

Annual Departmental Report 2021-2022

Program Information

Program/Department: English

Department Chair: Aruna Krishnamurthy

Department Assessment Committee Contact:

This document is to be kept in the department and an electronic file is due to the AVP of Institutional Research & Planning by June 1, 2022.

A. Departmental Special Section for AY21-22

Department Lessons Learned and Accomplishments

Returning to campus teaching after a year and half of remote teaching has been energizing for both faculty and students. However, students appear to have been deeply affected by the pandemic as evidenced in the increased student success issues we have faced this year. Given the post-pandemic situation where students need more attention and support of instructors, we may embark on a department wide discussion of freshman writing courses in AY 22-23 to develop some future directions. We will also build on some of the findings of the HEIF grant which is aimed at empowering heritage languages, working with our new faculty hire who has ESL specialty. Our assessment results based on the two courses we evaluate for the common objectives of English Studies, we find that students meet the standards and show improvements from the sophomore to senior year.

We held a department retreat in the fall where we took up a number of curricular and student success issues. We are rewriting some course titles and descriptions to communicate our course content and learning outcomes better to students. We will continue to make improvements based on the program review in 2023.

This year, we have put in for two cross disciplinary academic innovation grants, one that will enhance the role and form of the college newspaper *The Point* while creating an interdisciplinary minor, and another that develops an TESL certificate aimed at middle and secondary education students. Our professional writing and literature courses have an active participation in the new Gen Ed program and we hope to build on these contributions in the coming years.

We have also placed two students on paid summer internships this year and hope to increase that number in the coming years. We also held an alumni panel for our students to showcase the career possibilities for English studies.

Graduate program: we launched our Online/Hyflex Graduate program this fall, with the hope of attracting more students to the program. We have worked with the graduate marketing division to develop marketing strategies and publicize the program. The program is 30 credits and has an exit exam or MA thesis option. This year we successfully graduated two students—one with an exit exam and another with an MA thesis. We hope to grow the program in the coming years.

Additionally, we are currently recruiting students in our Creating Writing Certificate program and will be offering courses next year.

B. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) (Educational Objectives)

I. List of PLOs and the timeline for assessment.

PLO #	PLO – Stated in assessable terms	Where are the learning outcomes for this level/program published? (please specify) Include URLs where appropriate	Timing of assessment (annual, semester, bi-annual, etc.)	When was the last assessment of the PLO completed?

1.	<p>English Studies Department Shared Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be able to read and understand texts across genres, cultures, and periods. • Students will be able to write in various forms. • Students will be able to critically analyze texts and contexts. • Students will be able to communicate their perspectives and ideas. • Students will be able to apply their skills in distinct settings. 	<p>https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/academic-schools/school-arts-and-sciences/english-studies-department</p>	Annual	End of Spring semester
2.	<p>Literature Concentration Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be able to closely read and interpret diverse texts. • Students will be able to exchange critical viewpoints about literary and cultural topics. • Students will be able to produce scholarly work that include critical readings and the use and citation of scholarly sources. • Students will demonstrate knowledge about the scope, genres, and historical and critical contexts of literature 	<p>Literature Concentration, English Studies, BA/BS https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/literature-concentration/english-studies-babs</p>		

3.	<p>Professional Writing Concentration Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be able to develop writing skills needed to address diverse audiences. • Students will be able to engage with the process and the products of other writers. • Students will be able to analyze rhetorical situations. • Students will be able to create and edit professional products in various genres. 	<p>Professional Writing Concentration, English Studies, BA/BS https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/professional-writing-concentration-english-studies-babs</p>		
4.	<p>5-12 Initial Licensure in English Concentration Learning Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be able to communicate and reflect on their pedagogical philosophy and practice in teaching 5-12 English. • Students will be able to develop curricula and lesson plans for 5-12 English. • Students will be able to develop subject matter expertise for teaching literature in the 5-12 classroom. • Students will be able to receive initial licensure in 5-12 English 	<p>English Studies, Middle and Secondary Education with Initial Teacher Licensure, BA/BS https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/programs/english-studies-middle-and-secondary-education-initial-teacher-licensure-babs</p>		

Graduate Program Learning Outcomes:

- Students will produce graduate-level scholarship in the study of literature and culture.
- Students will research and respond to fellow literary and cultural studies scholars.
- Students will develop a wide range of literary knowledge, including a global perspective.
- Students will polish and expand their writing style and techniques.

- Students will explore major literary theories and the history of English Studies as a discipline, including key forms and genres.
- Students will have opportunities to refine and expand their pedagogical philosophies and practices.
- Students will have the opportunity to produce a culminating project, whether in the form of a researched MA thesis or an exit exam.
- Students will be able to complete the program in-person or online, as fits their needs.

II. PLO Assessment (Please report on the PLOs assessed and/or reviewed this year. Programs should be assessing at least one each year.)

Using the table below, list and briefly describe the **direct method(s)** used to collect information assessing whether students are learning the core sets of knowledge (K), skills (S) and attitudes (A) identified as essential.

PLO # (from above)	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in student program (internship, 4th year, 1st year, etc.)	To which students were assessments administered (all, only a sample, etc.)	What is the target set for the PLO? (criteria for success)	Reflection on the results: How was the “loop closed”?
1.	Read, understand, use and cite primary texts (Objective 1)	ENGL 2999 (taken at end of sophomore year) and in Capstone (ENGL 4999 taken in senior year)	All	Please see the chart that follows: Assessed on a scale of NA, 1 (does not meet standard); 1.5 and 2 (meets standard); 2.5 and 3 (exceeds standard).	Generally, students have facility in using and engaging with primary texts. The score of 2.3 in the sophomore level class suggests that there is room for improvement but meets the standard. That score improves during their final year to 2.65, which suggests a trajectory of growth and improvement of literary analysis and writing.
2.	Critically analyze primary texts across genres,	ENGL 2999 and ENGL 4999	All	Assessed on a scale of NA, 1	This is an ongoing challenge at the

	cultures, and periods using and citing secondary texts (Objective 2)			(does not meet standard); 1.5 and 2 (meets standard); 2.5 and 3 (exceeds standard).	sophomore level as the score of 1.86 indicates. Here, too, there is a dramatic improvement by the time students reach their senior year, with a score of 2.25. There is work to be done to improve their facility with secondary sources in general.
3.	Be able to critically analyze texts and contexts. (Objective 3)	ENGL 2999 and ENGL 4999	All	Assessed on a scale of NA, 1 (does not meet standard); 1.5 and 2 (meets standard); 2.5 and 3 (exceeds standard).	In this area, student do well and meet the standards of engaging with primary texts in multilayered ways. Both the sophomore as well as senior scores— 2.6 and 2.45 show a good skillset.
4.	Be able to communicate their perspectives and ideas after engagement with texts. (Objective 4)	ENGL 2999 and ENGL 4999	All	Assessed on a scale of NA, 1 (does not meet standard); 1.5 and 2 (meets standard); 2.5 and 3 (exceeds standard).	Students meet the standards generally, with scores above 2 in both classes, but this is an area that needs further bolstering.

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You may use this comment box to provide any additional information, if applicable:

Still in a mode of recovering from the post-Covid work adjustments, the assessment committee could not review the fall 2021 Approaches class. That class was reviewed by the chair and two other faculty.

Summary of Findings: Briefly summarize the results of the PLO assessments reported in Section II above combined with other relevant evidence gathered and show how these are being reviewed/discussed. How are you “closing the loop”?

We used the rubric below:

Rating → Indicator ↓	1 Does Not Meet Standard	2 Meets Standard	3 Exceeds Standard	NA	Score
Ability to use and cite hard copy primary texts	Demonstrates unclear or incomplete citation	Demonstrates basic use and citation	Demonstrates complex use and full citation	No use	
Ability to use and cite hard-copy secondary texts	Demonstrates unclear or incomplete citation	Demonstrates basic use and citation	Demonstrates complex use and full citation	No use	
Critical engagement with primary texts	Demonstrates no critical engagement (ie, summary)	Demonstrates basic critical engagement	Demonstrates sophisticated critical engagement	No use	

Critical engagement with secondary texts	Demonstrates no critical engagement (ie, summary)	Demonstrates basic critical engagement	Demonstrates sophisticated critical engagement	No use	
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Results from the rubric for Capstone class from the Assessment committee:

Overall averages for 5 portfolios:

- A (use primary): 2.65
- B (use secondary): 2.25
- C (engage primary): 2.45
- D (engage secondary): 2.1

Results for Approaches class:

Overall averages for 7 final papers from the class.

- A (use primary): 2
- B (use secondary): 1.5
- C (engage primary): 2.7
- D (engage secondary): 2

Reflection Prompt	Narrative Response
<p>Other than GPA, what data/evidence is used to determine that graduates have achieved the stated outcomes for the degree? (e.g., capstone course, portfolio review, licensure examination)</p>	<p>Senior Capstone Course; Examination of writing samples (as stated above) in entering majors' work in foundational "Approaches to English Studies" class and in "Capstone" portfolio of materials (final senior level class.) For Initial Licensure concentration (aligned with Program Area for Secondary and Middles School PASM education), MTEL licensure exams and practica in area 5-12 schools are also utilized to determine whether students obtain licensure. (I don't have this data at the moment)</p>

<p>Who interprets the evidence? What is the process? (e.g. annually by the curriculum committee)</p>	<p>The English Studies Departmental Assessment Committee, comprised of faculty members across the concentrations, who annually assess these papers, then report to chair and whole department.</p> <p>For the Initial Licensure concentration, the process also involves 5-12 English Studies PASM group; practicum supervising teachers in 5-12 schools, as well as Secondary-Middle education faculty and determination of students' MTEL exams completion as per the state requirements.</p>
<p>What changes have been made as a result of using the data/evidence? (close the loop)</p>	<p>Changes over the last few years have been made so that we articulate more clearly and purposefully the goals of English studies in our entry-level "Approaches to English Studies," and also the importance of preparing and maintaining a Senior portfolio that captures the learning of our students over the years. (This was done in response to feedback from our external evaluator from our Program Review in 2017.)</p> <p>In "Approaches," students are given academic preparation in the form of introduction to theories, analytical and research methods to bring students into the discipline of English Studies. The course involves deep engagement with primary texts and a meaningful use of secondary sources, as well as frameworks for literary analysis. The other courses in the curriculum build on these initial frameworks of primary and secondary engagement throughout the four years of study.</p> <p>Capstone prepares students for professionalization, graduate work and employment in related fields to English.</p> <p>We continue build the career and jobs focus for our students by offering alumni panels and speakers who explore with students the range of possibilities and skills that they have acquired, developed and have as English Studies majors within our three concentrations. We also usually conduct a forum that addresses the process of preparing for graduate study which helps our students who are prospective candidates approach and complete the process of applying for advanced degree programs in literature, library science and law, but have not been able to do it this year, due to the post-Covid slow start. This year we have worked with career development services to place two students in paid summer internships to help build skills and experience.</p>

	<p>We have also embarked on a revising of our course titles and descriptions to more accurately reflect the content of what we teach to encourage students to take and participate in our courses.</p> <p>During our fall retreat we discussed some of the issues to do with student success in our department and made some changes to our course descriptions, but await the 2023 program review to initiate major changes.</p>
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Graduate program: We offer a zero credit exit exam or the option of a Masters thesis as our capstone experience. Over the years we have successfully graduated many of our MA students with both these options. Last year we graduated two students, one with an Exit Exam and another with a Masters Thesis.

C. Assessment Plan for Program/Department

- I. Insert the program or department Assessment Plan
- II. Explain any changes in the assessment plan including new or revised PLOs, new assessments that the program/department plans to implement and new targets or goals set for student success.
- III. If you do not have a plan, would you like help in developing one?

Yes

The Department Assessment plan follows the methodology discussed above where we use Approaches and Capstone courses as out assessment tools. We do have a more detailed draft of assessment plan from 2019 (see attachment) but we have yet to engage in a dept wide conversation about the use and value of that draft assessment plan.

D. Program Review Action Plan or External Accreditation Action Letter/Report

Annual Reflection/Follow-up on Action Plan from last Program Review or external accreditation (only complete the table that is appropriate for your program)

I. Programs that fall under Program Review:

- i. Date of most recent Review: 2017
- ii. Insert the Action Plan table from your last Program Review and give any progress towards completing the tasks or achieving targets set forth in the plan.

Specific area where improvement is needed	Evidence to support the recommended change	Person(s) responsible for implementing the change	Timeline for implementation	Resources needed	Assessment Plan	Progress Made this Year
We will work to create new assessments in more of our classes concerning student work that will complement and extend existing assessment of our course objectives.	2017 Program Review	English department	5-7 year period	none	See the Assessment plan and draft assessment plan of 2019	Yes, of common core courses only
We will develop and expand existing initiatives within the department. These include expanding our Internships		Department faculty and chair; for Writing Associates, additionally: the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences and collaboration with Student				Successfully placed students on paid internships this summer and will build on this for the next year.

outside the campus and continuing and growing the Writing Associates outreach.		Support Services and the Director of the Writing Center				
We will continue to showcase the exceptional work of our faculty and students	2017 Program Review and per the recommendations made by the External Evaluator (Dr. Ann Brunjes in 2	Department				Good progress on many fronts, including through coursework (“Heritages of Change” in Dr Kisha Tracy’s Writing II course, and “Anti-Racist Pedagogy” in Dr Katy Covino’s Special methods class. The college newspaper and Route 2 also showcase the excellent work of both our faculty and students.

<p>Each of our three concentrations has a specific plan in mind that we will continue to strengthen.</p>	<p>Working with Admissions and the Davis Grant initiative . Also the departmental Curriculum committee.</p>				<p>Continuing good progress. Professional Writing has developed a new structure for the Major concentration and for the Minor which involves students taking classes in: “Rhetoric and Medium,” “Genre” and “Production” categories. Both Professional Writing and Literature have found placements in the new Gen Ed program. Professional Writing has developed a new 15 credit minor.</p>
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<p>As a department, we will seek to develop projects that will expand our community outreach which helps attract students to FSU and our major since enrollments in the arts and humanities is an increasing challenge nation-wide.</p>	<p>Department and Chair</p>				<p>Good progress through ALFA and other initiatives on campus with English department participation in FYE, and cross disciplinary programs such as Digital Humanities and Minor programs in Comm Media. We are also hopeful that the two Academic Innovation grants—for The Point and TESL certificate—will further enhance our program and create interest.</p>
<p>We will examine reasons for students' non-completion in English Studies.</p>	<p>Departmental faculty and the chair; the Assessment Committee</p>				<p>Ongoing discussions in the department and assessment committees, as well as retreat.</p>

<p>Improv Assessment Courses: better articulate to students the goals and outcomes of being an English Studies major; and better articulate the purposes of the portfolio in Capstone and improve career opportunitie s, articulation, and job preparation for graduating students.</p>	<p>Departm ental faculty and the chair.</p>					<p>Ongoing discussion in the department and assessment committees.</p>
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iii.

If you do not have an action plan, would you like help in developing one based on your last program review and needs of the program? **No**

Yes

II. Programs with external Accreditation:

- i. Professional, specialized, State, or programmatic accreditations currently held by the program/department.
- ii. Date of most recent accreditation action by each listed agency.
- iii. Date and nature of next review and type of review.

The English Studies Initial Licensure in 5-12 in English Education concentration works with the Program Area for Secondary and Middle School (PASM) at Fitchburg State; therefore, all things pertinent to this licensure are described and analyzed within the PASM Report (or within the Fitchburg State Education Department’s Annual Report).

Please see the Program Area for Secondary and Middle School (PASM) Report for Fitchburg State.

List key issues for continuing accreditation identified in accreditation action letter or report.	Key performance indicators as required by agency or selected by program (licensure, board or bar pass rates; employment rates, etc.)(If required.)	Update on fulfilling the action letter/report or on meeting the key performance indicators.

E. Departmental Strategic Initiatives

Accomplished Initiatives AY 21-22 <small>Add more rows as needed</small>	Corresponding Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy <small>Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3</small>	Indicate if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal

<p>English Studies Literature courses (as part of the MAJ proposal for AUC LA&S 60) were proposed and passed through governance per the new LA&S/ Gen Education requirements as part of the AUC LA&S/ Gen Education requirements, so that all students regardless of major to will be able take 3000 and 4000 upper-division literature electives without difficulty. Further, courses in the department are in the process of getting CL, DP, ER and PL, LI , AIA and IHIP designations this year.</p>	<p>Goal 1: Strategy 1</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Professional Writing concentration developed a new minor program of 15 credits</p>	<p>Goal 1: Strategies 2, 4.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Continued Participation in Early College Initiative with courses offered in conjunction with area high schools;</p>	<p>Goal 1: Strategy 4 Goal 2: Strategy 1, 4, 6</p>	<p>YES <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Continued Participation in Dual Enrollment Initiative</p>	<p>Goal 1: Strategy 4 Goal 2: Strategy 1, 4, 6</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Continued Participation by English department in faculty in the three-year Faculty Academy Initiative with Dr. Paul Hernandez</p>	<p>Objective 1: Strategy 2, 3, 4, Goal 2: Strategies 1 and 2; Goal 2: Strategies 1,2 and 4 Goal 4: Strategies 1, 2, 3 and 4 Goal 5, Strategy 1</p>	<p>YES</p>
<p>Participation in Davis Grant Initiative</p>	<p>Goal 1: Strategies 2 and 4; Goal 2: Strategies 1 and 5; Goal 5: Strategies 2 and 3</p>	<p></p>
<p>Faculty Hired in multi-ethnic American, Native American, and/or African American literature and culture and</p>	<p>Goal: Strategies 1, 2, 3, and 4. Goal 3: Strategies 3,4 and 6 Goal 4: Strategy 1</p>	<p>YES</p>

post-colonial studies, with a subspecialty in ESL/ELL (start date Sept. 22)	Goal 5, Strategy 1	
English Department Faculty collaboration in creating proposed interdisciplinary Digital Media Innovation major Working with Education department to create a TESL certificate.	Goal 1: Strategies 3 and 4; Goal 6: Strategy 3	
Implementation of a new Graduate M.A. Program that offers new hyflex and online modalities to expand appeal to a broader student population;	Goal 1: Strategies 2, 4, 5,6, and 7 Goal 2: Strategies 1 and 4 Goal 3, Strategy 6 Goal 4 Strategy 7 Goal 5, Strategy 3 Goal 6, Strategy 2 ,3, 6	
Implementation of a new fully online Creative Writing Certificate Program that will appeal to adult writers seeking skills rather than a terminal degree	Goal 1: Strategies 2,4,5,6 and 7 Goal 3, Strategy 6 Goal 4 Strategy 7 Goal 5, Strategy 3 and 4 Goal 6, Strategy 2,3,6	
English Department Faculty participation in ALFA Programs	Goal 1, Strategy 6 and 7 Goal 3: Strategy 3, 4, 5 Goal 5, Strategy 3 and 4 Goal 6, Strategy 3	
Developing and exploring local connections with area newspapers in the	Goal 1 Strategy 4	

state and local vicinity through our Journalism professor and coordinator of the campus newspaper <i>The Point</i> . Further, developed an Academic Innovation Grant that seeks to expand the form, scope and reach of the newspaper to serve the needs of the local community and our students.	Goal 2, Strategy 5 Goal 3: Strategies 1,2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	
Departmental Internship Program in Professional Writing	Goal 1 Strategy 4 Goal 2, Strategy 5 Goal 3; Strategy 3, 4, 5 Goal 3: Strategy 6	

Planned Initiatives for AY 22-23 <small>Add more rows as needed</small>	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy <small>Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 1.3</small>	Indicate if a Diversity, Equity and Inclusiveness (DEI) Goal
Implementation of Academic Innovation Grant that lays the roadmap for The Point to serve as a community newspaper and engage students campus-wide.	Goal 1 Strategy 4 Goal 2, Strategy 5 Goal 3: Strategies 1,2, 3, 4, 5 and 6	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementation of Academic Innovation Grant for developing a TESL certificate in collaboration with the education dept.	Goal 1: Strategies 3 and 4; Goal 6: Strategy 3	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
Studying student success and retention in Freshman Writing courses, with the idea of engaging ESL needs.	Goal 1: Strategies 1, 2 Goal 2: Strategies 1,2, 3 Goal 5: Strategy 1	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>

	Goal 6: Strategy 2	
Exploring other certificate programs such as TEFL that will bring in international students.	Goal 5: Strategy 3 Goal 6: Strategy 3	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>
Increasing paid internship placements for students in the department	Goal 2: Strategy 5 Goal 3: Strategy 3 Goal 6: Strategy 4	

F. Departmental Reflection:

Take this section to reflect on--

1) *Initiatives that you may be considering for 22-23 academic year that you did not already capture above.*

- Revival of English Studies High School Writing Competition (paused during COVID).
- Revival of *Route 2* (our English Studies journal produced in conjunction with the Editing and Publishing class)
- Continuing the work of the Davis Grant to define career competencies for students in all three concentrations as well as an action plan for the department. See attachment for the work this year.
- English Studies Rally for recruitment and in support of the English Studies major and minor
- Continued development of the Graduate MA Program in Literature program around national and international marketing outreach with the new Hyflex/Online modality
- Graduate Certificate in Creative Writing Program implementation and marketing

2) *Any other thoughts or information that you would like to share.*

Please note that I am writing this document as Interim Chair and may not have addressed all areas comprehensively because of my limited knowledge and experience this semester.