Final Assessment Report
English Language and Literature (BA/MA/PhD)
July 2019

Executive Summary

External reviewers found that the programs (BA, MA, PhD) delivered by the Department of English Language and Literature were in good standing.

> *"The undergraduate and graduate programs are in good standing. The programs are unique among English departments in Canada because they embrace both literature and rhetoric, and this broad scope and diversity is one of the programs' main strengths."*

A total of 5 recommendations were provided by the reviewers, touching on maintaining the program's uniqueness, program communication, undergraduate curriculum and graduate recruitment and funding. In response, the program created a plan outlining the specific actions proposed to address each recommendation as well as a timeline for implementation. The next cyclical review for this program is scheduled for 2024-25.

Student Complement in all Undergraduate Year Levels and Graduate Programs[1]

	General (3 and 4-year)	Honours Co-op	Honours	MA	PhD
2016-2017	58	137	135	50	62
2015-2016	68	118	95	71	70
2014-2015	81	115	106	75	71

Background

In accordance with the University of Waterloo's Institutional Quality Assurance Process (IQAP), this final assessment report provides a synthesis of the external evaluation and the internal response of the following programs (BA, MA, PhD) delivered by the Department of English Language and Literature.

- English Language and Literature (BA)
- English – Literature (BA)
- English – Literature and Rhetoric (BA)
- English – Rhetoric, Media and Professional Communication (BA)
- Literary Studies (MA)
- Rhetoric and Communication Design (MA)
- Experimental Digital Media (MA)
- English (PhD)

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[1] Undergraduate enrollment data is for Fall-term registration only.

- Technical Writing (minor)
- English (minor)

In addition, there are bachelor specializations in the following: Technical Writing; Global Literatures; Digital Media Studies and an Intensive specialization.

A self-study (Volume I, II, III) was submitted to the Associate Vice-President, Academic and Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs on October 24, 2017. The self-study (Volume I) presented the program descriptions and learning outcomes, an analytical assessment of the programs, including the data collected from a student survey, along with the standard data package prepared by the Office of Institutional Analysis & Planning (IAP). The CVs for each faculty member with a key role in the delivery of the programs were included in Volume II of the self-study.

From Volume III, two arm's-length external reviewers were selected by the Associate Vice-President, Academic and Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs: Dr. Martin Kreiswirth, Professor of English, McGill University, and Dr. Tania Smith, Associate Professor of Communication, Media and Film, University of Calgary.

Reviewers appraised the self-study documentation and conducted a site visit to the University on February 5-6, 2018. An internal reviewer from the University of Waterloo, Dr. Michael Chong, Professor of Chemistry, was selected to accompany the external reviewers. The visit included interviews with the Vice-President, Academic & Provost; Associate Vice-President, Academic and Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs; Dean of the Faculty of Arts; Associate Dean of Arts for Graduate Studies; Chair of the Department of English Language and Literature, as well as meetings with faculty members, staff and current graduate and undergraduate students. The Review Team also had an opportunity to visit and meet with representatives from the Library and Co-operative Education.

This final assessment report is based on information extracted, in many cases verbatim, from the self-study, the external reviewers' report and the program response.

Program characteristics
English Language and Literature (BA): grounds students in the discipline of English and allows multiple opportunities for students to explore their own interests. Includes a wide range of national and historical literatures, and courses in rhetoric, digital media studies, professional writing, information design and other areas.

English – Literature (BA): gives insight into our world, our culture, and our human identity through an analysis of historical and contemporary literature (e.g., British, American, Canadian, and Postcolonial) and theory.

English – Rhetoric, Media and Professional Communication (BA): provides intellectual challenge and practical insight into rhetoric, professional writing and communication design, and digital media.

English – Literature and Rhetoric (BA): provides intellectual challenge and practical insight by combining the analysis of historical and contemporary literature and the study of rhetoric.

English (minor): provides a grounding in some of the essential areas of the discipline of English literature.

Technical Writing (minor): provides an understanding of how innovative companies and organizations communicate with one another and with the public.

Literary Studies (MA): covers a broad range of literature written in English, including British literature from the medieval period to the present, American literature, Canadian literature, and English-language literature of the postcolonial world. Students study these areas with the aid of traditional techniques of literary research, recent advances in the theory of literature, and tools made available in the digital humanities.

Rhetoric and Communication Design (MA): emphasizes the intersection of rhetorical and semiotic theory (classical and recent) on the one hand, with problems of textual analysis, the design of digital media, and the social forms of communication on the other.

Experimental Digital Media (MA): offers a praxis-based exploration of the creative and critical processes provided by digital media through a lab-based, hands-on approach to digital technology and the production of objects-to-think-with.

English (PhD): explicitly integrates the fields covered by the MAs to demonstrate the myriad fruitful ways in which the study of rhetoric and the study of literature can benefit one another.

Summary of strengths, challenges and weaknesses based on self-study

Strengths
- External Research Funding: colleagues are highly successful in securing research funding
- Scholarly Output: colleagues are highly productive scholars
- Honours Rhetoric, Media and Professional Communication BA: the program is one of the fastest-growing majors in Arts
- Co-op: students have high employment rates, receive excellent evaluations by their employers, and graduate with resumes that provide strengths in both academia and the workplace
- Graduate Student Support and Graduate Program Management: the program has worked continuously to make improvements that help students succeed
- PhD Placement: graduates do comparatively well in academic employment generally and in tenure-stream employment in particular

- Quality of Teaching: students rate their instructors very highly

Challenges and Weaknesses
- Diversity: racial and ethnic diversity in hiring in general and in tenure-stream hiring in particular is an issue of concern discussed within the Department
- Undergraduate Enrollment: recruiting undergraduates into Honours Literature and Honours Literature and Rhetoric remains a challenge
- Service Teaching: Maintaining focus on the quality and effectiveness of the Department's undergraduate Honours degrees and graduate MAs and PhD is an important challenge. Long-standing and new demands for service teaching will require careful balancing of attention to ensure that all aspects of the Department remain robust
- Conference Travel Support: although Departmental trust funds are available to support conference travel for graduate students, there are no longer funds to support faculty conference travel
- Office Space: a critical point has been reached in the Department's lack of adequate office space

Summary of key findings from the external reviewers
The undergraduate and graduate programs are in good standing. The programs are unique among English departments in Canada because they embrace both literature and rhetoric, and this broad scope and diversity is one of the programs' main strengths.

For undergraduates, the unique combination of majors — Literature; Literature and Rhetoric; and Rhetoric, Media and Professional Communication (RMPC) — each coupled with a co-op option, provides students interested in English language, communication, cultural studies, rhetoric and writing more choice than most English departments in Canada.

The graduate programs are generally solid, with less strength in the Master's program than in the PhD largely due to challenges with graduate student funding. Both the Master's and PhD students spoken to said their experience in graduate study in English at Waterloo was positive, despite the funding and some issues with restrictions caused by program requirements, the timing of their deadlines, and the nature of their TA teaching assignments. They have a vibrant student community and appreciate the professional development support the department provides for their TA roles.

Program response to external reviewers' recommendations

Recommendations

1. Maintain the uniqueness of the department

Although the list of similar-themed English programs is relatively small, the department should not feel any sense of insecurity, and least of all, inferiority, about its choice to innovate its curriculum beyond literary studies. It is not alone in its embrace of rhetoric, media and professional communication as well as literature. The humanities fields must innovate and adapt in order to assert their value and relevance to today's culture and society. The English department at Waterloo demonstrates strength on both its literature side and its rhetoric side and we see neither as more important than the other as a foundation for its future success. However, the challenge will be to continue to collaborate, maintain morale, support one another's development (of programs, of research areas), and to permit each undergraduate and graduate plan to express sufficiently distinctive characteristics while sharing core values and resources. We offer these recommendations in a spirit of humble respect and confidence that the department will flourish.

Response

See implementation plan

2. Service teaching initiatives

The increasing number of service courses taught by English (as seen in the current Math Initiative and upcoming Undergraduate Communications Outcomes Initiative) needs to be closely monitored to ensure that there remain enough resources to maintain the department's core responsibilities to English studies.

Since lecturers will be hired to offer some of these courses and since there is currently (as the reviewers were told) some confusion regarding the specifics of their positions, we suggest that the department and university have discussions with the lecturers regarding such issues as "definite term" vs. "continuing" lecturers, course loads over several years, TA assignments, and other relevant issues.

Response

See implementation plan

3. Program communication

3.1 Make detailed course outlines more readily available publicly online in an easily indexed database so that teaching and learning methods are easier to see, especially assessment types. Currently, nine other Arts departments provide sample course outlines indexed through the current "Arts course outlines" page. At other institutions, all the instructors' detailed course outlines are published every term. This practice reinforces the importance of pedagogical methods, not just subject matter, in achieving learning

objects across the curriculum. Such easy access may also enable instructors to learn from their colleagues' course designs.

3.2 Encourage instructors to collaborate on "master syllabi" for core required courses. It is not known the extent to which this is already occurring, but the reviewers assume one has already been constructed for the core required courses such as ENGL 200 A and B. English courses should allow considerable instructor autonomy, but all instructors who often teach a course — especially a required course that functions as a prerequisite for other courses — should craft what is called a "master syllabus"— a document outlining general learning objectives and purposes of the course within the overall curriculum, as well as recommendations for textbook selection, teaching methods, assignment types and weights.

3.3 Promote experiential, applied and innovative pedagogy (especially those involving the use of communication technologies) and more publicly feature these learning opportunities' presence in every BA program's academic coursework. Students appear not to perceive the presence of application and experiential learning as strongly as faculty do. Experiential learning and application are not just the role of co-op; they are integral to a healthy academic program and are core values at the University of Waterloo. Faculty in English may be able to meet several challenging objectives at once by encouraging course-based learning methods and/or assessment types that are both 1) experiential and/or applied in nature and 2) require students to build proficiency in their use of communication technologies.

Response
See implementation plan

4. **Undergraduate Curriculum**

4.1 Consider bolstering the role that 100-level courses play in developing students' interest in and building a foundation for the three academic plans in English. Although entry to the English major occurs in the second year, the department still has control over the first-year courses they teach and their academic plan requirements. At other institutions, programs offer more advice, even online and in the calendar, about which first-year course(s) to take if a student is interested in a future English degree. Should certain 100-level courses be required as prerequisites for future courses in the field, and should certain 100-level courses be required or recommended in each of the three academic plans? Revisiting courses at this level would align with the objectives of the 2014-19 Arts Strategic Plan to "Revise [the] first year program to provide common foundations, core skills, and improved pathways to majors" (p. 6) and to "Direct greater attention to core skills and competencies in first year programming for both academic

success and co-op/career readiness" (p. 7)

4.2 Consider focusing the list of 100-level courses. Other programs mount fewer 100-level courses and more sections of each type. Staffing and offering many diverse courses may become a challenge in the future with increasing service teaching responsibilities at the 100 level. It may also build community among instructors who teach the same 100-level course and promote fruitful pedagogical conversations about how these courses inspire students to become English majors.

4.3 Consider balancing literature and rhetoric course offerings at the 200 level in order to more fully represent the English department's range of academic plans and course offerings at the 300 level and beyond. For example, current rhetoric courses could be used to form a two-course sequence in rhetoric at the 200-level that would be the counterpart to the current 200-level survey of British literature. Alternatively, the existing two-course 200A/B sequence could incorporate both rhetorical and literary studies and not just focus on British texts, promoting pedagogical collaboration between faculty members in each specialization. The "Literature and Rhetoric" plan could require courses in both themes while the other plans, especially Honours degrees, could promote focus in one stream or the other.

4.4 Consider permitting more room for RMPC students, especially those in Honours degrees, to focus more on their interests within English by reducing their literature course requirements beyond the core. Allowing the RMPC plan requirements to focus more could help with retention rates in the RMPC program. Students may still freely choose their options from both areas. At present the RMPC plan is not much different from the combined Literature and Rhetoric plan. We believe a combined middle-ground plan is as necessary in this program as it is at UBC, and its presence makes distinctive plans at either end of the spectrum more justifiable. It is helpful to have three plans for both students and faculty to manage and navigate the broad scope of the field of English at Waterloo.

> **4.4.1 Consider whether the 100- and 200-level requirements for RMPC students are adequately preparing them for their third and fourth years**. Currently there is better intellectual preparation offered to Literature students than RMPC students. Literature students are required to take three 200-level literature and theory courses (ENGL 200A, 200B, 251) while RMPC students are only required to take one 200-level rhetoric course (ENGL 292). We suggest that ENGL 293, Introduction to Digital Media Studies, seems reasonable as an academic plan requirement for RMPC.

> **4.4.2 Consider that an existing or reworked rhetorical theory course could be an**

alternative to ENGL 251 for RMPC students. Rhetorical theory and media studies provide tools for critical analysis and equip students for a very close examination of political, professional, and popular arguments and their underlying ideologies as well as an understanding of the ways in which media shape genres, messages, and interactions with readers/audiences.

4.4.3 Consider the purpose of requiring the Introduction to Linguistics course, ENGL 306A, for RMPC students when this course is neither required for Honours Literature students nor for Literature and Rhetoric students. Although we lack data showing that students struggle or find it lacks relevance, Linguistics is a different field of study and is not foundational to advanced studies in RMPC. A rhetoric course that touches on linguistics but focuses on rhetorical theories of style and language may be more suited to RMPC majors.

4.4.4 Consider whether it is necessary to require RMPC students to take two upper level courses in literature. Students in this plan, like students in the Literature plan, desire and deserve freedom to take advanced courses in their declared area of interest. RMPC students are not likely to be preparing themselves for graduate studies in English Literature, and if they are, advisors should direct them toward one of the other two academic plans. A program focused on RMPC can still provide a strong academic preparation for graduate studies and careers in Rhetoric, Media, and Professional Communication.

4.5 Consider the role of other Arts course offerings in degree requirements. Currently the English academic plans mention only ENGL courses and those that are cross-listed as courses in other fields. If staffing ENGL courses becomes a challenge, enabling students to use non-ENGL courses as requirements may allow for a more economical use of human resources. It may also "facilitate opportunities for interdisciplinary study" listed as an action in the Arts Strategic Plan 2014-19 (p. 6). Many other Arts plans such as Fine Arts and Cognitive Science enable students to choose requirements among courses offered by other departments.

4.6 Consider a 400-level academic plan capstone course for each stream. Many undergraduate Arts programs have required "capstone" courses that synthesize and build on prior learning. These help to launch students into post-graduation journeys and can foster a sense of community among students. It may also foster future alumni engagement. By requiring students to reflect on their entire degree, such courses can also enable faculty members to observe how well program-wide learning outcomes are being met by the fourth year level and how various courses have contributed to these outcomes.

Response
See implementation plan

5. **Graduate program**

   5.1 Continue to carefully track graduate student recruitment and admission, funding packages (and their components), and supervision (with a view towards dispersion throughout the department) to try to attract the best and brightest novice scholars from Canada and beyond and match them with the full range of the department's strengths.

   5.2 Consider measures to recruit diverse, high quality graduate students.

   > **5.2.1 Consider changing the wording of admission requirements** so that students who have very high grades and relevant coursework are not discouraged to apply despite lacking an "honours" designation on their BA degree. Because Honours programs elsewhere may involve not only a high grade average but also special coursework and a thesis, it cannot be assumed that all your best candidates will hold Honours degrees. The quality of a degree and the student's attainment should matter more than the word "honours."

   > **5.2.2 Make active efforts to research and recruit from specific Canadian and international programs** that are likely to produce eligible and strong graduate students. Targeted and personalized efforts can be more fruitful than passive or mass campaigns. Such measures, if successful, would enhance the diversity of the program and broaden the diffusion of the English program's reputation.

   > **5.2.3 Consider the value of recruiting students not only from English literature programs but closely related programs in other disciplines**. This may be especially appropriate when recruiting students for the media and rhetoric MA and PhD. Across Canada and internationally, these fields of study are housed not only in English but in other disciplines. Do not consider it a serious setback if an excellent student from a related field must first progress through qualifying coursework in English, since this provides the student an excellent opportunity to adapt to a new culture and learn from the department's own courses.

   5.3 Continue to implement the excellent systems developed to shepherd graduate students smoothly through their programs, such as checklists and TA mentoring and training. Although we acknowledge the frustration with program time to completion voiced in the self-study, we believe that on balance, more important factors are the department's attention to the academic quality of the graduate program, the quality of supervision, recruitment, retention, graduation rates, mental health, community, and the

quality of TAs' classroom teaching and professional development.

5.4 Ensure that graduate students' teaching and academic workloads are reasonable. It is essential to continue maintaining small class sizes per TA and to provide TA training and support. Departments must not only account for the labor involved in students' teaching duties but also their professional development as instructors while they are progressing through their graduate program. We praise the department for incorporating pedagogical training and mentoring into TA positions. We also acknowledge recent efforts to create manageable standardized qualifying field examinations for the PhD candidacy exam, since covering both rhetoric and literature can make it very tempting to double the amount of subject matter an individual student is expected to digest.

5.5 The department and university should consider adjusting program length expectations and advertising to account for the wide variation in time to completion. The university's program evaluation standards and statistical measures should not be too demanding in regard to this metric, which can be skewed by a few individuals. Delays often have unavoidable causes such as health and family responsibilities that should be accommodated.

5.6 The university administration should applaud this department for its ability to adapt with such sensitivity to individual graduate students' situational challenges and to foster their academic strengths. Their respect for graduate students' experience is well in line with the university's strategic plan -- its desire for "a vibrant student experience" and its value for "Integrity, equity, diversity and a balanced life for students, faculty and staff."

5.7 Consider occasionally offering opportunities for PhD students to teach a higher-level course in their own research area, not just a first-year course.

5.8 Support and collaborate with the graduate students' organization in their efforts to provide peer support and mentoring for PhD students after their coursework is complete, when students feel most isolated and challenged. Some of what they do could be institutionalized rather than continually remade by each new cohort of students.

> **5.8.1 A "graduate student handbook,"** if not already in existence, could be co-developed by the student society and the graduate officer, perhaps with appendices customized to each unique stream. An ideal handbook would not just state official policies and procedures (since the department and university should already do that) but provide friendly and supportive advice and tips from the student point of view. While handbooks require continual revision, they assist new students to become acclimatized and pass on practical wisdom.

5.9 Carefully look into the distribution of graduate supervision through a task force, working group, or committee with representation across the department based on supervisory activity. Include in the working group faculty who currently supervise and those who don't. As noted above, supervision (particularly PhD supervision, since very few MA students take the thesis option) is very unevenly distributed across the department. Some things for this group to consider:

- Should there be some form of concrete recognition for supervision — e.g. course release, significant merit weight?
- Since supervision can sometimes be determined by applicants' research area choices, should the admissions committee consider potential field as well as quality with the goal of spreading the students among the researchers' specialties?
- In connection with this, should more faculty members be involved in the PhD admission process? If the goal were to admit, say, 10 PhD students, the admission committee could do an initial screening, choosing a group of 30 potential students from the applicant pool; all (or as many as are interested) of the faculty can then look over these files and indicate which, if any, of the applicants they would be willing to supervise. The admission committee can then use this additional information in their final deliberations, thus more likely admitting a cohort whose research interests would be better spread across the academic staff.

Response
See implementation plan

Recommendations added by the Program[2]:

Graduate student funding

A five-year funding package should be projected for each admitted PhD student, consisting of a combination of teaching remuneration and fellowships. Since the times to completion in English are empirically something over 5 years, in order to make satisfactory progress towards the degree (and not be distracted by external employment) students should be supported for

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[2] These were not identified as formal recommendations in the external reviewers' report and are being put forward at the suggestion of the program. Hence, they are not required to be included in the implementation plan.

this time period; as well, 5 years of funding is common at many competing English PhD programs.

This package should be clearly communicated to prospective students so that they understand exactly how they can support themselves throughout the degree and the means by which this support is provided.

We recommend that no more than half of the terms during 5 years should be spent in teaching.

Response

See implementation plan

Staffing

Increase the number of support staff and honour and reward them appropriately, especially in light of the complexity and necessity of their current roles and the increased logistical workload accompanying the expansion of the writing service courses.

Reassess the workload and position designations of the entire support staff.

Response

See implementation plan

Implementation Plan

	Recommendations	Proposed Actions	Responsibility for Leading and Resourcing (if applicable) the Actions	Timeline for addressing Recommendations
1.	**Maintain the uniqueness of the department:** The Department demonstrates strength on both its literature side and its rhetoric side; however, the challenge will be to continue to collaborate, maintain morale, support one another's development (of programs, of research areas), and to permit each undergraduate and graduate plan to express sufficiently distinctive characteristics while sharing core values and resources.	Faculty in English agree that these elements—continuing collaboration, mutual support, maintaining morale, and carefully considering possible degree plan development—are essential for sustaining the uniqueness and strength of the Department. Awareness of these factors will inform discussion in the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Committees and in the Department as a whole.	Chair SJU Chair	2018-20 academic years: The Undergraduate Associate Chair has brought the Honours Literature Plan requirements to the Department for discussion at its monthly meetings. She has also brought motions to change the Honours RMPC plan to the Department. These have passed. In the coming year, it is likely that motions to alter the Literature plan requirements will also come before the Department. At the graduate level, changes made to the area examination committees were implemented in 2018-19. The Department has reorganized the examination process to include a defense of the PhD dissertation proposal by the dissertation committee. We continue to monitor the effect of these changes on student morale and completion times.
2.	**Service teaching initiatives:** 2.1 The increasing number of service courses taught by English (as seen in the current	The careful development of and planning for the new UCOI communication courses and the	Chair; UCOI Associate Chair;	2.1 In 2018-19, the UCOI Advisory Committee has met monthly and provided reports to the Department at

Math Initiative and upcoming English Language Competency Initiative) needs to be closely monitored. 2.2 The department and university should have discussions with the lecturers regarding such issues as "definite term" vs. "continuing" lecturers, course loads over several years, TA assignments, and other relevant issues.	recent hiring of excellent new faculty members will, we hope, ensure the success of the new UCOI service teaching initiatives for the Faculties of Science and Engineering. We believe they will be as successful as the on-going communication course delivery for the Faculties of Math and Environment (GEM). To manage current service teaching obligations, the Chair will appoint a UCOI Associate Chair; any new service teaching requests will need to be carefully considered in light of current course offerings. The Chair and the new Associate Chair will be fully involved in the UCOI advisory process. Assessment of the overall UCOI initiative and of the place of English within that initiative will be important future markers of success.	SJU Chair	its regular meetings. Members of the UCOI Committee, in concert with the Chair and the UCOI Associate Chair, have organized several events to bring together instructors from Arts, Science, and Engineering to discuss diverse kinds of teaching and learning in the different Faculties. Delegates from the UCOI Advisory Committee have met with Samantha St. Amand of the Faculty of Science to discuss methods of assessing the impact of first-year Science UCOI courses by surveying students when they reach years 2, 3, 4. UCOI Committee delegates have also met with Co-op to explore similar assessment measures that will track how these courses have prepared students to communicate during their work terms. These discussions are ongoing. 2.2 The Chair has met with all main-campus Definite-Term Lecturers at least once (in most cases twice) to discuss subjects such as process and timelines to lecturer reappointment; policy language re. continuing lecturer applications; the "1-in-6." She will

				continue to meet as needed with lecturers regarding their concerns and questions.
3.	**Program communication** 3.1 Make detailed course outlines more readily available publicly online 3.2 Encourage instructors to collaborate on "master syllabi" for core required courses. 3.3 Promote experiential, applied and innovative pedagogy (especially those involving the use of communication technologies).	These program communication recommendations will be referred to the Undergraduate and Graduate Studies Committees for discussion and possible recommendations. **Notes**: 3.1. an online syllabus builder and repository, which the Faculty of Science is developing, may make this possible without new staff resources from the Faculty of Arts. 3.3. may require new communication resource technologies from the Faculty of Arts (e.g. licenses for products such as Adobe Creative Suite; student labs to access these tools, etc.)	Undergraduate Associate Chair; Graduate Associate Chair; Chair; Dean	2018-20 academic years 3.1 and 3.3 The Chair has contacted Mirko Vucicevich to discuss the online syllabus builder and accessible course outline repository he has designed and which is being piloted in Faculties such as Science. 3.2 Under discussion in the Undergraduate Committee. 3.3 The Chair will determine whether new technologies are required after meeting with Mr. Vucicevich (see 3.1).
4.	**Undergraduate Curriculum** 4.1 Consider bolstering the role that 100-level courses play 4.2 Consider focusing the list of 100-level courses. 4.3 Consider balancing literature and rhetoric course offerings at the 200 level 4.4 Consider permitting more room for RMPC students, especially those in Honours	These undergraduate curriculum recommendations will be referred to the Undergraduate Studies Committee for discussion and possible recommendations to the Department as a whole. **Notes:** 4.1-4.3 are detailed curricular recommendations for 100- and 200-	Undergraduate Associate Chair	2018-20 academic years 4.1-3 Under discussion at the Undergraduate Committee, particularly the role and content of the 200 A/B survey courses in each undergraduate plan. 4.4 In 2018-19 the Department approved changes to the Honours and Four-Year General Rhetoric, Media, and Professional Communication

degrees, to focus more on their interests within English
4.4.1 Consider whether the 100- and 200-level requirements for RMPC students are adequately preparing them for their third and fourth years.
4.4.2 Consider that an existing or reworked rhetorical theory course could be an alternative to ENGL 251 for RMPC students.
4.4.3 Consider the purpose of requiring the Introduction to Linguistics course, ENGL 306A, for RMPC students
4.4.4 Consider whether it is necessary to require RMPC students to take two upper level courses in literature.
4.5 Consider the role of other Arts course offerings in degree requirements.
4.6 Consider a 400-level academic plan capstone course for each stream.

level courses. They are worthy of further discussion.
4.4.1.-4. would create a more distinctive RMPC degree stream. The benefits of these proposed curricular changes must be weighed against the strengths of the existing structure of collaboration and common degree elements.
4.5. Other Arts courses already play a crucial role in all undergraduate degree programs. English majors can also request to substitute a non-English course for a required course in their plan. We will study this recommendation in more detail.
4.6. Our degrees do have 400-level capstone courses relevant to each stream. These are called "Special Topics" courses in the degree plans. Students have some choice in the capstone course they take, and so there is no "one" capstone course per degree plan. The exigencies of a large Co-op program, in which students must fit their degree requirements into their study terms, demands a flexibility that discourages the introduction of a capstone course, where "capstone" means a specific required course that

(RMPC) degree plan to increase the number of electives within the plan from 0 to 2.
4.4.1 In 2018-19 the Department approved a change to the RMPC Honours, Four-Year, and Three-Year plans to reduce the number of required 200-level courses by one.
4.4.2 The Undergraduate Committee (UGC) continues to evaluate the plan requirements in RMPC and its other degree plans.
4.4.3 In 2018-19 the Department approved the elimination of 306A as a requirement for RMPC students. 306A is now one of two courses that they can take in fulfilment of plan requirements.
4.4.4 Degree plan requirements for all three undergraduate Honours degrees are presently under discussion, including the literature course requirements for RMPC students.

		must be taken in the student's final semester of study. We will study this recommendation in more detail.		
5.	**Graduate matters** 5.1 Continue to carefully track graduate student recruitment and admission, funding packages (and their components), and supervision 5.2 Consider measures to recruit diverse, high quality graduate students. 5.2.1 Consider changing the wording of admission requirements 5.2.2 Make active efforts to research and recruit from specific Canadian and international programs 5.2.3 Consider the value of recruiting students not only from English literature programs but closely related programs in other disciplines. 5.3 Continue to implement the excellent systems developed to shepherd graduate students smoothly through their programs. 5.4 Ensure that graduate students' teaching and academic workloads are reasonable. 5.5 The department and university should consider adjusting program length expectations and advertising 5.6 The university administration should applaud this department for its ability to adapt with such sensitivity to individual	5.1. and 5.3. Effective tracking and mentoring will continue to be managed by the Graduate Associate Chair. 5.2 Recruitment and admissions: recruiting diverse, high quality graduate students has been and will continue to be a key consideration. 5.2.1. Recommended changes to graduate admission criteria are referred to GSPA; Changes to admission wording to make it clearer will be considered by the Graduate Studies Committee. 5.2.2. This item is referred to the Faculty of Arts; it controls the admission of international students. 5.4. Reasonable workloads for students will be discussed by the Graduate Studies Committee and is also referred to the Faculty of Arts; it controls the 2-course/year teaching load of graduate students. 5.5. Adjusting program length expectations and advertising will be discussed by the Graduate Studies	Graduate Associate Chair Dean; Associate V-P, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs (5.2, 5.2.1, 5.6); Provost Student Association of Graduate English (SAGE) Executive	2018-20 academic years 5.1 The introduction in 2018-19 of an oral defense of the dissertation proposal as part of doctoral candidates' area examinations now enables the Associate Chair Graduate Studies to track PhD supervision at a relatively early stage of students' progress through the program. Efforts to find new ways to track supervision at later stages are ongoing. 5.2 In 2019 the Department requested and received an increase to the number of international graduate students it was allowed to admit (it went from 1 to a maximum of 4). For the PhD program, the Department has successfully recruited award-winning students from other universities. The Department will continue its active efforts to recruit diverse, high-quality graduate students. 5.2.3 In the 2018-19 recruitment cycle, the Department accepted XDM and RCD students from communications,

graduate students' situational challenges and to foster their academic strengths. Their respect for graduate students' experience is well in line with the university's strategic plan -- its desire for "a vibrant student experience" and its value for "Integrity, equity, diversity and a balanced life for students, faculty and staff." 5.7 Consider occasionally offering opportunities for PhD students to teach a higher-level. 5.8 Support and collaborate with the graduate students' organization 5.8.1 collaborate on a "graduate student handbook" 5.9 Carefully look into the distribution of graduate supervision	Committee and are also referred to the Faculty of Arts. 5.6. We hope that the university administration will applaud our efforts to support and respect graduate student aspirations and strengths. We believe we offer "a vibrant student experience" and that we value and support "Integrity, equity, diversity and a balanced life for students, faculty and staff." 5.7. Graduate student teaching assignments are based on student expertise and Departmental need. The Chair will determine if upper-level courses can be offered to graduate students. 5.8. The Department is pleased to work with the Student Association of Graduate English (SAGE). SAGE has indicated an interest in collaborating on a graduate student handbook. The Department will consult with SAGE on creating an updateable resource to aid graduate students in navigating their degree programs. 5.9. The distribution of graduate supervision will be investigated by the Associate Chair Graduate Studies and the Chair. Recommendations will		environmental science, and accounting as well as English literature programs. 5.3 Implemented in 2018-19, the new design of PhD area examinations puts students in close contact with their dissertation committees as they draft their dissertation proposals. 5.4. In 2018-19 the Department's TA Coordinator completed an audit of students to compile data on their teaching workload and address possible differences in hours worked. One result of the audit is that students now fill out a contract for teaching to safeguard equity in the teaching assignments. 5.5 At the Master's level, the Department maintains its one-year MA. At the PhD level, the revamped area examinations rolled out in 2018-19 are designed to improve completion rates by (among other things) increasing early contact between the candidates and their dissertation committees. 5.6 The Department continues to highlight graduate student experience,

		be made to the Graduate Studies Committee and the Department.	achievements, and organization on its web pages and in its blog. 5.7 Teaching opportunities for graduate students continue to be determined by Departmental need. While the Chair finds occasional chances to offer students this kind of valuable teaching experience, few such courses are available to graduate students. 5.8 The Associate Chair Graduate Studies has collaborated with SAGE to co-deliver SSHRC and area examination workshops, starting in Fall 2019. This will ensure more effective support for graduate students and a more consistent focus on scholarships. 5.9 In 2018-19, the Graduate Studies Committee has looked at the distribution of graduate supervision and will bring this item to the Department for discussion in 2019/20. The recent loss of a faculty member in two highly-subscribed areas of the graduate program, XDM and RCD, increases the urgency of addressing this issue.

Graduate student funding[3] 6.1 A five-year funding package should be projected for each admitted PhD student, consisting of a combination of teaching remuneration and fellowships. Since the times to completion in English are empirically something over 5 years, in order to make satisfactory progress towards the degree (and not be distracted by external employment) students should be supported for this time period; as well, 5 years of funding is common at many competing English PhD programs. 6.2 This package should be clearly communicated to prospective students so that they understand exactly how they can support themselves throughout the degree and the means by which this support is provided. 6.3 We recommend that no more than half of the terms during 5 years should be spent in teaching.	Because these recommendations are beyond the scope of the Department of English, they are referred to GSPA and the Faculty of Arts. The Department agrees that a five-year funding package is ideal for all new PhD students. While the Department is taking various steps to ensure timely PhD completion (e.g. a new comprehensive exam structure), a five-year funding package will significantly assist students and assist recruitment. 6.2. The Department agrees that it is desirable that letters of offer sent out by GSPA be as clear as possible. 6.3. PhD students currently teach or TA 2 courses per year. Reducing that number would, we believe, improve degree completion times.	Dean; Conversations with GSPA	2018-20: 6.1 In 2018-19 the Dean and Acting Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, of the Faculty of Arts advocated unsuccessfully at GSPA for a five-year funding package for doctoral students in the Faculty. 6.2 The Department's Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Studies Associate Chair provide guidance to students on the interpretation of their letters of offer and explain the means by which the support described in these letters is provided. In particular, they explain the roles that teaching assistantships and graduate teaching play in that support over the duration of their funding packages. 6.3 In 2019-20, the Associate Chair Graduate Studies will continue to advocate for a reduction in the teaching currently expected of PhD students.
Staffing[4] Increasing the number of support staff and honoring and rewarding them appropriately,	The Department agrees that increasing the number of support staff, giving them appropriate job	Chair, Dean	Ongoing: In 2018-19 the Chair asked Department staff to keep detailed lists of their activities and to note new

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[3] This was not identified as a formal recommendation in the external reviewers' report and is being put forward at the suggestion of the program. It is not required to be included in the implementation plan.

[4] This was not identified as a formal recommendation in the external reviewers' report and is being put forward at the suggestion of the program. It is not required to be included in the implementation plan.

especially in light of the complexity and necessity of their current roles and the increased logistical workload accompanying the expansion of the writing service courses. Given the unavoidable increase in workload with the introduction of the writing initiative, we feel it would be opportune at this time to reassess the workload and position designations of the entire support staff and include the Department's human resource needs in the writing initiative planning.	titles, and reviewing work load and job descriptions are important in order to retain the excellent staff members that we have. These items are referred to the Faculty of Arts.		tasks they begin to perform, especially in connection with the rollout of UCOI courses in several Faculties. She highlighted these tasks in staff evaluations for 2018-19 and will continue to do so in 2019-20 with the intention of reviewing work load, job titles, and job descriptions.

The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Dean of the Faculty shall be responsible for monitoring the Implementation Plan.

Date of next program review _____ **2024-2025** _____

Date

_____

Signatures of Approval

_____   28 August 2019

Chair/Director   Date

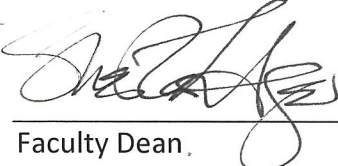_____

AFIW Administrative Dean/Head (_For AFIW programs only_)   Date

✳ _____   24 November 2019

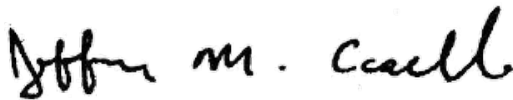Faculty Dean   Date

Note: AFIW programs fall under the Faculty of ARTS; however, the Dean does not have fiscal control nor authority over staffing and administration of the program.

_____   April 1, 2019

Associate Vice-President, Academic   Date
(For undergraduate and augmented programs)

_____   March 29, 2019

Associate Vice-President, Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs   Date
(For graduate and augmented programs)

✳ Please see separate Dean's response

Dean's Response to Final Assessment Report: English Language & Literature

The Faculty of Arts is currently facing financial challenges, and there is a hiring freeze in effect. Departments are being encouraged to review their curriculum in order to identify ways to make course offerings more flexible and degree programs more accessible. Growing course offerings rather than shrinking them is not very viable at the moment, and all Departments should be thinking about strategic use of their existing resources. It is my view that every Department in the Arts Faculty has important things to offer to our students, and the Dean's Office is prepared to do whatever it can to facilitate Departmental success in this regard. It may mean doing things differently as we move forward; we need to pay close attention to student interests and design curriculum that is meaningful to them.

I am pleased with the reviewers' overall positive assessment of the programs offered by the Department of English Language and Literature. With respect to the concerns raised by the reviewers and the Department, I would state the following:

1. Section 5.2.2 of the reviewers' report recommends active recruitment of international students. Because the Ontario government does not provide grant monies to universities for international students, and because the international tuition fee is for the most part rebated to the student as part of their funding package, the Faculty of Arts cannot support large numbers of international graduate students. Arts researchers do not tend to have the kind of large grants to support graduate students that STEM researchers do.

2. The reviewers expressed concern over the teaching load carried by graduate students (section 5.4). It should be clarified that the "two course/year teaching load" referenced by the Department actually means two TA-ships. The funding package provided to grad students is generally parsed out as two terms of TA-ships and one term of scholarship; students are not supposed to work more than 140 hours per term when they are acting as a TA. My understanding is that the English Department occasionally hires senior PhD students to teach a course; in instances such as this, the student would be paid at the sessional rate.

3. Section 5.5 addresses the question of graduate program length. Program length is also tied to funding (section 6.1, which was not identified as a formal recommendation by the reviewers). It is true that humanities PhDs tend to take five years (or longer) to completion; it is also true that UW has stated unequivocally that it will not fund a PhD student for more than four years. Moving forward, I would like to encourage all Departments to review their

graduate curriculum. We may need to challenge traditional expectations about what is and is not included in the scope of a PhD program.

4. The Department requests that consideration be given to the idea of increased staffing, and that attention be paid to job titles, workload, and job descriptions. I am in agreement that appropriate monitoring of workload and job descriptions should be a regular part of the Department's life-cycle. At this stage, however, I cannot authorize an increase in staff numbers; as mentioned above, the Faculty is currently under a hiring freeze.

24 November 2019