

Strategic Plan for the Department of English at The College of New Jersey

Approved by the English Department -- 14 May 2013

Approved by the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences -- 20 May 2013

MISSION STATEMENT

The College of New Jersey's Department of English is comprised of productive, distinguished teacher-scholars and writers dedicated to excellence in all their professional endeavors. As teachers of a wide variety of undergraduate and graduate courses in a broad range of liberal arts and professional programs, the members of the Department seek to involve their students to the greatest degree possible in the discovery and creation of knowledge and art, to encourage independent initiative and inquiry, and to instill a lifelong love of literature and language. As active, professional scholars and writers, they contribute significantly through many forums to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge in their fields of expertise. Finally, as citizens of New Jersey, the nation, and the world, the members of the Department seek to promote understanding of the rich cultural diversity of humankind in order to prepare students to go forth with wisdom, skills, and knowledge to serve and advance the communities in which they live and work.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

In keeping with the School of Humanities and Social Sciences Strategic plan, the Department of English has organized its strategic plan for the English M.A. program and the English Liberal Arts and English undergraduate program by the initiatives described below. (A separate Strategic Plan focused on the Journalism and Professional Writing program will follow in 2015-2016). The initiatives listed here come from the discussions of the English Department faculty, staff, students, and alumni.

SECTION I – CURRICULUM: Including the Department's Undergraduate Academic Program and Student Learning, Advising, Internships and Career Preparation, Internationalization, Graduate Academic Program

SECTION II – COMMUNITY: Including the Department's Intellectual Community, Faculty, Diversity, and Outreach

SECTION III – RESOURCES: Including Library and Technology

SECTION I: CURRICULUM

Undergraduate Academic Program and Student Learning

Goal A: Maintain a balanced undergraduate curriculum that reflects current understanding of the discipline and our students' needs.

Strategy 1: Develop a partnership with institutional research or design a qualtrics survey to determine what courses our students are taking and why.

Strategy 2: Communicate to students the rotation of upper-level courses in British, American, and World literatures.

Strategy 3: Continue to follow NCATE guidelines by including in appropriate courses "works representing a broad historical and contemporary spectrum of United States, British, and world, including non-Western, literature; works from a wide variety of genres and cultures, works by female

authors, and works by authors of color; numerous works specifically written for older children and younger adults; and a range of works of literary theory and criticism and an understanding of their effect on reading and interpretive approaches.”

Strategy 4: Consider the range of credentials and range of program options available to English students (correlate courses, certificates, minors) that would best serve our students’ goals and consider restructuring the place of the LNG course in the English Education majors.

Strategy 5: Offer selection of courses at times that complement junior field experiences and internships.

Strategy 6: Make better use of LIT 390 or consider developing a research seminar in which teams of English faculty and students work on topics associated with a common theme (e.g., the campus theme announced by the CICPC (Cultural and Intellectual Community Program Council)).

Strategy 7: Pursue membership in appropriate national organizations that support curriculum development, including Association of Departments of English.

Strategy 8: Rewrite Learning Goals to reflect changes in Foundation courses and curriculum.

Goal B: Examine middle section (200- and 300-level courses) of the English Liberal Arts and Teaching curriculum

Strategy 1: Consider new course numbering sequence and the revision of the 200-level course rule.

Strategy 2: Examine the teaching of literary history and study how students fulfill literary history requirements.

Strategy 3: Identify resources for English faculty interested in teaching courses that will meet expectations for the Community Engaged Learning Level 2 credential.

Strategy 4: Consider developing 300-level Topics courses that would satisfy Civic Engagement requirements and the elective in the English major.

Goal C: Make connections to Foundation Courses more explicit in curriculum.

Strategy 1: Consider developing a department anthology of critical and theoretical readings.

Strategy 2: Expand poetry offerings in upper-level courses and seminars.

Goal D: Broaden our mission to include non-majors in order to serve the broader needs of the campus and to ensure choices for students to fulfill Literary, Visual, and Performing Arts (LVP) requirement.

Strategy 1: Attempt to offer at least 12 FSP courses each fall.

Strategy 2: Consider creating courses at the 100-level and adding courses at the 200-level to support Interdisciplinary Concentrations and to satisfy Liberal Learning requirements in Race & Ethnicity, Gender, and Global.

Goal E: Strengthen instruction in oral communication skills.

Strategy 1: Identify resources and best practices for oral communication.

Advising

Goal F: Continue to provide faculty advisement to our majors and increase student awareness of the links between curriculum and their interests and career goals.

Strategy 1: Explore the possibility of running several smaller sections of LIT 099 (including a separate section for transfer students) rather than a single, large section. Try to improve orientation for those transfer students who are unable to enroll in LIT 099 by providing their advisors with proper orientation materials and training.

Strategy 2: Offer a pilot section of LIT 099 for transfer students and internal transfers in the spring semester.

Strategy 3: Support continued training and guidance for faculty advisers responsible for groups of 20-25 students. Each adviser should have a long-term advising relationship with student in order to develop a good sense of student academic goals.

Strategy 4: Compose additional advising guides, including guides for ENGA students for pursuing internships and for self-designed concentrations and majors. Advisers now have one-page summaries of most major and minor programs.

Strategy 5: Facilitate student creation of self-designed majors and interdisciplinary concentrations for students interested in library science, publishing, creative writing, linguistics, and other relevant plans of work.

Internships and Career Preparation

Goal G: Include making students aware of internships and career possibilities as part of our educational mission.

Strategy 1: Facilitate programs led by student groups and faculty that encourage students to think critically about internships and career paths by bringing professionals and alumni to campus.

Strategy 2: Market internships as elective options for students interested in literature and language.

Strategy 3: Facilitate student attendance at regional and national conferences for Sigma Tau Delta, NCTE, New Jersey Educational Association, AWP, among other relevant associations.

Strategy 4: Continue to use the English Student Advisory Council (ESAC) to sponsor English-specific career center programs.

Internationalization

Goal H: Promote the success of study abroad and off-campus courses among our majors.

Strategy 1: Explore the practicality of starting a semester-abroad program with TCNJ faculty, in collaboration with other departments.

Strategy 2: Hire graduate student workers with experience in social media and web design so we can actively publicize study-abroad and off-campus opportunities among our students (e.g., by using media/technology to publicize programs and courses, by promoting study-abroad fairs held by the Center for Global Engagement, and by using film and photographs from past courses for our archives and publicity).

Strategy 3: Continue to support and develop study-abroad and off-campus courses taught by English faculty in such places as Britain, Greece, France, and Massachusetts.

Graduate Academic Program

Goal I: Maintain a balanced graduate curriculum that reflects current understanding of the discipline and our students' needs.

Strategy 1: Differentiate standards and expectations for student work at the graduate and undergraduate level, especially in LIT/CMP497/ENGL505.

Strategy 2: Encourage faculty who regularly teach Topics courses at the graduate level (ENGL670) to develop these courses into permanent offerings.

Strategy 3: Write Learning Goals for M.A. curriculum and design program to reflect best practices in graduate programs in English.

SECTION II – COMMUNITY

Intellectual Community

Goal J: Maintain and strengthen ties among English-affiliated student organizations (Ink, Lion's Eye, and Sigma Tau Delta) and English department members (students, faculty, and staff).

Strategy 1: Host one brief informal event each academic year – such as a Coffee Hour – in which student organization officers are briefly introduced to faculty and staff.

Strategy 2: Ask student organizations for an annual report listing members, officers, activities, awards, and accomplishments and file these reports in a folder to which the student organizations will have access (so that future officers have a record of past accomplishments).

Strategy 3: Consider changing the makeup of the English Student Advisory Council (ESAC) to include representatives from student groups rather than representatives from specific programs.

Goal K: Promote a thriving intellectual community among graduate students.

Strategy 1: Strengthen our newly-developed “Monday Afternoon Club” (MAC) venue for graduate students, offering more programs that will familiarize, assist, and encourage our MA candidates to take part in graduate studies opportunities (e.g., programs focusing on attending literary conferences, designing research projects, applying for research grants and awards, and publishing in literary journals).

Strategy 2: Consider developing a national Graduate Student Conference on the TCNJ campus within the next five years.

Strategy 3: Consider developing a Graduate Student Advisory Council that focuses on the graduate program exclusively.

Goal L: Sustain and improve an intellectual climate that provides students with a rich cultural basis for a lifetime of intellectual growth and professional development.

Strategy 1: Continue to promote thought-provoking discussions by inviting scholars from beyond the TCNJ community to give lectures and lead discussions on campus. We will coordinate such lectures, as well as exhibits, performances and films, as much as possible with courses taught in our department in order to enhance the academic impact of these special events.

Strategy 2: Continue to encourage faculty to participate in “Close Readings,” “Faculty Research Talks,” and other similar events to enrich the learning experience of students.

Strategy 3: Encourage faculty to organize and host a national conference on TCNJ’s campus (or nearby) at least once every four years to increase the stature of TCNJ and to provide students with new opportunities to assist in the presentation of papers (and other works) and to experience the intellectual atmosphere of a scholarly conference.

Faculty

Goal M: Effectively integrate all faculty into the department.

Strategy 1: Discuss developing an affiliated faculty program that would open up non-cross listed LIT courses and the sponsorship of Honors theses to qualified campus faculty.

Strategy 2: Explore the possibility of developing post-doctoral and in-residence programs (including both writers and scholars) for terminal, period appointments.

Strategy 3: Develop faculty handbook that includes syllabus requirements, explanation of major, expectations for office hours, etc to help new and adjunct faculty assimilate into the department.

Goal N: Develop leadership interests and responsibilities among faculty at all stages of their careers in order to insure that the workloads of faculty are fair and that the burdens of administration and service are shared equitably.

Strategy 1: Consider expanded departmental committee structure and designation of specific service responsibilities.

Strategy 2: Perform a department review of administrative service and duties of department members and discuss the distribution of workloads.

Goal O: Develop and support accomplished teacher-scholars.

Strategy 1: Maintain class scheduling practices that balance scholarship, build community, and preserve faculty accessibility.

Strategy 2: Maintain presence of scholarship for TCNJ English community through use of Facebook and regular email round-ups.

Strategy 3: Encourage faculty members to apply for SOSA.

Strategy 4: Encourage faculty to apply for mini-grants that would help defray costs of traveling to archives for research.

Strategy 5: Consider instituting a formal mentoring and professional development system for all faculty.

Goal P: Following the recommendations of our external reviewer, hire full-time faculty members in Romanticism/ Modernism and English Education.

Strategy 1: Continue making the case to the administration that we need these positions.

Diversity

Goal Q: Enhance efforts to bring diverse students into our majors and to help them succeed.

Strategy 1: Coordinate more effectively with the EOF office.

Outreach

Goal R: Continue efforts to recruit promising students to the English majors.

Strategy 1: Continue to participate actively in College-wide recruitment events (Junior Visit Days, Accepted Students Day, etc.).

Strategy 2: Attempt to maintain an overall “yield” of 25-33% for ENGA majors and 40-50% for ENGT majors.

Goal S: Continue to maintain and improve alumni relations by encouraging our alumni to see their TCNJ English major as a life-long identity.

Strategy 1: Continue to invite alumni back for Accepted Students Day, sponsor an annual alumni creative writing reading, link Sigma Tau Delta induction to Homecoming, maintain networks through social media, encourage targeted alumni giving, and invite alumni to events on campus (e.g., “Close Readings,” “How to Teach” evenings, summer “Book Talk,” and “Visiting Writers” series).

Strategy 2: Encourage networks among alumni who are master secondary school teachers and who work in publishing in order to create mentorship, supervision, and internship opportunities for current students.

Strategy 3: Explore avenues to raise funds in support of co-curricular activities and faculty/student initiatives.

SECTION III -- RESOURCES

Goal T: Facilitate access to digital and textual materials and tools necessary for the successful delivery, completion, and development of our curriculum, as well as for continuing administrative and research needs.

Strategy 1: Perform yearly review of library and technology needs with faculty and liaisons.

Strategy 2: Facilitate access to tools that ensure equity for students, faculty and staff with multiple learning/working needs by working closely with the Offices of Differing Abilities and Human Resources.

Strategy 3: Continue to advocate for wireless access throughout Bliss Hall and for Bliss 233 to be turned into a smart classroom.

Goal U: Keep up-to-date with emerging trends in textual production, analysis, and criticism as appropriate to the needs of our students and faculty.

Strategy 1: Provide opportunities for faculty to enrich pedagogy and provide the most appropriate feedback for students and one another via current and emerging technologies, such as telepresence, online annotation, and other multimedia technologies.

Strategy 2: Provide faculty and students with appropriate technology to model the requirements of the students’ anticipated career needs.

Strategy 3: Consider exploring opportunities to obtain fellowships and develop projects and programs in the digital humanities.

Goal V: Coordinate with other departments and programs within Bliss Hall to maximize use of resources.

Strategy 1: Request resources to purchase more chairs and tables for the Bliss Hall Lounge to improve intellectual community.