricular demands but also the responsibilities it bears for the senior experience and the Honors program, which together annually will require approximately 13 sections, or the entire teaching load of two and one-half full-time faculty. The University Core's multicultural requirement involves additional faculty, though courses for this requirement also fulfill requirements for the major

All courses

- Carefully screen and hire adjunct faculty
- Employ a comprehensive peer visitation policy (unanimously approved on 3 March 2003), designed both to evaluate instructors' classroom efforts and to mentor their development as professionals
- Hire at least 1 rhetoric/writing full-time faculty and 1 American literature faculty to address staffing needs caused by 8 faculty (and possibly more in AY 05-06) with reduced teaching loads because of administrative and editorial duties; explore the possibility of joint hires with other departments (e.g., Chicano/a studies in English & Foreign Language or Native American studies in English and History)

- Continue offering interdisciplinary courses and seeking resources, such as the Way-Klingler Award for Interdisciplinary Teaching, to facilitate collaborative teaching between English faculty and faculty from other units.
- Continue offering Writing Center course (English 192), which trains undergraduate students to be peer tutors in a nationally recognized Writing Center; likewise, convert the Writing Center director's position to a tenure-track line, as is the case in most research universities, so that the position will reflect the professional status it deserves, especially given the national profile the Writing Center has achieved under the current director.
- Find additional space for faculty offices, for TA and adjunct offices, and for faculty gatherings (preferably all under one roof)—all of which impact students in terms of conferences, receptions, sense of community, etc.

✓ **Jesuit Mission.** To promote the Jesuit, Catholic values of faith, excellence, leadership, and service, the Department will continue to pursue several strategies:

- Utilize the University mission in the screening and hiring of regular faculty—this means, specifically, identifying candidates who are sympathetic to the University's dedication to preparing students committed to social justice and aware of their responsibility to the community in which they live
- Incorporate these issues figure in all on-campus interviews, and the Department has been extremely successful in its practices
- Employ service learning in a variety of undergraduate literature and writing courses
- Offer special topics courses that promote the Jesuit mission, including (recently) "Catholic Characters in Fiction and Film" and (in 2005-1) "The Life You Save May be Your Own: An American Pilgrimage"
- Continue the Department's affiliation with the Manresa First-Year Reading Program via the FYE Program and via specially-developed Manresa-based courses.

✓ **Globalization and Diversity.** To enhance the role of globalization and diversity awareness in students, curriculum and faculty, the Department will continue to pursue several strategies:

- Offer regularly sections of post-colonial literature courses (English 147); continue to integrate post-colonial literature into traditional literature courses; develop special topics courses
- Offer regularly sections of multicultural literature courses (English 159 and 177); continue to integrate multicultural literature into traditional American literature courses; and develop special topics courses, e.g., African American literature, with a view towards adding them to the *Bulletin* as new courses

- Continue offering courses cross-listed with Women's Studies, English 185 ("Women in Literature") and English 186 ("Studies of Women's Literature), which regularly focus on global awareness and diversity among women
- Offer in 2004-2 two Mitchem courses that focus in large part on diversity: "Representing Violence in American Literature" and "(Re)writing Slavery"
- Allow for the probability of future Mitchem fellows in the Department, given the nature of the Mitchem fellowship and the character of English studies
- Offer in 2005-2 "African American Literature" as a special topics course, with a view towards adding it as a new course in the bulletin in 2006-2007
- Continue to explore the development of new multicultural courses, whether for the University Core, as Honors seminars, or as Senior Experience courses, although such development will necessarily put additional strains on staffing resources
- Include diversity as one criterion in the hiring process by hiring faculty members in rhetoric/writing and/or American literature who have expertise in an area of multicultural studies and/or who increase the diversity of faculty; possibly achieve this goal via joint hires with another department or via hiring a Mitchem candidate.

✓ **Graduate Studies.** To increase the quality, productivity, and efficiency of graduate programs, the Department will continue to pursue several strategies:

- Extensively advise English graduate students, specifically by the Director of Graduate Studies
- Offer a curriculum that responds to the strengths of the faculty and the directions of the profession
- Implement two revisions to the Ph.D. program to increase its efficacy (i.e., to move students through the program more quickly):
 - (1) the DQE, an oral exam based on a Ph.D. student's dissertation topic and its contextual field (unanimously passed 15 February of 2005)
 - (2) English 330, a required course that enables Ph.D. students to work closely with a faculty member to prepare more effectively and more efficiently for the DQE (passed by a wide majority 15 February 2005)
- Maintain the balance of our M.A. and Ph.D. program, given the excellent placement rates that exist for each program
- Continue excellent record of Ph.D. students' applying for and receiving Schmitt, Smith, and Raynor fellowships
- Investigate ways to enable advanced Ph.D. students to gain experience teaching literature as a means of furthering their professional development

III. Resources

√ Faculty and Staff: Numbers.

- The Department has 26 regular faculty, 7 full-time adjunct faculty, approximately 20 adjunct lecturers, 36 teaching assistants, 5 research assistants, and 2 administrative assistants
- The current situation of 2 administrative assistants (supplement by work study students) represents a decrease of one position from the 1998-1999 year
- The current total of 26 regular faculty represents an increase of one position since 1998-1999

√ Faculty: Ranks.

- The Department has one endowed professorship: the Louise Edna Goeden Professor of English, currently held by Michael Gillespie
- It has 7 full professors, 10 associate professors and 9 assistant professors

√ Additional Faculty.

- In the past six years, the Department has hosted three of the Women's Chairs in Humanistic Studies and two Mitchem fellows; next year it will host two Wade Chairs

√ Teaching Loads.

- Regular faculty typically teach five annual courses, adjunct full-time faculty six annual courses, and lecturers and teaching assistants 4 annual courses

√ Credit Hours per Faculty.

- According to College records, in 2003-2004 English faculty taught an average of 261 credit hours per regular faculty; this average is affected two issues—(1) upper-division writing classes for the popular WINE major, which maintain a cap of 15 in accordance with national standards and (2) course reductions for 8 faculty members, due to their administrative or editorial duties. (Please note: in 2005-06, the number of faculty with reduced administrative loads may increase if they are tapped for college administrative duties.)
- If the 8 faculty with reduced course loads for administrative or editorial service are factored out of the equation, then in 2004-05 the English faculty with regular teaching loads taught an average of 305 credit hours per regular faculty. (See chart appended to this document.)

√ Departmental Administrative Structure.

- Executive Committee (Departmental Chair; Directors of Graduate Studies, Undergraduate Studies, First Year English; and three elected members)
- the First Year English Committee
- the Undergraduate Studies Committee
- the Graduate Studies Committee

√ Service Assignments.

- Regular faculty typically serve on one of these committees, advise undergraduate majors, and participate in other Departmental (e. g., writing contests) and University

(e.g., open houses) activities

√ **Promotions.**

- In the past six years two individuals have advanced to the rank of full professor, three to the rank of associate professor, and two to emeritus status

√ **Hires.**

- In the past six years the Department has made 8 tenure-track hires of individuals with strong academic backgrounds, experience, scholarly productivity, and interests that complement the Department's curricular flexibility
- These individuals have taken their Ph.D. degrees from: the University of Chicago, the University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin, the Ohio State University, Cornell University, the University of Minnesota, and Columbia University
- Their teaching and research interests focus on nineteenth-century American poetry, post-colonial literature, rhetoric, linguistics, early modern literature, nineteenth-century American fiction, and African American literature

√ **Physical Facilities.**

- The Department occupies three on-campus locations: Coughlin Hall, where the regular faculty have offices; the Academic Support Facility, where the majority of teaching assistants have offices; and the Raynor Library, where the Ott Memorial Writing Center is housed (See chart appended to this document for space issues)

√ **Use of Resources**

- With these resources the Department runs an undergraduate English program, an M.A. program, and a Ph.D. program
- English annually serves approximately 3000 students in the First Year English program, 1800 students in the introductory literature courses, and 1200 students in the upper-division courses
- **Major.** The undergraduate major, which typically enrolls about 200 students, has three tracks: a literature track (approximately 38.1% of the students), the writing-intensive track (approximately 40.2% of the students), and the teaching track (approximately 21.7% of the students).
- **University and College Core Courses.** The Department bears most of the responsibility for administering the University's First Year English program, which fulfills the core rhetoric requirement; the Department also provides many core courses in literature/performing arts and contributes courses in diverse cultures.
- **The M.A. program.** This two-year program annually graduates approximately 10 students, some of whom go on to Ph.D. programs (most recently Arizona State, the University of Kansas, and the University of Illinois, as well as Marquette), but most of whom enter the non-academic, private sector
- **The Ph.D. program.** This program annually graduates one or two students who have generally realized a good placement rate at (typically) private liberal arts colleges; recent graduates have taken permanent positions at St. Mary's College of Winona, Franklin

College, Rider University, Silver Lake College, DeSales University, Augsburg College, and St. Thomas University

IV. Budget Initiatives and Fiscal Plan. • Salaries and the Departmental operating budget are controlled by external units

√ **Salaries**

- Salaries for regular faculty seem in general not have met the 60% mark targeted by the University
- Compression has been a particular problem at the assistant rank

√ **Operating Budget**

- The Department's operating budget has been frozen at \$28296 since the 2000-2001 academic year, though supplemental grants by the Deans of Arts and Science and the Graduate School, especially for travel, have effectively increased this sum
- In 1995-1996, the Department's operating budget was \$35075
- Out of this budget the Department pays for copying, postage, telephone calls, supplies, visiting speakers, computer maintenance, furniture, conference travel, and recruitment

√ **Sponsored Events**

- The Department administers two writing contests (the Zadoc and Gales) out of fixed budgets that will likely be defunct within 5 years
- For two years (1998-1999 and 1999-2000) the Department ran a privately endowed essay contest (Olivia Paige Akin), which was allowed to lapse by University Advancement
- The Department sporadically sponsors alumni and career nights, though these have not led directly to any revenue

V. Evaluation

√ As has been said in previous strategic plans and external reviews, the Department does many things, it does them well, and it does them with limited financial and staffing resources: by any quantifiable criteria (e. g., SCOT scores, breadth of curriculum, faculty publication, promotion and tenure, and graduate student placement) English has been extremely successful

√ To maintain and improve on this success we identify the following desiderata:

1. **Preserve rigorous hiring practices**

- three committees (screening, interview, and Executive) target candidates who show promise of sustained publication as well as a particular interest in the university mission

2. **Hire in rhetoric/writing and American literature, which currently pose the greatest curricular and staffing needs.**
 - given that three rhetoric/writing faculty all have reduced teaching loads because of administrative service, 1 and possibly 2 writing faculty are needed to cover courses for the popular WINE major; this major's courses are covered now only because 2 VAPs regularly offer writing classes
 - given the popularity of undergraduate and graduate courses in American literature as well as needs at the Ph.D. level, at least 1 American literature faculty is needed
 - Possible strategies for addressing these staffing needs include:
 - the recruiting of Mitchem fellows for VAP and/or tenure-track lines
 - the recruiting of existing VAPs for tenure-track lines
 - joint hires with other departments (e.g., Chicano/a studies in English & Foreign Language; Native American studies in English and History; literacy/rhetoric studies with English and Philosophy); a joint hire with any of several Arts and Sciences Department might effectively relieve some of the strains created by the Honors program, i. e., a faculty member might be hired in any area but with a view towards freeing additional teaching opportunities for the Honors program
 - a related issue, the Department (in conjunction with the College) should find a way to convert the Writing Center director's position to a tenure-track line, as is the case in most research universities, so that the position reflects the professional status it deserves, especially given the national profile that MU's Writing Center has achieved under the current director
3. **Preserve the integrity of First Year English**
 - as a service program for the University, English 1 and 2 require support from the University, specifically in the University's oversight of resources, college curricula, and their consequences for departmental programs and staffing
 - as outlined in a memo of 7 October 2003 to Dean McKinney, English 1 and 2 quickly lose viability in their current form if even a few colleges join Communications in requiring Communications 11 in place of English 2
 - as First Year English goes, so goes much of what the Department does in graduate programs, and therefore hiring, and therefore undergraduate offerings
 - if the permanent reduction in teaching load to 3 courses for all teaching assistants could be accomplished as part of this goal, that would be desirable
4. **Preserve flexibility in curriculum and staffing**
 - increasing teaching demands on English faculty are overextending resources of the faculty
 - we are increasingly confronting reallocation decisions: decrease the number of courses offered, whether introductory, upper-division, or graduate; or increase the representation of adjunct faculty in upper-

division and Honors courses, including the Senior Experience

–we can maintain what we do through the conversion of some lecturer positions to full-time visiting assistant professorships; through the conversion of some adjunct positions to regular faculty positions; through the creation of new, interdepartmental positions—likely departments that might co-host a faculty member with English are History, Philosophy, and Foreign Languages; or through some combination of all of these options

- as we look to the future, we can anticipate only one retirement in the next 5 years; in the subsequent 5 years 6 additional faculty could retire
 - since some of these faculty focus on areas in which the Department will have adequate representation, such retirements would provide opportunities to strengthen what we do well but also to expand in ways that will solidify our curriculum and respond to both student interest and professional developments

5. **Develop contacts with the alumni and members of the community**
- this would be done partly to facilitate the career objectives of English majors and partly to foster funding for contests and so forth
6. **Develop both the new Departmental Web page and an on-line Departmental newsletter**
7. **Continue to work with the CCRC to revise and implement revisions to UCCS criteria for core courses in rhetoric, literature/performing arts, and diversity**
8. **Continue to work with the university assessment committee to revise and implement our comprehensive Departmental assessment plan**

Drafted (Tim Machan) December 29, 2004

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