

**ACADEMIC
DEPARTMENT
PROGRAM REVIEW**

**DEPARTMENT OF
ENGLISH STUDIES**

APRIL 2024

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Executive Summary of Comprehensive Plan for Improvement

1. Summary of the self-study findings

Since the last program review, the English Studies department has continued its trajectory of teaching, service and scholarly excellence and made tremendous contributions to the campus community at all levels. We have revamped our Professional Writing and Teaching Licensure concentrations to address new trends in the discipline, added new courses to our program of study in all concentrations, including an introductory course in professional writing, added courses in diversity, developed a new Political Journalism Minor in partnership with the EHPS department and collaborated with Communication Media department to shape a new Digital Media Innovation major and minor, and continue to make significant contributions to our new General Education program. We have revised our MA English program into a 30-credit program, incorporated a range of modalities, and added a new fully online Graduate Certificate in Creative Writing. We hired two new tenure-track faculty, with specializations in Speech and Multi-Ethnic American Literature/ELL. We have enhanced our students' exposure to high-impact learning by strengthening our capstone course, placing more students on paid internships and relaunching the college newspaper as a print publication. Our faculty continue to make high-level contributions to the discipline through scholarship and research and many have taken on leadership roles on campus. We have a stellar record of service to campus and community. We have secured numerous grants—HEIF grant, Davis grant and two Academic Innovation Fund grants—that have helped us strengthen support for multilingual and heritage learners, prepare students for careers through their four years in the program, and broaden the impact of the college newspaper, *The Point*.

Our full-time and part-time faculty proved tremendously innovative during the pandemic, keeping frequent communication with students, maintaining positivity and good cheer, and fostering determination and the love of literature, writing and teaching foremost in the minds of our students. Several of our faculty shared strategies and techniques for going online within our department and also with the campus at large.

Though we serve the entire student body on campus through our freshmen-level writing and speech courses, and contribute to the general education program in significant ways, one significant challenge that we have encountered in the last five years is the enrollment decline in our major at both undergraduate and graduate levels. This is in keeping with the trend in English studies across the nation, as well as shrinking enrollments at Fitchburg State University, and in higher education as a whole. While we are partnering with the marketing office to robustly broadcast the value of English Studies at both undergraduate and graduate levels, we continue to evolve our program and our identity to meet the needs and interests of current and new generations of students. We are committed to providing curricular and campus support for our students, and have also made great strides in promoting career and skills training for them, and plan to build more opportunities for them. In order to better understand the effectiveness of our curriculum, we plan to create and implement an assessment plan for our three concentrations. We are also looking into the equity and range of workload distribution within the department in both teaching and advising.

Overview and Vision

1. Brief overview of the department

The evolution and identity of the department is linked to the history of Fitchburg State University and to changes within the field of English Studies. In keeping with the university's origins as a normal school in 1894, the department continues to embrace a commitment to the training of teachers, many of whom serve in the classrooms of our regional schools. Alongside the literature and secondary education concentrations, the English department added a professional writing concentration in the 1970s and a theater concentration in the 1990s. In 2012, the theater concentration moved to the Communications/Media department, and the professional writing and literature concentrations each expanded their focus, adding substantive studies in new and digital media, film, cultural studies, world, South Asian and Latin American literature, and other fields.

At present, the English department offers three concentrations for the English Studies major: literature, secondary education with initial licensure and professional writing with a common core of courses for all our majors. We also offer Literature, Professional Writing and Professional Journalism minors, as well as contribute to many interdisciplinary minors: African American Studies, American Studies, Asian Studies, Film Studies, Digital Media Innovation, and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Our faculty and curricula have an integral role in our new General Education program, where we teach across all three areas--foundation, exploration and integration. Further, speech courses that fulfill the "speaking and listening" requirement for students across campus and for our majors, are housed in our department. Our faculty regularly contribute to other programs such as Game Design and program areas such as the Honors program, the Middle and Secondary education program and the Freshman Year Experience. We also teach cross listed courses with Communications Media and EHPS departments.

At the time of our last review, we had 21 full time faculty. Between 2017 and 2023, five faculty from our literature, speech and professional writing concentrations retired. Based on our strategy of stability and growth, where we could continue to offer existing courses but also grow in new areas, we added three new faculty in the fields of Journalism, Speech, and Multi-Ethnic American Literature and ELL. Currently, we have 17 full-time faculty in the department and around 3-5 part-time faculty, where the latter teach freshman foundation courses, Writing I and II and Speech. These include Early College courses in local schools.

Our curriculum has expanded in exciting directions in the past five years where changes within the field of English Studies—theoretical, pedagogical, and professional—have continuously shaped our curriculum and identity as a department. We have revised and updated our offerings in all of our concentrations in keeping with developments in literary and cultural theory, digital media, and changes in journalism and professional writing, and teacher training mandates from the state. The department's speech courses, from first-year to advanced, not only provide significant offerings for students in and outside the major, but are set to expand in multiple directions in partnership with STEM and other disciplines. These and other curricular changes and additions, which affect our majors as well as students across the university, also reflect our faculty's continuing scholarship in the dual areas of research and teaching pedagogy. While

transfer students might have already met this requirement, nearly all FSU students take at least one of our classes and most take four—Writing I, Writing II, Speech, and a Literature course.

The department makes key contributions to the campus community that raise the profile of the university. The college newspaper, *The Point*, has been revived in recent years and publishes 14-16 editions annually and has a digital presence. We also continue to produce an annual magazine, *Route 2*. Our department faculty are very active scholars with numerous books and journal, magazine and other publications to their credit, and contribute to the department and university in innumerable ways through their service.

The department regularly hosts events within and outside the campus, such as the English Rally and High school Writing Contest, to highlight our curricular offerings, student support and career opportunities and attract students to the program. We have a very active Writing Club as well as the English Club and Honor Society. Our Student Success committee organizes an annual event to promote career development for our students.

The pandemic made a significant impact on our department in a number of ways. While we were able to effectively move our teaching to remote modalities in 2020-21, some of our assessment plans, student activities and committee work, and aspects of the department action plan from the previous review were put on hold. The rigors and exhaustion of the pandemic regrettably pushed three of our senior faculty in English Studies into retirement. This pandemic-related disruption must be kept in focus as we take stock of our achievements and challenges of the last five years.

The department is actively engaged in reviewing goals and outcomes in order to stay current in our curricular offerings, to update our concentrations and the core, and to recruit and prepare new majors and minors. We are also committed to providing our students with tools for a successful career in both public and private sectors.

The English Studies department also features a Graduate program with two distinct sub-programs: a longstanding Master's in Literature that has been recently relaunched in an online form, and a new graduate-level Creative Writing Certificate. Also, we decided to consolidate the literature and teaching programs, discontinuing the MAT as a separate program.

The MA program features one required 3-credit course (Graduate Research Methods) and 27 additional required credits, which can be fulfilled either by taking 9 more courses and an Exit Exam; or by taking 7 more courses and completing a two-course Master's Thesis sequence. Enrollment challenges in recent years led the MA program to be frozen for a year, and it relaunched in fall 2021 with one major change: the program can now be completed entirely online. This change, coupled with aggressive marketing and recruitment efforts, are intended to grow the program and revitalize this valuable offering from English Studies.

The second program, the Creative Writing Certificate, was created in part in response to those same challenges and goals, but is also intended to harness the expertise of our writing faculty to meet a growing interest in creative self-expression among various constituencies. The Certificate program features 12 credits that can be fulfilled with any four Certificate courses, which cover a

range of creative and professional writing emphases. The program is in its second full year and has offered a class every semester to a number of students from a wide geographic area.

In order to support both of these programs, the current model allows for MA students to receive 3 credits from Certificate courses, and for Certificate students to bring those credits with them if they apply for and enter the MA program.

2. Program's vision, mission and objectives

The Department will be revising its Mission and Vision statements as part of its future action plan (AY 2024-25) to more accurately reflect our current and emergent identities, our program offerings, and our response to changes within the discipline. The current statements (that were revised in 2023) are as follows:

English Studies Department Mission Statement:

The English Studies program provides students: a) knowledge of the variety of literary and cultural texts in English; b) in-depth understanding of diverse cultural, literary, rhetorical, and pedagogical traditions; c) skills in reading, writing, speaking, critical thinking, and research; and d) ample opportunity for hands-on experience in literary analysis, professional and creative writing, teaching, and scholarship to prepare students for personal and professional success.

English Studies Department Vision Statement (Please see the full statement in Appendix 1):

English Studies: Read the World, Write its Stories, Teach its Future

English Studies trains students to become thoughtful, critical thinkers and engaged readers, writers, creators, and teachers of texts. English Studies is diverse, looking through various cultural, literary, rhetorical, and pedagogical lenses to analyze, interpret, and author texts in a range of genres and media.

Our major is built around core requirements and specialized concentrations focusing on literature, middle and secondary education, and professional writing that provide students with the training and flexibility to pursue individual talents and interests. Our goal is to equip Fitchburg State students on their journeys to being critical and analytical citizens, writers and teachers who can engage within multiple dynamic, multicultural environments in a range of professional spaces. The skills they learn from our department are readily translatable skills in the professional world.

English Studies prepares students on this campus in analytical writing and critical thinking, to engage with a diverse world through such practices as reading closely to decode potential meanings in texts, synthesizing a range of sources and observations, and communicating their ideas in creative and critical ways. Students can expect to learn to recognize the profound issues that cross geographic and temporal boundaries as they sharpen their writing and verbal skills.

Our professional and creative writing classes train students to edit, revise, and explore writing, and hone their craft through discussions and instruction in a workshop setting. Students also

garner real-world experience in producing print and digital newspapers and an annual literary journal. In our speech courses, students explore the central role that communication plays in shaping our relationships, institutions, and societies. Across these various courses, students also develop a foundation in rhetorical principles, both for the evaluation and production of texts, updated for the contemporary moment.

Students in the middle and secondary licensure program learn theories and practices of pedagogy, and after their practicum semester, are eligible for recommendation for Massachusetts teaching licensure in grades five through twelve.

English Studies plays an integral, sustaining role in Fitchburg State's General Education curriculum through courses in Information Literacy, Literary Inquiry and Analysis, Speaking and Listening, and Writing. We are committed to supporting the General Education Program outcomes of the university by focusing on integrative learning, highlighting diverse voices, emphasizing writing as procedural and logical thinking, encouraging civic learning, and providing other high impact practices.

The English Studies department is committed to:

- Communicating the value of English Studies and the range of approaches and sub-disciplines in our field to various constituencies.
- Being flexible and responsive to the needs of our students.
- Developing a curricular presence for cultural and global studies in our department, including representations of Latino and world texts to complement our offerings in Caribbean, African, and Asian cultural texts as well as to foster international perspectives.
- Contributing to interdisciplinary minors, including African-American Studies, American Studies, Asian Studies, Digital Media Innovation, Disability Studies, Film Studies, Political Journalism, and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies.
- Collaborating with disciplines and departments on campus, local institutions, and local schools.
- Providing professionalization opportunities for students.

3. Relationship to the university mission, vision, and strategic plan and to the university strategic plan

Mission and Vision

Though the university is in the process of revising its mission, the English Studies' program aligns with the present mission statement that states: "Fitchburg State University is committed to excellence in teaching and learning and blends liberal arts and sciences and professional programs within a small college environment. Our comprehensive public university prepares students to lead, serve, and succeed by fostering lifelong learning and civic and global responsibility."

Our department serves this mission in a number of ways. Our program and our robust and innovative curricula that incorporate contemporaneous scholarship and student-centered pedagogy fulfills the mission of excellence in teaching and learning. We embody liberal arts

ideals and by serving each student on Fitchburg State's campus and by educating the whole person. Our courses across all three tracks, with their commitment to diversity, critical thinking, and information literacy, are designed to promote "lifelong learning and civic and global responsibility." By offering leadership positions on our college newspaper, *The Point*, and our literary journal, *Route 2*, and by teaching students the art of public speaking, presentation, editing, and writing, we prepare the entire student body for leadership roles.

Fitchburg State University's vision statement begins with the goal of national recognition through "excellence in teaching and learning," the "commitment of transforming lives," and the "dedication to public service." To satisfy the vision statement, Fitchburg State University offers these five goals, included here, along with how English Studies try to meet those goals:

- 1. Prepare students for a global society** through curricular innovation and program development: The English Studies program regularly reviews curricula and creates new classes to meet the growing needs of our students and communities. Also, we offer minors to enhance the skills and learning of our students, including Professional Journalism Minor, Digital Media Innovation minor, and the Graduate Creative Writing Certificate.
- 2. Achieve academic excellence** by investing in our faculty and librarians in their pursuit of knowledge, professional competency, and scholarship: The English Studies faculty stay abreast of disciplinary trends through external course work, attending and presenting at national and international conferences, and exhibit their knowledge in extensive publications and presentations.
- 3. Employ innovative uses of technology** in the library and across our campus to maximize student learning: Members of the English Studies program experiment with various technology-infused teaching programs, such as Peerceptiv, Yellow Dig and augmented reality, website creation, ebooks, and editing with the most up-to-date computer programs and equipment. Many faculty are involved in developing Open Educational Resources in partnership with the Library.
- 4. Create a culture of diversity** to meet the needs of the region and enhance the personal and academic lives of the university community: The faculty of the English Studies program teach diverse writers and courses. Our classes include thinkers and writers from a myriad of backgrounds, we teach cultural studies and ethnic-central literature courses, including World Literature, African-American Literature, South Asian Literature, and Latin American literature. We also teach various women's studies and literature classes, LGBTQ literature, and literature and disability. Furthermore, faculty in the Professional Writing track teach contemporaneous authors and writers from various backgrounds. Creative writing professors also employ anti-racist workshop platforms, and provide inclusive peer workshops. Some of our faculty have been active contributors to the Faculty Academy that tackles issues of institutional racism through developing an inclusive pedagogy. All our faculty are committed to validating all students' experiences in and outside the classroom.
- 5. Build partnerships within our community** to provide real-world opportunities for our students and collaborative solutions to community issues: English Studies have partnerships with the *Sentinel & Enterprise* as well as other area newspapers, and institutions such as the Peabody Essex Museum and Fitchburg Historical Society. Our internships have created opportunities for our students while forging strong links with newspapers and presses in North Central MA. Recently the "City News Team" has placed a number of students as reporters in the local

newspaper, *Sentinel and Enterprise*, which has helped to address “news deserts” in our community.

The English Studies Department hopes to establish further connections with both local and national organizations to create opportunities for our students. The Department will continue to explore and offer innovative and relevant curriculum, and will revisit the core requirements to better align them with our students’ needs in the near future.

Strategic Plan

The Fitchburg State University’s 2020-2025 strategic plan has the “unifying concept of education justice,” wherein education justice is defined as “commitment to equity. It is a belief that access to a quality education is a vehicle for providing students with equity of opportunity” (Strategic Plan 2020-2025).

The plan strives to achieve the following six strategic goals:

- Goal One: Forge innovative paths to knowledge acquisition, career readiness, social mobility, and lifelong learning
- Goal Two: Become a model student-ready university and narrow the achievement gap
- Goal Three: Be an engine of social, economic, civic, and cultural development in our city and region
- Goal Four: Establish inclusive excellence, innovation, and environmental stewardship as signature strengths
- Goal Five: Assert our distinctive value proposition and institutional learning outcomes boldly and widely
- Goal Six: Steward physical and financial resources responsibly and navigate a path to long-term organizational sustainability

The English Studies Department adheres to this strategic plan and its goals of achieving education justice. Our curriculum is committed to promoting global and local diversity in literature, and we have recently revised our Professional Writing track, created a new Graduate Certificate in Creative Writing, and contributed to the creation of Digital Media Innovation major, and contribute to a range of minors, all of which offer an innovative and flexible curriculum (Goal 1 and 4). Many faculty members of our department participated in professional development to help us learn to meet students where they are, including attending the Faculty Academy, national and international conferences, and online workshops (Goal 2). We are using available resources, such as the HEIF grant and Academic Innovation Fund, to support heritage language learners and to address linguistic diversity and provide nonremedial pathways for our incoming students in the freshman writing classes (Goal 2 and 4). Our Capstone, internships and “production” classes and departmental workshops with alumni and guest speakers prepare students for careers, a goal we have worked on through the Davis grant for career planning through and beyond the curriculum (Goal 1 and 3). As mentioned before, our department contributes to the surrounding community through our Journalism and College newspaper courses (Goal 3). We also host a High School Writing contest each year that creates opportunities for local high schoolers to engage in advanced writing (Goal 3). We have a partnership with Mt. Wachusett Community College to create a pipeline for Initial Licensure

students (Goal 3) and continue to explore other such opportunities. We participate in the Early College Initiative with courses offered in conjunction with area high schools as well as the Dual Enrollment Initiative (Goals 3 and 4). Our faculty regularly teach in the ALFA program (Goal 3). Our alumni report a high level of career readiness, social mobility and continuing professional development (Goal 1).

4. Overview of program (Including minors, concentrations, and graduate coursework)

- a) Degree requirements for the program, using the format of the catalog description

Objectives for the Program in English Studies

Through a variety of specialized programs, English majors can obtain a Bachelor of Arts English-Literature, Bachelor of Arts English-Professional Writing, Bachelor of Arts English-Initial Licensure, and Bachelor of Science English-Literature, Bachelor of Science English-Professional Writing, Bachelor of Science English-Initial Licensure.

A Bachelor of Arts requires language proficiency at the intermediate level; the BS does not require language study. We are in the process of redefining the BA/BS distinction in tandem with other departments on campus.

The English Studies program offers students a) knowledge of the broad field of literature in English, b) in-depth knowledge of its diverse aspects, c) the reading, writing, and research tools for exploring the field and its boundaries, and d) ample opportunity for hands-on experience in related fields.

1. Requirements for the Major in English Studies

Approaches to English Studies (ENGL 2999) provides an introduction to the discipline. All English majors must satisfactorily complete the course by the end of their sophomore year. Transfer students must take ENGL 2999 during their first year at the university, unless exempted by the department chair, based on evaluation of transfer course work. English majors in all concentrations must fulfill common core requirements, including the Senior Capstone. See individual tracks for specific requirements in addition to the above.

A course in Speech fulfills the speaking and listening requirement, where applicable.

Core Courses for All English Studies Concentrations

All English Majors are required to take 21 credits from the following courses, with the exception of our Initial Licensure students, who have a designated course for the third survey in the core (explained in the Middle and Secondary Education section) :

Approaches to English Studies	ENGL 2999	3
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One British Survey of Literature: Select from these options	ENGL 2200 - British Literature I: Adventure and Transformation ENGL 2210 - British Literature II: Revolution and Romance ENGL 2220 - British Literature III: Empire and Resistance	3
One American Survey of Literature: Select from these options	ENGL 2000 - American Literature I: Legends/Massacres and Slavery/Freedom ENGL 2100 - American Literature II: Making and Remaking America	3
A third British or American Survey or select ONE from the courses listed here.	ENGL 2003 - Latin American Literature ENGL 2400 - World Literature I: Myths and Traditions ENGL 2500 - World Literature II: Cultures in Conversation ENGL 2650 - Ethnic American Literature ENGL 3000 - World Drama ENGL 3010 - American Drama ENGL 3020 - Modern Drama 3 cr. or ENGL 3030 - Global Middle Ages ENGL 3040 - British Literature Since World War II ENGL 3100 - World Novel ENGL 3120 - Golden Age of English Renaissance Literature ENGL 3220 - American Novel to 1950 ENGL 4010 - Chaucer and His World ENGL 4040 - Major English Writers of the 17th Century ENGL 4050 - The Novel in the 18th Century ENGL 4080 - British Romanticism ENGL 4090 - The 19th-Century English Novel ENGL 4100 - Victorian Literature 3 cr. or ENGL 4115 - British Modernism ENGL 4200 - The Romantic Movement in U.S. Literature 1810–1860	3
One Upper-Level Literature	Any 4000-level Literature Course	3
One Upper-Level Writing Intensive	ENGL 3015 - Writing the Science Fiction and Fantasy Novel ENGL 3026 - Genres, Forms, and Themes in Creative Writing ENGL 3027 - Experimental Writing ENGL 3028 - Research for Creative Writers ENGL 3045 - Media Conscious Storytelling ENGL 3055 - The Structure and Nature of Language ENGL 3510 - Fiction Writing ENGL 3520 - Poetry Writing ENGL 3540 - Writing Film Criticism ENGL 3860 - Writing for Organizations ENGL 3870 - Feature and Magazine Writing ENGL 3890 - Creative Nonfiction Writing SPCH 3000 - Speech Writing	3
Capstone	ENGL 4999 - English Capstone	3
Total Credits		21

Literature Concentration

In the Literature concentration, in addition to the core, students must take the following courses for a total of 42 credits:

Culture Studies (select from)	ENGL 2300 - Literature and Disability ENGL 2350 - American Political Film and Literature: Conspiracies & Controversies ENGL 2600 - The Bible as Literature ENGL 2620 - Greek and Roman Mythology ENGL 2650 - Ethnic American Literature ENGL 2660 - 19th Century African American Literature ENGL 2670 - 20th Century African American Literature ENGL 2710 - Introduction to Science Fiction and Fantasy ENGL 2765 - LGBTQ Issues & Literature ENGL 2890 - Storytelling and the Oral Tradition ENGL 3000 - World Drama ENGL 3061 - Jewish American Literature & Culture ENGL 3091 - Asian Cinemas: Eastern Visions in a Post-Colonial World ENGL 3100 - World Novel ENGL 3300 - Women and Literature ENGL 3620 - The Classical Tradition in Western Literature ENGL 3880 - Folklore in America ENGL 4060 - Early Modern Women Writers ENGL 4600 - Literary Cult of the Virgin Queen	3
Genre Study (select from)	ENGL 2620 - Greek and Roman Mythology ENGL 2700 - The Short Story ENGL 2720 - Reading Poetry ENGL 2750 - Detective Fiction ENGL 2890 - Storytelling and the Oral Tradition ENGL 2900 - Children's Literature ENGL 2910 - Literature for Young Adults ENGL 2951 - The Grammar Dilemma: Grammar Instruction in the Middle and Secondary School ENGL 3000 - World Drama ENGL 3010 - American Drama ENGL 3020 - Modern Drama ENGL 3060 - Modern Poetry ENGL 3090 - Questioning War in Film and Literature ENGL 3100 - World Novel ENGL 3730 - Comics and the Graphic Novel as Literature ENGL 4050 - The Novel in the 18th Century ENGL 4090 - The 19th-Century English Novel ENGL 4230 - American Novel Since World War II ENGL 4500 - Literary Theory	3

Continental/Post-Colonial Literature (select from)	ENGL 2003 - Latin American Literature ENGL 3050 - 20th-Century Irish Literature ENGL 3070 - European Literature I ENGL 3080 - European Literature II ENGL 3092 - Transatlantic Literature ENGL 3700 - African Literature ENGL 3710 - South Asian Literature ENGL 3720 - Caribbean Literature	3
Literary Movement (select from)	ENGL 3030 - Global Middle Ages ENGL 3040 - British Literature Since World War II ENGL 3120 - Golden Age of English Renaissance Literature ENGL 3210 - Major American Writers of the 20th Century ENGL 3620 - The Classical Tradition in Western Literature ENGL 4040 - Major English Writers of the 17th Century ENGL 4080 - British Romanticism ENGL 4100 - Victorian Literature ENGL 4115 - British Modernism ENGL 4200 - The Romantic Movement in U.S. Literature 1810–1860	3
Special Authors	ENGL 4000 - Major Authors	3
Shakespeare (select from)	ENGL 4020 - Shakespeare's Drama: Text and Performance ENGL 4030 - Interpreting Shakespeare's Work	3
Junior/Senior Seminar	ENGL 4400 - Seminar	3
Total concentration credits		21
Total core+ Concentration Credits		42

Literature concentration learning outcomes:

- 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.

Professional Writing Concentration

In addition to the core requirements, students in the Professional Writing Concentration must take the following courses, for a total of 27 credits:

Foundations of Professional Writing	ENGL 2025	3
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Rhetoric and Medium (select one at 2000-level and one at 3000-level)	ENGL 2020 - Style Studio ENGL 2800 - Journalism ENGL 3027 - Experimental Writing ENGL 3028 - Research for Creative Writers ENGL 3045 - Media Conscious Storytelling ENGL 3055 - The Structure and Nature of Language ENGL 3860 - Writing for Organizations	6
Genre (select one at 2000-level and one at 3000-level)	ENGL 2030 - News Reporting and Writing ENGL 2040 - Introduction to Creative Writing ENGL 2320 - Script Writing ENGL 3015 - Writing the Science Fiction and Fantasy Novel ENGL 3026 - Genres, Forms, and Themes in Creative Writing ENGL 3035 - Playwrighting ENGL 3510 - Fiction Writing ENGL 3520 - Poetry Writing ENGL 3540 - Writing Film Criticism ENGL 3870 - Feature and Magazine Writing ENGL 3890 - Creative Nonfiction Writing SPCH 3000 - Speech Writing ENGL 3026 may be taken twice. It may be used as either one genre elective and one professional-writing elective or as one professional-writing elective and one upper-level writing intensive.	6
Production (select two)	ENGL 3075 - Editing and Publishing 3 cr. ENGL 3830 - College Newspaper Production 3 cr. ENGL 3840 - Freelance Writing for Magazine 3 cr. ENGL 4940 - Internship 3 cr. ENGL 4950 - Internship 6 cr. ENGL 4960 - Internship 9 cr. ENGL 4970 - Internship 12 cr. ENGL 3830 may be taken three times. It may be used to satisfy both required Production courses or as one required Production course and professional-writing electives. Internship credits above 3 will be applied first to professional-writing electives, then to free electives.	6
Professional Writing Electives (select two)	Electives drawn from any of the three clusters above: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rhetoric and Medium ● Genre ● Production 	6
Total credits in concentration		27
Total core + Concentration credits		48

Professional Writing Concentration Learning Outcomes:

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.

English with Licensure (5-12) Concentration

Students within our English major can pursue initial licensure as a middle and high school (5-12) English teacher. This program provides students with both a broad introduction to middle and high school teaching and specific instruction in the theory, research, and practice of middle and secondary English teaching. Throughout the program, students engage in field-based experiences in the school setting supervised by our faculty, culminating in a formal teaching practicum.

Candidates for initial teacher licensure must pass stage reviews to gain formal admission to the program, including GPA requirements and successful completion of Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTELs). Students will complete the middle and secondary education minor as part of their initial licensure concentration. A practicum in a local middle or secondary school is the final step towards licensure, as required.

Required Courses in English for Licensure: The student must fulfill all the requirements for the **core** and the **Literature concentration**. In the core curriculum, Licensure students must take either World Literature I or II or the World Novel to fulfill their third survey. This adjustment has been made to ensure that our Licensure students get the requisite content knowledge in this area in a very crowded plan of study.

In addition, they must take the Interdisciplinary Middle and Secondary Education minor and following courses for a total of 33 credits.

ENGL 1400	Introduction to Teaching English	3
EDUC 2011	Diversity in Education (5-12)	3
EDUC 2012	Teaching the Adolescent Learner (5-12)	3
SPED 3800	Inclusive Instruction (5-12)	3
ENGL 3082	Methods of Teaching English (5-12) I	3
ENGL 4850	Methods in Teaching English (5-12) II	3
ENGL 4860	English Licensure Practicum I (5-12)	4.5
ENGL 4870	English Licensure Practicum II (5-12)	4.5
ENGL 4012	Practicum Seminar (5-12)	3
EDUC 3122	Sheltered English Immersion	3
Total Licensure concentration credits		33
Total core + Literature + Licensure Concentration credits		75

5-12 Initial Licensure in English Concentration Learning Outcomes:

- 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.

2. Minors

The English Studies department also offer the following minors:

Literature Minor

ENGL 2999 OR ENGL 4500	Approaches to English Studies OR Literary Theory	3
One American Literature Survey: Choose from these options	ENGL 2000 - American Literature I ENGL 2100 - American Literature II ENGL 2650 - Ethnic American Literature ENGL 3010 - American Drama ENGL 3220 - American Novel to 1950 ENGL 4200 - The Romantic Movement in U.S. Literature 1810–1860	3
One British Literature or World Literature Survey: Choose from these options	ENGL 2200 - British Literature I ENGL 2210 - British Literature II: ENGL 2220 - British Literature III ENGL 3030 - Global Middle Ages ENGL 3040 - British Literature Since World War II ENGL 3120 - Golden Age of English Renaissance Literature ENGL 4010 - Chaucer and His World ENGL 4040 - Major English Writers of the 17th Century ENGL 4050 - The Novel in the 18th Century ENGL 4080 - British Romanticism ENGL 4090 - The 19th-Century English Novel ENGL 4100 - Victorian Literature ENGL 4115 - British Modernism ENGL 2400 - World Literature I ENGL 2500 - World Literature II ENGL 3000 - World Drama ENGL 3100 - World Novel	3
One Literature elective, any level		3
Two Literature electives, 3000 or 4000-level		6

Total	18
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Professional Writing Minor

ENGL 2025	Foundations of Professional Writing	3
One LI designated literature course		3
Three electives One course must be at the 3000-level.	<p>ENGL 2020 - Style Studio ENGL 2030 - News Reporting and Writing ENGL 2040 - Introduction to Creative Writing ENGL 2320 - Script Writing ENGL 2800 - Journalism ENGL 3015 - Writing the Science Fiction and Fantasy Novel ENGL 3026 - Genres, Forms, and Themes in Creative Writing</p> <p>ENGL 3026 may be taken twice given different course topics.</p> <p>ENGL 3027 - Experimental Writing ENGL 3028 - Research for Creative Writers ENGL 3035 - Playwrighting ENGL 3045 - Media Conscious Storytelling ENGL 3055 - The Structure and Nature of Language ENGL 3075 - Editing and Publishing ENGL 3510 - Fiction Writing ENGL 3520 - Poetry Writing ENGL 3540 - Writing Film Criticism ENGL 3830 - College Newspaper Production ENGL 3840 - Freelance Writing for Magazine ENGL 3860 - Writing for Organizations ENGL 3870 - Feature and Magazine Writing ENGL 3890 - Creative Nonfiction Writing SPCH 3000 - Speech Writing ENGL 4940 - Internship</p>	9

Professional Journalism Minor

ENGL 2030 - News Reporting and Writing ENGL 2800 - Journalism ENGL 3830 - College Newspaper Production POLS 1500 - State and Urban Government		12
Choose one of the following	POLS 2002 - Elections and Campaigns POLS 2600 - The First Amendment POLS 3000 - Public Policy Analysis: Case Studies in American Politics POLS 4360 - Understanding Government Decision Making	3
Total		15

Graduate Programs

The Master of Arts in English (MA) The English MA offers students an introduction to graduate study in literature, culture, and teaching, connecting students to a diverse and impressive community of teachers, scholars, and writers. The program features courses in Literature and teaching. This is a 30-credit program, including either 24 credits of coursework and 6 credits of thesis work, or 30 credits of coursework and an exit exam. Courses are offered in different modes of delivery, including, residential, hybrid and online.

Program Learning Outcomes

The Master of Arts in English (MA) Program is designed to train students to understand and employ a variety of strategies in literature, research, writing, and teaching.

- 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.
- Students will refine and expand their pedagogical philosophies and practices.

The Certificate in Creative Writing Program is designed for students looking to prepare their creative writing for publication and/or for preparing materials to apply to MFA or PhD programs; to learn about the marketplace for creative writing; to become a member of a writing community; and to gain valuable experience from working with actively publishing professional writers. The program offers courses in poetry and prose throughout the year, as well as during the summer. The program is 100% online.

Program Learning Outcomes

- Students will learn how to prepare their creative writing for publication.

- Students will learn how to prepare materials for application to MFA or Ph.D. Programs.
- Students will learn about the marketplace for creative writing and how to become a member of the writing community.
- Students will gain experience about the field by working with actively publishing professional writers.

MA in Literature			
ENGL 8050--Advanced Research in English Studies			3
Either 9 electives drawn from the full range of MA and Certificate Courses and then completion of an Exit Exam;			27
Or 7 electives drawn from the full range and the two-semester Thesis sequence:			21
English 9100--Master's Thesis Research			3
And English 9200--Master's Thesis Writing			3
TOTAL			30
Creative Writing Certificate			
Four electives drawn from the full range of Certificate courses			12
TOTAL			12

b) Discipline specific best practices

The English Studies department follows (or tries its best to follow) the best practices laid out by the following organizations:

1. ADE: The Association of Departments of English has identified various best practices in the discipline, which they list as separate policy statements at <https://ade.mla.org/Resources/Policy-Statements>.

Our department's efforts are definitely aligned with ADE's recommendations. For example, in the statement on class sizes they recommend no more than 20 students in a writing course, while our cap is currently at 18 (the Council of Writing Program Administrators recommends a cap at 15). Our 2000-level literature courses have a maximum enrolment of 28 (much below the recommended 35, and reduced to 25 in some instances over the past five years). Our 3000- and 4000-level courses are at 25 or below. We are embarking on a review of class sizes linked with course numbering in AY 2024 in our action plan (spring 2024).

Likewise, the statement on teaching, evaluation, and scholarship recommends an emphasis on both teaching and scholarship (broadly defined, to include creative endeavors, service, and research). When it comes to departmental and institutional evaluations of faculty, Fitchburg State does indeed emphasize teaching expertise alongside scholarship in its peer and institutional performance evaluations.

2. According to the Modern Language Association (2009): "To meet the demands of technological innovation, globalized societies, and the explosion of disciplinary knowledge, we recommend four basic elements in the baccalaureate degree program in English and other languages: a coherent program of study, collaborative teamwork among faculty members, interdepartmental cooperative teaching, and the adoption of outcome measurements." While the department has the first and second benchmarks met, interdepartmental teaching and team teaching are aspirations that need institutional support. We have outcome assessment for our gateway and capstone courses, and recently, of our freshman writing courses, with a campus-wide assessment of our Literature courses planned (for the attribute of "Literary Inquiry" in the General Education program). We plan to embark on assessment of courses within each concentration starting in spring 2025.
3. According to the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) (2017): "Writing faculty should keep all students in mind when selecting teaching materials and pedagogical strategies. Teaching materials should promote intercultural communication and understanding in class and beyond. Pedagogies should take into account students' prior literacy experiences across languages and dialects, valuing students' ways of life, ways of knowing, and ways of making meaning."

Sound writing instruction is based on the following: (1) emphasizes the rhetorical nature of writing; (2) considers the needs of real audiences; (3) recognizes writing as a social act; (4) enables students to analyze and practice with a variety of genres; (5) recognizes writing processes as iterative and complex; (6) depends upon frequent, timely, and context-specific feedback from an experienced postsecondary instructor; (7) emphasizes relationships between writing and technologies; and (8) supports learning, engagement, and critical thinking in courses across the curriculum.

In addition, the 2020 CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Multilingual Writers provides valuable guidance for our student population which is becoming increasingly multilingual. In particular, they recommend that we remember “Multilingual writers can have a wide range of literacies in their first languages, from being unable to read or write to having completed graduate degrees in that language. They learn and acquire English in various educational contexts, by employing various strategies, and to meet various global/local standards” and seek out ways to “recognize and support multilingual writers’ practices of integrating their unique linguistic and cultural resources into writing both in classrooms and at the level of the writing program.”

While the learning outcomes for our freshman writing courses include many of the guiding principles, training our students to “cultivate the skills of argumentation, uses of evidence, analysis, close reading of texts (in any number of forms), and revision as essential elements of the college-level writing process,” we have recently embarked on a three-year project framed around education justice that will support linguistic diversity and nonremedial pathways for incoming students.

4. The Association of Writers and Writing Programs (AWP), offers guidelines for creative writing programs. Although Fitchburg State University does not have a creative writing major, we do include creative writing in our Professional Writing Concentration.

AWP promotes variety and innovation in curricula: “Because there are many paths by which one may become a writer, the curricula vary from program to program. AWP encourages variety and innovation while it sets general guidelines to help ensure a high quality of artistic literary training within these programs.” The Professional Writing Concentration allows for students to explore various focuses in writing—from journalism, rhetoric, speech writing, and creative writing, as well as editing and teaching. Our department encourages students to take classes across the discipline as well as in other disciplines outside of English Studies to enhance their thinking and writing skills.

AWP also advocates competent and expert faculty, capable students, and ample support: “A successful [creative] writing program has accomplished writers as faculty members, a rigorous curriculum, talented students, and strong administrative support, all of which are complemented by the assets that distinguish a generally excellent academic institution.” Professional Writing Concentration faculty regularly revisit the curriculum of our students and help our students hone their writing skills through craft classes, writing workshops, production classes, and rhetorical classes. Members in our concentration are active and accomplished members of the writing community, including creative writers, rhetoricians, theorists, and editors. We attend conferences and workshops for professional development, we compose theoretical and pedagogical papers and books, we publish poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction in journals and we publish books. Some of us volunteer at literary journals and presses to give back to the writing community and to stay conversant in trends and norms of the industry.

AWP notes the importance of inclusivity and diversity in writing programs. AWP “defines diversity as addressing historical imbalance by foregrounding underrepresented

groups including race and/or ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, and religious affiliation.” Professional Writing faculty adhere to these guidelines and also encourage students to write in their first languages when relevant. Creative writing faculty use contemporary writers as examples in our classrooms and are sure to teach writers from different ethnicities, religions, genders, and sexualities.

AWP recognizes the importance of having well-read writers: “undergraduate program complements the study of writing with a rigorous study of literary works: one must become an expert reader in order to become an expert writer. To cultivate this expertise, a strong undergraduate program emphasizes a wide range of study in literature and other disciplines to provide students with the foundation they need to become resourceful—as readers, as intellectuals, and as writers.” Our Professional Writing students are required to take literature classes as the core of our major lays out, including room to take more literature classes as desired. Professional Writing students must also take liberal arts general education requirements, are encouraged to take a minor, and are encouraged to use their electives to help inform their writing and scholarship.

AWP notes that “a large majority of coursework in a major should be upper division. Students may receive credit toward a major for work on a literary journal, which may be offered as a course, and for service courses or internships offered by the creative writing program.” We are currently expanding our upper-division course offerings in the track. We also have an editing class that includes editing our literary journal *Route 2*, and a newspaper class that includes editing and writing for our college newspaper *The Point*. We also have and are developing relationships with various companies and organizations for internships, as noted in “Assessment: Internships and opportunities” in this document.

5. According to National Council of Teachers of English (2020): “Pasternak et al.’s (2018) study of English teacher education programs across the United States breaks new ground in our knowledge of Methods courses. They found that five “focal areas” (156) shape English teacher education programs today. These areas include (1) field experiences; (2) preparation for racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity; (3) new technologies; (4) content area literacy; and (5) K–12 content standards and assessments. These new areas of emphasis function as focal points within programs, thereby urging programs to innovate around them.” Eight courses required of our licensure candidates include pre-practicum hours to offer candidates field experiences; these are: Introduction to Teaching English; Diversity in Education; Teaching the Adolescent Learner; Inclusive Instruction; Sheltered English Immersion; Methods of Teaching English (5-12) I; Methods of Teaching English (5-12) II. Lastly, students complete a 300+ hour practicum in their final semester. While we integrate preparation for racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity into all of our courses, two courses focus on these topics in particular: Diversity in Education and Sheltered English Immersion. The former of these courses was developed and added to the minor within the last five years, when we redesigned the program. While we integrate use of technology into all of our courses, it is one of the goals in the course description of Methods of Teaching English I, another addition in our recent redesign. Content area literacy is taught through the requirement that all licensure students complete all of the requirements of the English literature concentration; further, they take the course,

Literature for Young Adults, and read literature taught in middle and high schools in their two methods courses. Students become familiar with the Massachusetts State Frameworks, based on the Common core beginning in their Introduction to Teaching English course; for each lesson plan they write, they must correlate instructional methods and student expectations to the Frameworks. The newly integrated Gateway Tasks, required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of Massachusetts, ask students to adapt a lesson plan to meet the standards and methods of teaching aligned to middle and secondary school students. They write and deliver lessons in local schools in three courses (Introduction to Teaching English; Methods of Teaching English I, and Methods of Teaching English II).

6. National Communication Association (2015) [Speech]: “A central assumption of these Learning Outcomes in Communication (LOCs) is that Communication constructs the social world and is relational, collaborative, strategic, symbolic, and adaptive. The LOCs are adaptable to different expectations for level of accomplishment at different degree levels and include the following:
- Describe the Communication discipline and its central questions
 - Employ Communication theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts
 - Engage in Communication inquiry
 - Create messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context
 - Critically analyze messages
 - Demonstrate the ability to accomplish communicative goals (self-efficacy)
 - Apply ethical communication principles and practices
 - Utilize communication to embrace difference
 - Influence public discourse

The array of speech courses offered to Fitchburg State University students have been revised since the previous assessment to more closely align with these disciplinary standards. Introduction to Speech Communication (SPCH 1000) specifically touches on each of these standards as it is a survey course that introduces students to the discipline of Communication. Specialization areas of Communication that have modules in SPCH 1000 are expanded upon in stand-alone courses such as Small Group Communication (SPCH 1400) and Public Speaking (SPCH 1600). In all three courses the discipline and its central questions are described, concepts and perspectives are employed, and self-efficacy is practiced. Argumentation and Debate (SPCH 1100), Persuasion (SPCH 2600), and Speechwriting (SPCH 3000) particularly emphasize embracing difference, applying ethical communication principles, and creating messages appropriate to the audience, purpose, and context. In all speech courses students critically analyze messages and engage in communication inquiry. Upcoming courses including Rhetorical Criticism (SPCH 2800) and Communication and the Environment (SPCH 2XXX) will similarly emphasize message analysis, embracing difference, self-efficacy, and the application of ethical communication.

- c) Balance between breadth and depth designed in the program

The core and all three concentrations in the English Studies department achieve a strong balance between breadth and depth in the program. The core is a mix of required courses and elective options and includes a gateway course—Approaches to English Studies—that introduces students to a range of literary approaches. The two survey requirements—in American and British literature—provide a solid foundation in the discipline. A third survey or literature course option and another 4000-level course encourage students to explore world literatures or other literature courses based on their interests. The core also includes a writing intensive course from the professional writing track that allows all students to build writing skills, from professional writing to creative writing. Finally, the capstone course brings all three concentrations together and prepares students for professional careers after graduation.

The Literature concentration is built around a number of content areas—Culture Studies, Genre, Continental/Postcolonial Literature, Literary Movement, Major Authors, Junior/Senior Seminar, and Shakespeare—where students not only cover key themes in literary studies, but through a wide selection of courses that offer specialized topics, gain depth in these fields.

The Professional Writing concentration has a similar balance between breadth and depth, where students are required to take a gateway course—Foundations in Professional Writing—followed by a wide range of electives stretched over three key areas—rhetoric and medium, genre, and production—for a rigorous training in the field of writing. Students have the opportunity to work on the college newspaper—*The Point*—and the annual literary magazine—*Route 2*—as well as undertake internships, all of which prepare them for a successful career after graduation.

The Middle and Secondary education concentration is spread over three key components that ensure a strong training in both content and pedagogy through a combination of a Literature concentration, a cluster of education courses that focus on issues and themes of teaching, and advanced field experiences in the form of practicum and pre-practica courses. The program is built around a cohort model with multiple opportunities for exchange and feedback with peers and guidance for the MTEL exams.

The Graduate MA and Creative Writing Certificate programs likewise emphasize breadth with multiple opportunities for depth. In the MA program, the available elective courses cover a range of Literary and Cultural topics, and then students focus in on and explore in depth particular interests for either culminating option (the Thesis or the Exit Exam). In the Certificate program, the available courses cover every genre of creative and professional writing, but students can focus on their choice of courses on fiction, poetry, or non-fiction to explore their own style and work more fully.

5. Internal demand of the program or department

a) Service courses

1. General Education Program

In AY19, the University passed a new General Education curriculum (to replace the previous Liberal Arts and Sciences curriculum). The English Studies department is central to the General Education Program in offering required courses in writing, speech, and literature to all students in the University. Our courses also contribute to a range of other General Education attributes, such as Civic Learning, Diverse Perspectives, Integrative Learning, and Procedural and Logical Thinking, as well as Integrative High Impact Practices. Our faculty see nearly every student at the University at least twice and generally three times in a classroom, regardless of major. Our department's significant contributions to the General Education curriculum include the following:

First-Year Writing Courses: Writing I and Writing II

These courses are required of students from all majors under the General Education Program to meet Writing and Information Literacy learning outcomes in the Foundation part of the curriculum. The learning outcomes of Writing I and II are as follows:

ENGL 1100: Writing I

The first-year writing sequence at Fitchburg State, consisting of Writing I and Writing II, provides the undergraduate student with the foundation necessary for critical thinking through academic writing. Together, these courses afford a continuous space in which students cultivate the skills of argumentation, uses of evidence, analysis, close reading of texts (in any number of forms), and revision as essential elements of the college-level writing process. Writing I seeks to provide a comprehension of (1) rhetoric, (2) argumentation, (3) uses of evidence, (4) process-oriented writing, and (5) academic community.

By the end of Writing I, students should:

Rhetoric:

- Understand the purposes of writing within specific and varied discursive communities
- Develop means of persuasion with an awareness of audience
- Recognize figures of speech and logical fallacies

Argumentation:

- Identify and construct an argumentative thesis
- Write essays that employ logical structures and transitions
- Synthesize critical thinking and close reading in analytical writing

Uses of Evidence:

- Locate, evaluate, and select sources
- Summarize and critique materials
- Paraphrase and integrate materials
- Cite texts properly

Process-Oriented Writing:

- Build an essay in stages (from pre-writing and invention to drafting)
- Practice the revision process
- Differentiate between global and topical revision
- Utilize the classroom as a workshop

Academic Community:

- Make appropriate choice of tone, grammar, and format according to situation and convention

- Acknowledge the standards and modes of academic integrity

ENGL 1200: Writing II

Writing II expands upon the argumentative and analytical emphases of Writing I (of which it is a necessary extension). It will foster research-based composition (with or without a thematic focus). By the end of Writing II, in addition to the objectives listed above, students should:

- Demonstrate in their prose a knowledge of rhetoric, argumentation, uses of evidence, process-oriented writing, and academic community
- Employ a variety of research methods and genres (including, but not limited to, interview, annotated bibliography, fieldwork, archival work, multimedia, etc.)
- Obtain reference materials, books, and articles through the Fitchburg State library's search engines and databases
- Become familiar with the latest information technologies pertinent to their research
- Adopt either APA or MLA citation format and use properly
- Upon the successful completion of the two-semester sequence, students will be prepared to utilize and enhance their writing abilities within their own fields of study.

The charts in the next section illustrate the extent of the department's ongoing commitment to first-year writing. The figures denote the number of students enrolled in Writing I and II courses over the past four years, based on 18-22 students enrolled per section (course caps have changed from 22 to 18 in the 2022-23). Students enrolled in Basic Writing are not included in this table, following the Board of Higher Education's agreement concerning developmental writing courses, which are no longer taught at the state universities unless *in extremis*, but are instead offered in partnership at the local community colleges. Basic Writing courses are not counted towards our students' graduation requirements.

Students may place out of the required writing courses based on Accuplacer scores, Advanced Placement courses, or transfer credit. Accuplacer scores also dictate course placement in Basic Writing, Writing I, or, to a lesser degree, Writing II.

In short, our three writing courses do handle multiple levels of writing concerns that we have for our students, which differs from some other state and community college peers which add a developmental lab component. Fitchburg State spent much time examining and reexamining our writing courses: our department worked closely with Dean Franca Barricelli, Dr. Sean Goodlett, Chris Coffin (then head of Student Support) and the Academic Advising Center to revise our institution's adherence to these guidelines set out by the state. We worked with the Massachusetts State Developmental Advisory Board headed by Elena Quiroz-Livanis for a number of years (2019-21) to ensure that we were thinking about necessary developmental issues related to our writing courses to make sure that our Writing placements and classes would be in line with the state's parameters. Beginning this year we have an AIF project "Supporting Education Justice in First-Year Writing" that is revisiting these conversations and guidelines to assess our first-year writing course sequence and recommend program modifications, including course structures and other direct support models. This project includes campus partners in the ACT and Writing Center, which is run by Kat McClellan, and the Center for Diversity and Inclusiveness, which is run by Junior Peña.

We believe this commitment to teaching writing to our first-year students is vital to the University.

World Languages/Speaking and Listening Courses:

The department's speech courses also contribute to the General Education Program and serve the entire university's students as they fulfill its Speaking and Listening learning outcome of the Foundation part of the curriculum. A large number of students pass through our various speech courses every year representing a wide variety of majors, which is one option in the Speech and World Languages requirement. A Speech course is required for English Studies majors.

Literary Inquiry and Analysis Courses:

In the Exploration part of the General Education curriculum, students are required to take a course fulfilling the Literary Inquiry and Analysis learning outcome. At present, only courses in English Studies have this designation.

Other Courses Offered with General Education Designations

A total of 136 courses from the English Studies are offered with the attributes listed below, emphasizing, once again, the centrality of the department within the General Education program.

- In the Exploration part of the General Education curriculum, students are required to take a course fulfilling the Civic Learning outcome. English Studies offers four courses with this designation.
- In the Exploration part of the General Education curriculum, students are required to take a course fulfilling the Diverse Perspectives learning outcome. English Studies offers twenty-one courses with this designation.
- In the Exploration part of the General Education curriculum, students are required to take a course fulfilling the Procedural and Logical Thinking learning outcome. English Studies offers four courses with this designation.
- In the Integration part of the General Education curriculum, students are required to take a course fulfilling the Integrative Thinking learning outcome. English Studies offers eighty courses with this designation.
- In the Integration part of the General Education curriculum, students are required to take a course with an Integrative High Impact Practice designation. English Studies offers twenty-seven courses with this designation.

2. Honors program

Faculty in the English studies department teach Honors Writing I (discontinued in AY 2022) and Honors Writing II, as well as the Honors seminar in Literature each year. Over the course of five years, we have taught 13 sections of Honors Writing I and II and 7 sections of Honors seminar. We have also taught Honors Current Event and Service Learning and plan to offer further sections of the course in the next year.

3. First Year Experience Program

We have offered 1 section of FYE each year from 2019-2023.

4. Service to other majors and minors:

Many of the ENGL courses serve the needs of other departments. A number of our professional Writing courses are listed as part of the elective options in Communications Media department's Game Design, as well as the new Digital Media Innovation major. Our faculty also teach courses Education, Communications, and Game Design courses, which are housed in other departments. Many of our courses contribute to the Public Relations minor and the Digital Media Innovation minor housed in the Communications Media department. Our speech courses contribute to the Interdisciplinary Studies for Pre-Law housed in the Humanities department. Further, our courses contribute to other interdisciplinary minors on campus, such as the Film Studies minor, African American Studies minor, American Studies minor, Asian Studies minor, and Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies minor.

5. Dual Enrollment and Early College students: Our Freshman Writing courses include a large number of Dual Enrollment and Early College students as shown in the chart below:

	Writing I	Writing II	Total
Fall 2018	25	2	27
Spring 2019	3	7	10
Summer 2019	42	21	63
Fall 2019	30	1	31
Spring 2020	0	16	16
Summer 2020	15	2	17
Fall 2020	18	0	18
Spring 2021	0	50	50
Summer 2021	1	1	2
Fall 2021	22	0	22
Spring 2022	2	32	34
Summer 2022	0	0	0
Fall 2022	72	0	72
Spring 2023	1	45	46
Summer 2023	0	0	0
Fall 2023	50	6	56

Additionally, Fitchburg State University recently received a \$40,000 grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to support its dual enrollment program, indicating a continued role for the English Studies program in this effort.

b) Enrollments in service courses

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Writing I	717	681	663	603	480
Writing II	691	690	556	541	460
Total	1408	1371	1219	1144	940
Basic	15	9	8	6	10

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
Speech Course Enrollment	245	301	244	143	169	1102

The percentage of our courses for the new Foundational attributes--World Languages/ Speaking and Listening and Writing--in the General Education program:

	AY 2022	AY 2023
Speech Courses	6%	7%
First-Year Writing	48%	44%

	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	Total
Literary Inquiry and Analysis Course Enrollment	1212 (fulfilling the Literature requirement in the 2018-19 GE program)	981	772	653	613	4231

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Honors English I	21	10	No longer a required course	No longer required

Honors English II	26	17	21	41
Honors Seminar in Literature	41	13	21	40

The following chart captures the number of sections and student enrollment per General Education attribute taught by the department since the Fall 2021 semester when the new General Education program came into effect. It should be noted that some of these courses have multiple attributes (such as Writing II satisfying both the Writing and Information Literacy requirements) so there is some degree of overlap in the totals.

Attribute	AY 2022 Sections	AY 2022 Enrollment	AY 2023 Sections	AY 2023 Enrollment
World Languages/ Speaking and Listening	7	143	3	68
Writing	56	1,144	49	940
Information Literacy	26	561	26	500
Civic Learning	3	19	4	38
Diverse Perspectives	13	307	11	234
Literary Inquiry and Analysis	29	689	27	567
Procedural and Logical Thinking	1	1	2	20
AIA (without IHIP)	33	730	28	563
AIA (with IHIP)	8	106	14	107

While the enrollments in services courses offered by the department shows a contraction from AY 2019-23 (in keeping with the enrollment patterns of the university), the above numbers indicate that English Studies has a central, indispensable place in the academic program of the university. This stretches from first year foundation courses (Writing I and II, FYE, Speech) to more advanced General education courses over a number of attributes, as seen above. We have a key role to play in offering Information Literacy, Diverse Perspectives and AIA outcomes, in particular, which connect to the mission of the university.

- c) Assessments of student learning for the service courses as they relate to the General Education Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

Assessment of the new General Education Program began in AY22 with the development of

Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing rubrics by faculty/librarians, including two English Studies faculty members, assembled through an open campus call. In the following year, AY23, Inquiry and Analysis rubrics, including Literary Inquiry and Analysis, were developed by a second group of faculty/librarians, including one English Studies faculty member. These rubrics are available on the University website: <https://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/academic-affairs-division/shared-governance/all-university-committee/general-education-learning-outcomes>

In spring 2023, the call for artifacts went out to campus to request instructors voluntarily submit student artifacts from fall 2022 and/or spring 2023 courses that have been officially designated through AUC with any of the following General Education attributes: Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing as either a learning outcome or a skill. Only ENGL 1100 Writing I and ENGL 1200 Writing II are designated with the Writing learning outcome, and ENGL 1200 is designated with Information Literacy as are First-Year Experience courses; thus, English Studies faculty were the major source of student artifacts for this call.

A second call went out in spring 2023 to request assessors to assess the student artifacts submitted. To be eligible to assess, a faculty member or librarian must teach at least one course with the learning outcome designation that they will assess or offer library instruction in information literacy. Three assessors from English Studies were compensated for their participation in Assessment Day on May 22, 2023 to assess student artifacts for the Writing learning outcome, and three librarians assessed student artifacts from both Writing II and First-Year Experience courses for Information Literacy. See **Appendix 32** for the full report.

As this was the pilot for assessment and due to the schedule of the creation of the rubrics for Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing, there was not time to give ample attention to guiding faculty in assignment design or artifact selection to align with the rubrics. It was acknowledged that this no doubt impacted the outcome of the scoring, but carrying out the assessment was still deemed a viable process. In the future, assessors did suggest workshops and other means of communicating the rubrics to instructors, which is being addressed by a program of events facilitated by the General Education Program Ambassador for Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing, Dr. Steve Edwards from English Studies.

The following summarizes the assessment data for Writing, from ENGL 1100 Writing I and ENGL 1200 Writing II:

	Controlling Idea	Controlling Idea Development	Organization	Sources & Evidence
<i>Mean</i>	2.9	2.5	1.51	2.23
<i>Median</i>	3	2	3	2
<i>Mode</i>	3	4	4	2
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	.98	1.26	.89	1.05
<i>Sum</i>	87	75	88	67

	Documentation of Sources	Academic Discourse	Style/Presentation
<i>Mean</i>	2.33	2.34	3.21
<i>Median</i>	2	2	3
<i>Mode</i>	2	4	4
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	1.164	1.45	.89
<i>Sum</i>	70	71	93

These findings indicate a fairly high level in student demonstration of the Writing rubric criteria, given that this rubric is intended not only to assess first-year writing but also the development of writing skills across learners' careers. What this information most indicates is that our writing instruction appears to be in alignment with the campus-wide General Education Writing learning outcome and that students are producing artifacts that can be scored appropriately.

The following summarizes the assessment data for Information Literacy (from ENGL 1200 Writing II and First-Year Experience):

Process

	Forming and Revising Research Question	Identifying Authoritative Sources	Locating Sources Using Research Strategies	Process of an Effective Plan for Finding Information
<i>Mean</i>	.45	1.03	.38	.38
<i>Median</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Mode</i>	0	1	0	0
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	.74	.73	.49	.56
<i>Sum</i>	13	30	11	11

Product

	Synthesize Sources of Information to Communicate New Ideas	Engagement with Ongoing Scholarly Conversations (Academic Discourse)	Citing Sources Ethically and Appropriately
<i>Mean</i>	.70	.79	1.34
<i>Median</i>	0	1	1
<i>Mode</i>	0	0	1
<i>Standard Deviation</i>	.93	.86	.97
<i>Sum</i>	20	23	39

This is the first time that Information Literacy is officially a learning outcome of Writing II, and, as these findings indicate, we need to work further on alignment of instruction, especially

assignment design as there was a significant number of N/A's by assessors, with both the General Education learning outcome and the new First-Year Experience curriculum, which also assesses Information Literacy.

In AY24, a similar process will be followed to assess student artifacts in Literary Inquiry and Analysis. Speaking and Listening will be assessed in 2025-26. Other outcomes will be assessed in their respective years. There will be a five-year rotation in General Education learning outcomes, meaning that Writing and Information Literacy will be assessed again in 2027-28.

6. Recommendations and actions from previous five-year review

Reviewer's recommendations	How they were addressed	Timeline
Review the Capstone to increase its effectiveness.	The Capstone class has been revised to include preparing students for professionalization, graduate work and employment in fields related to English. We have incorporated field trips, alumni presentations and expert speakers who share with students the range of possibilities for career and future plans for English Studies majors within our three concentrations. The class helps students develop a portfolio, publishable writing, resume and cover letters.	2018-present
Consider creating a required or optional internship experience, particularly for those in the professional writing concentration.	By the beginning of AY 2025, we will have offered 20 internships, which is a significant increase from the previous years. The details of these are laid out later in the document.	Ongoing
How are department faculty engaging in the kinds of high impact practices advocated by AAC&U (https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips) shown by research to improve learning outcomes?	Many of the high impact practices listed on the AACU site are in our program and teaching. We already have a Capstone course, engage in collaborative assignments and projects (see the service learning and community outreach sections), have a core curriculum and a Gen ed program, offer many courses in Global learning and Diversity, teach in FSU's FYE program, provide internships and undergraduate research opportunities. With the new Gen Ed that places a significant emphasis on HIP, we hope to offer more high impact practices.	Ongoing
Graduate program: The department needs to be innovative and bold to reverse trends of low enrolment in MA/MAT. Development of academically sound and challenging hybrid course	The Graduate program has directly addressed all three of these recommendations over the last five years: –Both the relaunched MA in Literature and the new Creative Writing Certificate program have been designed to recruit more students, not only locally but from across the country and world. We continue	

<p>offerings to supplement their current face-to-face instruction.</p> <p>Development of either a graduate Professional Writing degree, or a concentration within the literature degree in Professional Writing</p>	<p>to work actively with SGOCE on a variety of strategies related to marketing and recruiting, including advertising nationally, creating webinars and colloquia featuring our students and faculty, and more.</p> <p>–Both of these programs are now fully available online, with courses that can be taught either fully online or hybrid (if students express an interest in in-person availability).</p> <p>–We created the Creative Writing Certificate program to offer a graduate-level Writing degree.</p>	
<p>Identify areas of weakness in writing-related learning outcomes across campus.</p>	<p>The recent AIF grant titled “Equity and Justice” combines the expertise of three faculty members to embark on a project built around supporting linguistic diversity, making recommendations for universal syllabus design, and working with student support services to lower barriers for student success in freshman writing.</p>	<p>2022-present</p>
<p>Hire a Writing Program Administrator, a faculty member trained in Rhetoric and Composition who is given adequate release time to address the complex writing needs of the campus.</p>	<p>The current structure of the institution does not support this goal: while we do have a Rhetoric/Comp person, there is no release time being offered to take charge of writing issues across the campus</p>	
<p>Hire a Writing Center Director Academic Writing Centers are usually led by an English department (or in this case, English Studies department) faculty member trained in Rhetoric and Composition with release time to administer all aspects of the Writing Center.</p>	<p>The current structure of the institution does not support this. We have a model in which we have a staffed Academic coaching and tutoring center that offers drop-in and Online tutoring services for all levels of classes.</p>	
<p>Work with appropriate university offices and departments to review the Elementary and Early Childhood Education Major requirements Develop an English major for elementary education students</p>	<p>With recent changes to the program, the Elementary Education program now has a 120-credit plan of study that leaves very little room for students to pick up an English studies major or minor. Four required courses from our department are included in this major: ENGL 1100 (Writing I), ENGL 1200 (Writing II), ENGL 2300 (Literature and Disability) and ENGL 2900 (Children’s Literature)</p>	
<p>Hire a full-time faculty member with a specialization in Speech. one new line, and possibly two lines, in Rhetoric and Composition for skilled Writing Program Administrator, and Writing Center administration.</p>	<p>We hired Dr. Collin Syfert in 2019, whose specialty is Speech. We have also hired Dr. Jennie Snow in 2022 who has a specialty in ELL/ESL and Multi-ethnic American Literature.</p>	<p>2019 and 2022</p>

7. Departmental/program initiatives and significant changes during the five years since the last review.

a) Interdisciplinary programs

A major focus for the English Studies department over the past years has been to increase our participation in interdisciplinary programs across campus. To that end, our faculty have been part of the creation of two new degree programs (Digital Media Innovation, housed in the Communication Media department, and Creative Arts Enterprise, in the Humanities department). We have also partnered with the Economics, History, and Political Science (EHPS) department to create a new minor in Political Journalism while continuing to support the Women and Gender Studies, American Studies, Asian Studies and African American Studies minors. Additionally, support from the Academic Innovation Fund has enabled work on the development of an interdisciplinary Sustainability Studies minor and an IDIS major with a Sustainability concentration, featuring Speech and English Studies courses (still in the development stages). Finally, we have collaborated with the Game Design faculty in Communications Media to increase the presence of English Studies courses within their major program requirements. As mentioned earlier, we contribute to the Honors and FYE programs as well.

b) Delivery mechanisms

During the Spring 2020 semester, all of our courses required a switch to an all-online modality because of COVID-19 pandemic closures. Many of our AY 2020-21 courses stayed online, or hybrid, but by AY 2021-22 nearly all of our courses were back in face to face, in-person modality (Face to Face: 96 sections; Hybrid: 9 sections; and Online: 5 sections).

Beyond the pandemic-related modality changes, the English Studies day program regularly offers a limited number of courses that are online and hybrid during the academic year, summer and winter sessions. These courses mainly fulfill requirements for the fully Online undergraduate Day and SGOCE programs on our campus as well as assist matriculated students in reaching their graduation requirements in a timely manner.

The chart below indicates our various delivery mechanisms in the last five years:

	Face to face	Hybrid	Online/Asynchronous	Total
AY 2018-19	153	2	4	159
AY 2019-20	156 (went remote in spring)	2	1	159
AY 2020-21	67 (Onsync)	41	39	147
AY 2021-22	111	8	2	121
AY 2022-23	112	4	1	117

Graduate program

As the Graduate Program has both relaunched the MA in Literature and established the Creative Writing Certificate, it has significantly added to and amplified our delivery options for the courses in those respective programs. The Creative Writing Certificate courses are delivered entirely online: most of the courses are asynchronous with optional synchronous meetings for students who want them. Some future courses are planned to be synchronous for all students. The MA courses are all available online but are hybrid, meaning that they always feature synchronous meetings and that those synchronous meetings have the option of being in person if some students want to meet in that way. This hyflex delivery mechanism is designed to meet the needs of a wide range of students and in the hope of increasing enrolments in the program.

c) Service learning and Community outreach

Service learning

The English Studies department contributes to courses that employ service learning and civic engagement components, such as Dr. Wafa Unus's Honors course on Current Events and Service Learning. Configuring news reporting as a valuable "service" to the community, Dr. Unus themed the class on the housing crisis, a community issue that also had relevance for our students, most of whom hail from middling- to low-income families. Dr. Unus brought in the editor of Harvard Press, John Osborn, who was able to provide great insights on the topic, given the current debates in the town of Harvard around this issue. Further, as part of the class, students were put in charge of developing five seminar events that featured journalist speakers from WGBH and other news sites, where they developed the questions and moderated the discussion. The class was featured on the University of Vermont's Center for Community News.

Dr. Collin Syfert employs service learning and civic engagement components in many of his courses. For example, in both the Introduction to Speech Communication and Persuasion courses, students research and deliver a proposal to address a campus issue. Students in Argumentation and Debate write two Letters to the Editor, with the aim of enriching public discourse. Students in Small Group Communication develop original team building exercises to be shared with the campus community. With ever-greater frequency, the Public Speaking course engages in opportunities to speak outside of the classroom on contemporary issues. Most recently this was part of Constitution Day programming. Outside of course assignments Dr. Syfert continues to work interdepartmentally to foster information literacy and public engagement, such as the upcoming Summer Institute for Journalism Education, the 2020 Presidential Debate Watch and Panel Discussion, and the upcoming Boston Fed Wealth Study Discussion, all open to the greater Fitchburg and Massachusetts community.

Community Outreach

The pandemic interfered with our ability to be part of many events in the region; nevertheless, the department boasts a wide variety of meaningful partnerships with the community and activities that connect with FSU's mission of community engagement.

Some specific events and activities of this sort include:

- Teaching in the ALFA program (Adult Learning in the Fitchburg Area, a lifelong learning institute that serves adult learners in Fitchburg and the surrounding communities) for community members. The English Department offers many courses on a wide range of topics during the year, in addition to the Day workload, and has been a key contributor to this effort. We have offered a total of 19 courses to date. See **Appendix 25** for a listing of these courses.
- Partnership with the Fitchburg Historical Society: as mentioned above, Dr. Kisha Tracy created an exhibition titled “Disability Heritage: from the Medieval to the Local” with Writing I and Honors students (Spring 2020 and following).
- Annual Community Read: numerous English department Studies faculty have contributed significantly to this effort in partnership with the Library in the last five years:

Dr. Ben Railton gave a talk at the FSU Library about immigration, Chinese Americans, and American history to start our conversations about *Everything I Never Told You*. He also led a community discussion at the Leominster Public Library to start FSU’s conversations about *Born a Crime*.

Dr. Bellinger-Delfeld created a moth radio hour style open mic, and brought a speaker to campus to support Community Read.

Dr. Diego Ubiera organized and led a discussion on the 2020-21 community read, *Underland* by Robert McFarlane, where he invited faculty from several disciplines - especially those from the sciences-to participate. English department faculty—Dr. Steve Edwards, Dr. Ben Railton, Dr. Collin Syfert (English Studies), and Dr. Kisha Tracy—also led the discussion of major insights and stakes of MacFarlane's timely work.

Dr. Wafa Unus participated and facilitated a Community Read event on Asian identity. She also organized a presentation for Community Read by Sam Roe on *Nomadland*. This was a very significant experience for our campus as we got a chance to engage with a Pulitzer-prize winning journalist. Dr. Unus ran a very well-attended community keynote event, “Fitchburg Speaks: Stories About What Made Us Who We Are,” to support the community read choice, *Born a Crime*.

Dr. Lisa Gim, working with Librarian Connie Stritmatter on behalf of Fitchburg State University’s Community Read Series, organized and moderated a panel discussion “A Literary Perspective on Art Spiegelman’s *Maus*” featuring Professors Michael Hoberman, Heather Urbanski and Katharine Covino-Poutasse in 2019.

Dr. Katharine Covino-Poutasse participated in multiple Community Read panels including the Literary Perspectives of *Maus* in September 2019, Everything You Need to Know about the Lee Family and Everything I Never Told You in March 2019.

- Dr. Unus contributed her time and effort to a team that organized a workshop with Fred Plotkin, a well-known figure who writes on food and culture.
- Dr. Elise Takehana designed a “When We Were Normal Augmented Reality Campus Tour” in 2018.
- Dr. Collin Syfert organized a Fitchburg State University Presidential Debate Watch and Panel Discussion event (2020) alongside co-presenters Dr. Wafa Unus and Dr. Katharine Jewell (History). The event entailed brief lectures on the history of presidential campaign advertising and media, the role and rhetoric of presidential debates, post-debate reporting, followed by a live group discussion as the debate aired.
- Dr. Collin Syfert’s Public Speaking students participated in the 2022 Constitution Day events by delivering well-known First Amendment speeches on the campus quad. Community members and a photographer were present.
- Dr. Steve Edwards and Dr. Unus curated and organized WATCH MY SIX: A Veteran Storytelling Event (2023) that brought six veterans from our campus and surrounding communities to speak about their experience of war and its aftermath. A similar event was also organized in 2022.
- Dr. Kisha Tracy created an exhibit on Cultural Heritage through Image titled, “Heritages of Change” (Spring 2021 and following). Using the Deans’ Anti-Racism fund grant, she brought together her Writing II students, in partnership with ALFA, to create digital and physical mini-exhibitions curating marginalized heritage.
- Honors Literature Fair - students in Dr. Tracy’s HONS 2100 Literature Seminar created a Literature Fair titled “A Journey into What’s Possible: An Exploration of Afro/Africanfuturism” in partnership with librarians, who served as judges.
- Several faculty members support ongoing community events such as the Mass Poetry Festival in Salem, MA, Arisia, a regional science fiction convention, and the World Science Fiction Convention where Dr. Heather Urbanski participated in panel discussions and worked as staff for Incident Response Team at multiple conventions from 2018 through 2020.
- Many of our faculty participate in events for the campus and community during Women’s History month. In 2021, Dr. Bellinger-Delfeld brought renowned *Boston Globe* editor and columnist Renée Graham to give the keynote address for the Nancy Kelly Memorial lecture.
- Women in the Arts: our faculty have been active in this program for quite some time. Recently, students in Dr. Tracy’s course created a Cultural Heritage exhibition focused on women and then a boxed handout on Hildegard of Bingen.
- Many of our department faculty have worked on hosting and judging a High School Writing Competition for students in the area. We hold an annual award ceremony on campus where we invite the finalists and their families.
- Dr. Lisa Gim organized and hosted the 17th Annual Undergraduate Shakespeare Conference of New England, “Shakespeare for All Time,” which was held at Fitchburg State University on April 28, 2018 with the support of Dean Franca Barricelli. Eighteen students from Massachusetts colleges and universities, including Clark, Harvard, Holy Cross, Wellesley, Tufts, Holyoke, and University of Massachusetts Boston, as well as four students from Fitchburg State, presented their papers on Shakespeare’s plays; a plenary speech was given by Shakespearean Dr. Helen Whall, Professor Emerita from Holy Cross; English Studies faculty Dr. Aruna Krishnamurthy and Dr. Elise Takehana

along with Fitchburg State's English Studies adjunct professors, Elieen Hamm and Jack Crory, other area professors on the Steering Committee moderated panels and judged the best essay contest. The conference ended with a performance of MacTweet, a play for the era of Donald Trump that was written and performed by student members of Fitchburg State's Shakespeare Society.

- Dr. Elise Takehana and Dr. Katharine Covino-Poutasse were key contributors to the 2020 Robert Cormier symposium where they created a series of three themed digital exhibits showcasing artifacts from the Robert E. Cormier Collection at Fitchburg State University's Amelia V. Gallucci-Cirio Library.
- As an active member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP), Dr. Bellinger-Delfeld has brought a lot of new ideas, activities and programs to the organization. She has also served as Northeast Council Chair and Publications Committee Chair and Acting Chair of the DEI committee at AWP, where she has served the cause of disabled and LGBTQIA communities. Dr. Delfeld has also served as a Board member in the Worcester Children's Chorus as the DEI chair where her efforts have led to more diversity in the organization, as well as financial support for students. She continues to serve as a Poetry judge for Best of the Net, as Regional Representative for MassPoets, and Judge for Prairie Schooner Book Prize in Fiction.
- Dr. Unus has launched a News Literacy Summer Institute
- Dr. Unus has recently initiated a "City News Team" where students in the College Newspaper class serve as reporters and columnists for *Sentinel and Enterprise* with more such partnerships to come.
- Dr. Michael Hoberman moderated a discussion "Imagining the Jewish Past: Three Authors Discuss Jewish History and Literary Inspiration: at the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center in Boston in 2022
- Dr. Hoberman was a panelist for "The myth of American 'chosenness'" organized by the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty in Boston in May 2023.
- Dr. Frank Mabee was a moderator for a literary conversation with well-known author R. A. Salvatore at a campus event titled "The Future of Storytelling" in 2022. Salvatore will be a visiting speaker in Game Design classes, "Introduction to Science Fiction," "Writing the Science Fiction Novel" and the Honors Literature classes in spring 24.

Assessment

1. Program Inputs

a) Program reputation

There exist no national metrics for ranking English studies programs.

Our program is consistent with many of the standards and structure of our sister institutions, such as including a core set of courses, an Introductory level course, a writing intensive requirement as well as a capstone course. The curricula emphasizes British, American and World literatures with a special focus on diversity; most of the concentrations have some degree of literary studies as part of the plan of study. In keeping with recent trends within English Studies programs, we

have an emphasis on diversifying our curriculum, offering flexibility within the concentrations while emphasizing skills training.

The Center for Community News at the University of Vermont has recently commended our efforts at supporting local news as noted in the article “Fitchburg State University Journalism Program Creating Solutions to Local News Crisis” by Greta Solsaa, in which she praises *The Point*’s City News Team, advanced journalism students who write for both *The Point* and local newspapers including *The Harvard Press* and *Sentinel & Enterprise*. See **Appendix 2** for details.

Our program has several distinguishing features that are noted here:

Our curriculum is shaped around diversity in literature and diversity in genres and traditions. One of the most diverse departments on our campus, our curricular offerings reflect an orientation towards questioning the canon through the literature and culture of under-represented communities. We offer courses that give our students a firm grounding in world literature and literatures of multiple ethnicities and identities. Our student-centered classrooms, pedagogy of inclusivity, and diversity-focused courses train our students to think critically as well as find their place in a global community of readers and scholars.

Our Professional Writing track offers a wide range of courses within clusters that shape students’ craft of writing by creating flexible opportunities to experiment and engage with a diversity of styles. Through courses in “rhetoric,” “genres” and “production” areas students get a well rounded training in creative writing skills, cutting edge experimental and professional writing, and hands-on production experience through courses in the college newspaper *The Point* and literary magazine, *Route 2*.

As explained in the “Trends in the Discipline” section, we continue to expand and revise our curriculum in response to the needs of students and changes in the discipline.

Education Justice: Our department has a demonstrated commitment to our education justice, not only through its curricula and courses, but also in its interest in developing non-remedial pathways for multilingual learners and students from under-represented communities. Two faculty—Dr. Gim and Dr. Ubeira—recently worked on a HEIF grant for Heritage language support with an ESL/ELL 1 credit course in conjunction Writing 1 and 2 (See **Appendix 29** for details on HEIF grant). Dr. Snow, our new faculty member with a specialty in ELL/ESL, Dr. Urbanski, our Rhetoric and Composition expert and Dr. Ubeira, with specialty in Latin American Literature, have teamed up to secure an Academic Innovation Fund to address linguistic diversity in first-year writing and provide nonremedial pathways for our incoming students, which aligns with the university goal of being a student-ready campus (See **Appendix 23** for details on the AIF project).

Licensure Exams (MTEL) support and success: We have a 97% MTEL pass rate for our Middle and Secondary Education students. Our Licensure students are supported through a special course on MTEL exams taught by a full-time faculty, Dr. Keyser. See **Appendix 26** for details.

Internships and other High-Impact Learning Opportunities: Our students are afforded great opportunities for hands-on skills training and professional growth. We have placed a number of our students on paid internships in local newspapers and presses. Our courses create an opportunity for all students on campus to contribute and produce the campus newspaper, *The Point*, and the literary magazine, *Route 2*. The College Newspaper students have a dedicated space-- “**Journalism Lab**”--that functions like a real time newspaper office. Further, under Dr. Unus’s guidance, our advanced student journalists, facilitated through an internship model, have played a significant role in reporting on the City of Fitchburg for both *The Point*, and the *Sentinel & Enterprise*, Fitchburg's local newspaper. As our student reporters advance through experience on *The Point*, they have become a major asset to a local publication that serves a population of over 100,000. This year, they filled a gap in local election news coverage that would otherwise have been nonexistent. These opportunities where students can prepare for a post-graduation career are unique to our program.

Study Abroad Opportunities: Though our two recent study abroad courses to Jordan and Montreal got canceled due to the pandemic, we have plans for a 2025 spring study abroad course in Argentina.

Writing Associates Opportunity: The department continues to offer academically talented students opportunities to work closely with a sponsoring faculty member in courses across the curriculum to serve as writing associates, class-linked writing tutors who assist students with their writing tasks. Each academic year, the English Studies faculty member who manages the program works in an independent study format with writing associates who are engaged in this work. Students are responsible for attending the classes in which they are assigned and for meeting on a regular basis with their sponsoring faculty member and the Writing Associates coordinator, Dr. Heather Urbanski.

Career Training Opportunities: outside of internships, our program places considerable emphasis on career skills training through our Capstone course. Dr. Ben Railton recently finalized, through the Davis Foundation Grant, a departmental document that highlights alignments between the program of study/coursework and built-in professionalization and career training opportunities at each stage and year of our Major (see **Appendix 3**). We also host “student success” events where students are given timely advice and mentorship on career possibilities by alumni.

Faculty excellence in scholarship and research: Our faculty is exceptionally prolific in scholarship and research that feeds into their teaching and mentorship of their students. As a whole, in the past five years, English Studies faculty have published 11 books (including one novel and one poetry collection), contributed twenty-four book chapters, written nineteen journal articles, given four invited lectures, and presented more than twenty papers or panels at regional, national, and international conferences. In addition, faculty published thirty-six creative nonfiction and eleven short fiction pieces and nearly twenty poems. Finally, in service to our disciplines and to the general public audience, faculty produced eleven book reviews and dozens (likely more) pieces of public scholarship such as blog posts and online magazine columns.

See **Appendix 4** for a listing of faculty publications and **Appendix 5** for faculty CVs. Faculty are also recipients of competitive awards, and serve as board members in various academic and non-academic organizations where they take on leadership roles.

Student Support through Clubs and Rallies: The English Studies department makes tremendous effort to support its majors through many activities throughout the year. We take pride in building a sense of belonging for our students (especially in a post-Covid world) through our student-run clubs, the English Club and Writing Clubs, that meet regularly, and have a dedicated faculty mentor. We have held events such as English rally and meet and greet events for our students to get to know each other and the faculty. We also support Sigma Tau Delta, our English Honor Society that inducts members each spring (suspended during 20-22). Students from the Honor Society have attended and made presentations at the national conference under the guidance of faculty. Other clubs arise and flourish depending on student interest but always with English Studies faculty support.

Student Awards and Scholarships: student accomplishments are also supported through a number of competitive awards. See **Appendix 6** for a full list of awards.

Graduate Program: In the Graduate English program, the new Creative Writing Certificate program is a unique offering that complements our MA in Literature and allows all of our graduate students the chance to work with writing as well as literature faculty. This is one of many distinctive ways that our graduate students can develop different sides of their voices and work, including our Graduate Program journal *The Falconer* and our Graduate Colloquium series that we are relaunching in Spring 2024 with a webinar featuring grad student participants. See **Appendix 7** for a recent edition (2020) of *The Falconer*.

b) Students by program

1. Student enrollment trends (see **Appendix 8** for the institutional report)

Undergraduate Day Students	AY 2018-19	AY 2019-20	AY 2020-21	AY 2021-22	AY 2022-23
Incoming freshman majors	12	8	10	7	12
Percentage of Incoming freshman majors	1.63%	1.12%	1.46%	1.04%	2.07%
Incoming transfer majors	13	13	10	5	5
Percentage of transfer students	3.00%	3.11%	3.27%	2.25%	1.96%
Total Enrollment in Literature	26	24	16	14	8

Total Enrollment in Professional Writing	57	52	47	30	22
Total Enrollment in Initial Licensure	27	22	27	19	23
Overall enrollment in English majors	111	100	91	63	54
Percentage of overall enrollment	2.89%	2.92%	2.53%	1.92%	1.85%
Enrollment in Literature Minor	48	29	16	11	8
Enrollment in Professional Studies Minor	35	35	29	30	21
Total enrollment in all English Studies classes	3542	3286	3026	2582	2192
Percentage of total enrolment	10.33%	9.75%	9.52%	9.45%	9.05%
Retention rates in major	53.85%	62.50%	50.0%	28.57%	Not available
Retention rates change in major	23.08%	0.0%	12.50%	14.29%	
Retention rates change institutional	11.98%	11.78%	13.58%	12.42%	

The widely reported national and regional trend of enrollment and retention declines in higher education due to demographic changes and other factors such as tuition costs,¹ is reflected in the fluctuating numbers of incoming majors in the English Studies department at FSU and in the university’s overall decrease in the number of first-time, full-time students enrolled at Fitchburg State. This trend of enrollment contraction in English is equally visible in our sister institutions and in New England (see **Appendix 9**). Further, the pandemic related attrition of enrollment and retention in higher education, where nearly 1.3 million students disappeared from colleges and universities during and after the pandemic,² is reflected in our class of AY 2021 and AY 2022.

¹ Jon Boekenstedt, “Will your College Survive the Demographic Cliff,” *Rethinking Admissions and Enrollment, Chronicle of Higher Education*, 2022.

² Karin Fischer, “The Shrinking of Higher Ed,” *Rethinking Admissions and Enrollment*.

ADE reports that the “decline may have resulted from various forces: most immediate, the radical downturn in the United States economy beginning in 2007–08, and, more general, the rising personal

While we await campus-wide conversations on FSU’s enrollment and retention plans to which we can contribute as a department, there is positive news in the form of an uptick in the number of majors in AY 2022. The data also shows an increase in the numbers of incoming English majors relative to all incoming majors across the university. Our retention data (especially in the pandemic and aftermath) is too limited for any meaningful conclusions, but is largely in keeping with the trends at the university.

While we continue to address issues around enrollment and retention of our majors, it is also important to note that the department continues to offer a large number of courses and sections that serve the entire campus and other programs as discussed before (in the “service courses” section). We have taught a total of 182 sections of Literature or Literary Analysis with a total of 4218 students taught; and 154 sections of Writing I with 3,144 students and 137 sections of Writing II with 2,938 students (see details/charts in the section “Teaching Responsibilities”)

The Graduate Program has also experienced declines in enrollment, from 30 matriculated students in AY 2018-19 to 11 in the MA in Literature as of January 2024 (see **Appendix 10**). Retention has not been an issue, and indeed retaining and graduating current students has contributed to these declining numbers. This trend is in keeping with MA and Graduate programs around the country.

2. Minimum qualification students must have in the program:

In addition to the degree requirements for the University, students in the English Studies major must maintain a 2.0 or higher GPA.

3. Enrolled student profile

Our data is limited to two years only and therefore, does not provide any conclusive evidence.

cost of (and declining public support for) higher education, which together put pressure on students to value higher education for the employment prospects it produced. Combined with that pressure was a devaluing of the humanities in favor of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) [this is certainly true in MA] and applied programs (in health sciences, for example) designed to prepare graduates for specific jobs and careers. Other cultural factors were at work, too—among them the national decline in leisure reading . . . and the saturation of culture by electronic media (including its reshaping of reading practices). *A Changing Major: Report of the 2016–17 ADE Ad Hoc Committee on the English Major*, Web publication, 18 July 2018.

English Studies majors by Gender and Race/Ethnicity

	AY 19			AY 23		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	1	1	0	0	0
Asian	1	3	4	0	1	1
Black or African American	3	2	5	2	0	2
Hispanic	2	5	7	1	5	6
More than one	1	5	6	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-resident Alien	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unknown	1	0	1	1	0	1
White	25	51	76	11	26	37
Total	33	67	100	15	32	47

c) Faculty

1. Faculty Diversity, credentials and years of service:

Demographic faculty summary	Number of full time assigned to unit
Women	12
Men	5
Ethnicity	
White/Caucasian	13
Asian	4
Hispanic/Latino	1
Black/African American	1
American Indian	0
International or Other	2
	Includes faculty identifying multiple categories
Credentials—Highest degree held	
Bachelor's Degree	
Master's Degree	
Doctorate	17
Experience	
0-3 years	1
4-7 years	3
8-11 years	4
12-15 years	4
16-24 years	4
25+ years	1

Professors retired or no longer at FSU:

Chola Chisunka	1991 – 2021	Retired July 1 2021
Judith Budz	1974 – 2020	Retired September 1 2020
Angela Nastassee-Carder	2001 –2020	Retired December 31 2020
Thomas Murray	1986 – 2019	Retired January 1 2019
Patrice Gray	2000 – 2018	Retired December 31 2018
Joseph Moser	2008 – 2018	Left May 2018

All faculty have 4/4 FTE unless they have received Alternate Professional Responsibilities (APR) arrangements.

APRs: These range from CBA defined releases (for MSCA leadership and Chair workload releases), as well as releases for other professional work on campus such as serving as coordinator for General education, PASM, Center for Faculty Scholarship, Leading for Change

and the Faculty Academy. Often, Special project awards for scholarship and other work are also given APRs.

AY 2018-19, faculty collectively received 41 credits of APR.

In AY 2019-20, 42 credits

In AY 2020-21: 25.5

In AY 2021-22: 28.5

In AY 2022-23: 22.5

Faculty Qualifications Table

NAME	RANK	TEACHING	SERVICE	SCHOLARSHIP
DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld	Associate Professor	First year writing, Intro to Creative Writing, Poetry Writing, Fiction Writing, Intro to Women's Studies, Research for Creative Writers, Script Writing, Writing Film Criticism.	<p>English Dept: Search Committee; Creative Writing Contest; Assessment; Student Success</p> <p>University: Center for Faculty Scholarship; Community Read; Library Advisory Committee; Leading for Change Committee; AUC; BSU; Women's Studies</p> <p>Discipline: Board member, Association of Writers and Writing Programs; Poetry judge, Best of the Net; Mass Poets; Prairie Schooner (alum editor and book prize)</p> <p>Community at Large: Board member, Worcester Children's Chorus; FSU Community Orchestra.</p>	<p>Creative Writing: Fiction, poetry, and creative nonfiction.</p> <p>Literary Studies: 20 and 21c African-American, American working-class lit, and American women writers, emphasis on Black and women of color.</p>
Katharine Covino-Poutasse	Associate Professor	Licensure Courses Literature for Young Adults, Children's Literature, Classical Mythology, Honors Writing I, FYE	<p>English Dept: PEC; Curriculum Committee; Graduate Committee; High School Writing Contest</p> <p>Education Dept: Co-Chair Continuous Improvement Committee</p> <p>University: Co-Chair PASM; Co-Chair Undergraduate Research Conference; CTL Committee; General Education Assessment Group; IRB; WGSS</p> <p>Discipline: Co-Chair Methods Commission, NCTE; Chair Intellectual Freedom Award, NCTE;</p>	<p>Scholarship: Critical Literacy, Critical Pedagogy, Social Justice Education, Transformative Education, Censorship, Critical Engagement with Cultural Myths, and STEAM</p> <p>Children's Books: Digital Technology</p>

			Standing Committee Against Censorship, NCTE Community at Large: Bromfield School Council; Harvard School Council	
Steven Edwards	Professor	Fiction Writing, Nonfiction Writing, Editing and Publishing, Foundations of Professional Writing, Poetry Writing, Environmental Writing	Harrod Lecture Committee; General Education Ambassador for Reading, Writing, and Information Literacy; Assessment Committee; High School Writing Committee	Nonfiction Essays, short stories, and poems
Lisa Gim	Professor	Shakespeare, Early Modern Women, Early Modern literature, 17th century literature, Drama, Film and Literature, World Literature	English Studies Department Chair 2013-2022; Curriculum Committee 2000-2024; PEC Committees; AUC Committees; Department Committees	Shakespeare; Early Modern Women Writers; ; Queen Elizabeth 1 studies
Michael Hoberman	Professor	American literature, Jewish literature, folklore	University Promotions Committee	Early Jewish American history; American literature; New England studies
Wendy Keyser	Associate Professor	Licensure Courses Literature for Young Adults, Children's Literature, LGBTQ Issues and Literature, Reading Poetry	Faculty Academy Education Unit Library Committee Honors Committee PASM Department Committees	LGBTQ literature and children's literature, teaching with empathy, dialogic instruction
Aruna Krishnamurthy	Professor	18 th and 19 th Century British, World Literature, South Asian Literatures.	MSCA chapter president, VP, Grievance officer AUC-Curriculum Dept committees Provost Search	British Literature, South Asian Literature, World Literature
Frank Mabee	Professor	British Romanticism, Critical Theory, Game Studies, World Literature, First-year Writing	Departmental Committees, University Tenure Committee (chair), Gen Ed Assessment Team	British Romanticism, Urban & maritime radicalism, Gender Studies, Game Studies, Cultural Studies
Irene Martyniuk	Professor	20th Century British and World Literature	Department Committees	Geopolitical implications of literary representations of Afghanistan,

				stories told by people in liminal political areas
Benjamin Railton	Professor	American Literature and American Studies, First-year writing, Capstone	Graduate Program Chair, American Studies Minor Coordinator AUC Chair, LA&S Council Chair, Dept committees	American literature and studies, Public scholarship
Jennie Snow	Assistant Professor	Multiethnic American Literature; First Year Writing; Film and Visual Studies	Undergraduate Research Conference, Integrative Learning Cohort Facilitator, FYE for English Studies, Department Committees	Multiethnic American literature; critical refugee studies; first-year writing and open pedagogy
Collin Syfert	Assistant Professor	Communication, Public Speaking, Rhetorical Criticism, Environmental Communication	Department committees, IRB committee, MSCA Professional Development committee	Science communication, Rhetoric of science, Environmental communication
Elisabet Takehana	Professor	Media Studies, Rhetorics of Style, 20th and 21st century literature, digital humanities	University Tenure Committee Presidential Search Committee	Stylometry, electronic literature, digital humanities, 20th and 21st century literature, media studies and book history.
Kisha Tracy	Professor	Global Medieval Literature (esp. Medieval Africa); Bible as Literature; Mythology; Storytelling and Oral Tradition; World Literature; First-Year Writing	AUC (Chair); General Education Program Area (Chair); Open Educational Pedagogy; Center for Teaching and Learning; Faculty Academy; Department Committees: Curriculum, Scholarships and Awards, Student Success; Cultural Heritage through Image; Society for the Study of Disability in the Middle Ages; The Lone Medievalist; National Humanities Center; TEAMS; MAA CARA	Medieval Disabilities (especially mental health); Scholarship of Teaching and Learning; General Education; Cultural Heritage; Public Humanities; Memory; Confession
Diego Ubiera	Associate Professor	Latin American and Peninsular Literature; World Literature; Caribbean Studies; US Latinx Literature; Latin	PEC Departmental Committee; Fulbright Student Program National Screening Committee; CTL Faculty Area Lead;	Nineteenth-Century Caribbean Intellectual History, Dominican/Haitian S American and Caribbean Literature

		American Film; Spanish-Language Pedagogy	Community Read; Leading for Change; Honors Committee; Hispanic Heritage Month Committee; Recognition Awards Selection Committee; Department Committee	
Wafa Unus	Assistant Professor	Journalism, News Reporting and Writing, News Production, Science Reporting, Big Data & Artificial Intelligence in Journalism	Community Read Committee	Journalism history, News Deserts, Collaborative Journalism, Local News and Civic Engagement, News Literacy, Minority press
Heather Urbanski	Associate Professor	Composition Studies, First-Year Writing; Popular Culture; Professional Writing	Curriculum committees (both department and university); FYE development; AIF grant review; Health and Safety committee	Popular culture; Disability Studies; First-Year Writing

d) Staff support

We have one full-time administrative assistant in the department.

Job duties required in the role include (see **Appendix 30** for a full list of duties):

- Providing administrative support to an academic chair and department.
- Working independently and as a member of a team;
- Being committed to fostering a welcoming environment for students, faculty and administrators
- Being highly organized with a high degree of competence and knowledge of the functions of the University and English Studies Department.

e) Resources

1. Fiscal

The English Studies Department Operating Budget (See **Appendix 11** for AY 2022-23) covers supplies and day-to-day operation costs for all faculty in our three concentrations. Department budgets across campus were reduced by 3% in 2021, and now remain flat. The budget is administered by the chair and the department administrative assistant. This budget also includes funds for department faculty/student initiatives such as the publication of *The Point*,

Route 2, the campus literary journal, and our annual High School Writing Competition. Faculty travel fund, which has also fallen over the years, now stands at \$317 per FT faculty per year, and is issued separately from the Operating Budget, but placed within it for allocation. Actual travel reimbursements vary among faculty members' needs and the yearly goals of the department. For example, every year a small number of faculty opt not to use their travel funds: these days, \$317.00 does not go far in conference travel. Their funds remain in the department travel fund pool, and, at the discretion of the chair, are used to augment other colleagues' travel. Department policy for travel reimbursement is determined by the following priorities: 1) Travel to a professional conference to present a paper or to participate in a formal capacity such as organizer or officer, and 2) Attendance at a conference, usually out of one's major field of study, to promote professional development in such areas as program assessment. If funds remain, they can be used to support attendance at conferences that support other department initiatives. In addition to the travel funds provided by the University through our budget, faculty are also eligible to receive annual Continuing Scholarship funds, typically between \$800-\$900. Faculty may also apply for Special Project Grants or the AIF that can be used for travel or other professional expenses. During the period of this review, faculty were granted funds to support their scholarship. Adjuncts, then and now, do not receive any travel or professional development Support. Department funds are also used to support student-centered events and purchasing teaching supplies and supporting teaching and learning activities.

Graduate Program Budget: The graduate program has 3000\$ annually and is currently used to support travel and teaching resources.

2. Equipment

The English Studies Department provides its faculty members with complete service through basic office equipment such as a department printer/scanner that allows faculty to print and scan from their laptops. Department faculty are well supplied with paper and office supplies and may request special equipment or materials as needed. All full-time faculty have personal offices with a desk, office chair, bookcases, and an additional chair for students or guests. Each office is equipped with a phone and a separate phone extension specific to that professor.

3. Space

The English Studies Department is housed in Miller Hall, where it occupies the entirety of the second floor, as well as two offices on the first floor and three the lower level of the building. We also maintain conference rooms for faculty and student meetings on the first floor. One full-time administrative assistant runs the main office, which is open to students from 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Our faculty teach in classrooms across campus, including at the McKay Campus School.

Recently, we have been given a large room in the basement level for our Journalism Lab. Students who are enrolled in the College Newspaper course have access to this space and use it to produce each edition of *The Point*.

4. Library

Like all departments on campus, the English Studies Department benefits from the FSU library, but does not dictate its content. The FSU library maintains a solid collection of primary texts in

English Literature, coupled with important criticism. New works are added every year as space and budget allow. The library also maintains a collection of print journals and electronic journals and a number of databases important to the field. Recently, the Library has acquired a collection of electronic books and has plans to get more. The increasing acquisition of important online databases allows students access to full-text articles from journals to which FSU does not subscribe. Additionally, English Studies faculty collaborate with FSU librarians to promote information literacy. For example, several of our faculty including Dr. Elise Takehana and Dr. Katharine Covino-Poutasse, along with our former faculty member, Dr. Anna Consalvo (now at the University of Texas at Tyler) have worked with librarian Asher Jackson to digitize texts from The Robert Cormier archive (first brought to our university by English Professor Emeritus Marilyn McCaffrey), housed at our university library, and have contributed to the Annual Robert Cormier symposium. Dr. Unus, Dr. Syfert, and Dr. Tracy have collaborated with the Library to develop OER materials. Such collaborations and the daily help provided by our librarians enable us to reach our students though offering vital sustained research experiences in information literacy vital and collaborative, hands-on learning opportunities for students. (See **Appendix 12** for the Library report for English Studies.)

2. Program Processes

a) Curriculum

1. Process for curriculum development and recent activity

All departments are required to have an Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. At the beginning of each academic year faculty vote on the membership of the Curriculum Committee, ensuring that each concentration is represented and that the needs of the department will be met. Faculty members self-nominate, and final membership is determined by a ballot vote if the number of nominees exceeds the number of available seats on the committee. Positions for student representatives are also available. Curriculum Committee meetings are held monthly or more often as the needs of the department dictate.

The main purposes of the Curriculum Committee are 1) to review proposals for their content, potential contributions to the department's needs and goals, potential program ramifications, feasibility, etc., and 2) to consider any potential issues that might arise in the All University Committee governance process. Proposals are generated by English Studies faculty members, usually with the collaboration of faculty in relevant concentrations. They are then submitted to the Curriculum Committee, and then reviewed and voted upon by the department as a whole. Those that require All University Committee (AUC) governance approval are submitted to that process, which culminates in the approval of the University President.

Graduate program curriculum proposals (like all Graduate proposals, including those for MA Theses for example) come first to the Graduate Chair, who then brings them to the Graduate Committee which reviews and votes on all proposals. When appropriate/required, proposals then move to the FSU Graduate Council and then the FSU President for full university-wide approval.

2. Recent Activity

General Education Designations

The bulk of curriculum activity in the last five years has focused on English Studies offerings in the new General Education Program. After the passage of the program, departments on campus reviewed their courses and decided which courses should be proposed for which designations. In English Studies, we proposed to the AUC and were approved for the following.

- In AY21:
 - English Studies submitted ENGL 1100 Writing I and ENGL 1200 Writing II for Writing and Information Literacy designations respectively. While these two courses were required in the new curriculum, it was necessary to have them reviewed by the campus as a whole to ensure that they met the GE learning outcomes as understood university-wide.
 - Six SPCH courses were approved for Speaking and Listening.
 - Sixty-six courses were approved for Literary Inquiry and Analysis (with an additional one in AY23).
 - ENGL 2999 Approaches to English Studies was designated as MAJ (i.e. counting both towards the major and General Education) for all concentrations to meet the Literary Inquiry and Analysis requirement; in addition, the Continental/Post-Colonial requirement was designated as a second MAJ meeting Diverse Perspectives for the Middle and Secondary Initial Licensure concentration only.
- In AY22:
 - Twenty-one courses were approved for Diverse Perspectives.
 - Four courses were approved for Civic Learning.
 - Four courses were approved for Procedural and Logical Thinking.
 - Eighty courses were approved for AIA (Integrative Learning).
 - Twenty-seven courses were approved as Integrative High Impact Practices.
- In AY23:
 - Courses cross-listed for interdisciplinary minors were approved for their respective designations.

Middle and Secondary Initial Licensure in English Concentration Restructuring

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's decision to combine the middle and secondary licenses into one necessitated making many changes to the curriculum, both within English Studies and in alignment with other programs on campus. This led to the development of a new four-year program that combined the middle and secondary education licensure programs, the development of a minor, the redesign of existing courses, and the creation of new courses. The English Studies education faculty are key participants and contributors in the newly-formed Program Area in Secondary and Middle School Education.

Professional Writing Concentration and Minor Restructuring

The motivation for revising the Professional Writing Concentration in AY19 was primarily to reimagine the major to attract and recruit more students, better address the needs of our existing students, and take advantage of the specialties and expertise of the five new hires in this concentration. The guiding principle was to develop a curricular structure that was flexible enough to withstand the fast pace of change within the writing fields while also providing majors with a path to professionalization after graduation. Requiring courses across the three new

clusters (rhetoric and medium, genres, and production) ensures that all our graduates are exposed to subjects they will need to be familiar with as professional writers. Major changes included:

- Offering an introductory course ENGL 2025 Foundations of Professional Writing that gives students a context for their future work as professionals in writing and publishing and usher them into a culture of professionalization early in their academic career.
- Increasing the required credits from 21 to 27.
- Reorganizing requirements into three clusters.

The restructuring of the minor in AY22 included:

- Requiring ENGL 2025 Foundations of Professional Writing.
- Changing literature requirements from two survey courses to one Literary Inquiry and Analysis (LI) designated course.
- Decreasing required credit hours.

New Courses

New courses developed in the past five years include:

- ENGL 2003 Latin American Literature
- ENGL 2020 Style Studio
- ENGL 2025 Foundations of Professional Writing
- ENGL 2030 News Reporting and Writing
- ENGL 2765 LGBTQ Issues and Literature
- ENGL 3065 Jewish Literature Around the World
- ENGL 3082 Methods of Teaching English (5-12) I

Courses were also developed to support the new major and minor in Digital Media Innovation:

- ENGL/COMM 2325 Introduction to Digital Humanities
- ENGL 3600 Language, Literature, and the Digital Humanities
- ENGL/COMM 4799 Digital Media Innovation Capstone
- ENGL/COMM 4800 Digital Media Innovation Capstone Fieldwork

Renaming Courses

In ongoing attempts to keep courses up to date and significant, the following course names have been revised:

- ENGL 2000 American Literature I: Age of Exploration to the Civil War to American Literature I: Legends/Massacres and Slavery/Freedom
- ENGL 2100 American Literature II: Civil War to the Present to American Literature II: Making and Remaking America
- ENGL 2200 British Literature I: Beowulf to Milton to British Literature I: Adventure and Transformation
- ENGL 2210 British Literature II: Pepys to Shelley to British Literature II: Revolution and Romance
- ENGL 2220 British Literature III: Brönte to Rushdie to British Literature III: Empire and Resistance
- ENGL 2400 World Literature I to World Literature I: Myths and Traditions
- ENGL 2500 World Literature II to World Literature II: Cultures in Conversation

- ENGL 2323 Digital Journalism to Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, and Journalism
- ENGL 2620 Classical Mythology to Greek and Roman Mythology
- ENGL 2860 Introduction to Secondary School Teaching to ENGL 1400 Introduction to Teaching English in Middle and Secondary School
- ENGL 3030 The Middle Ages to The Global Middle Ages
- ENGL 3840 Online Magazine to Freelance Writing for Magazine
- ENGL 4850 Special Methods in Teaching English to Methods of Teaching English (5-12) II

New Graduate courses created and offered in the last five years include:

ENGL 9046: Literature of U.S. Empire

ENGL 9069: Multiethnic American Literature

ENGL 9073: South Asian Literature

ENGL 9074: Global Premodern Women

ENGL 9105: Narrative Theory and Media Franchises

3. Curriculum requirements

As detailed before, the Initial Licensure, Literature, and Professional Writing concentrations each have their own requirements for graduation and four-year plans of study. Common to each concentration is a seven course English Studies core, which provides the foundation of the major: ENGL 2999: Approaches to Literature, three literature survey courses, one upper-level literature course, one upper-level writing-intensive course (designated as ENGL 3055 The Structure and Nature of Language for licensure students), and ENGL 4999: English Studies Capstone. This core has offered students more flexibility in their course selection, allowed them more “room” to take additional courses within their specific concentrations and greatly strengthened their senior year portfolio work and culminating departmental experiences.

While our program of study acknowledges the value of a common curricular base, we also recognize the varying needs of the students as they prepare for future careers in teaching, in professional writing, in graduate school in English Studies, or in the many professions English Studies majors move into after graduation. Each concentration has its own plan of study as detailed before.

4. Description of curriculum

See the Overview of curriculum in the earlier section.

5. Plans of study, two-year rotations, handbooks

Four-Year Plan: Each concentration makes available to students on its webpages its four-year plan of study. These plans include a list of required courses in the major and concentration as well as General Education requirements and free electives. Their year-by-year organization (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th) makes explicit to students a plan of study that will ensure timely matriculation. The department ensures that the Four-Year Plans are current, an ongoing task with a curriculum that continues to evolve. (See **Appendices 13, 14 and 15**)

Two-Year Course Rotations: While the department has in the past published our Two-Year Course Rotation on our department website, the University has recently required these course rotations more formally. Through the University seats list as well as through the department, students can find confirmation when required courses are offered (each semester or once a year, depending on the requirement and size of the concentration) and see the range of elective courses available. Although a useful tool for students to plan their course of study, the University and the department has some ongoing challenges in fully implementing course rotations since faculty leaves of absence and sabbaticals result in ongoing course reassignments. Course enrollments also often complicate a Two-Year Course Rotation. Given budget constraints, often classes with fewer than ten students may not run, and it is possible that required courses may not be offered every semester. Nonetheless, many courses can be offered in a two-year course rotation. (See **Appendix 16 for Five-Year Course Rotations**).

See **Appendix 17** for the MA English two-year rotation.

6. Curriculum trends in the discipline

In response to the slowing down of enrollments in the discipline, where, according to federal data, the number of English majors dropped by a third from 2011 to 2021,³ departments across the country have been engaged in curricular changes to the major as one measure to attract and retain students. Some of these changes are around creating flexibility within the program structure, offering multiple tracks or concentrations (rather than a monolithic major), focusing on diversity and social justice within the curriculum, and an emphasis on skills training. A 2018 ADE report suggests that key to departments' success will be reviewing and revising programs in terms of the "interest that study in English can hold for students, bearing in mind conditions that influence their learning . . . from digital reading and writing environments to employment concerns."⁴

The English Studies department has embarked on significant curricular changes and revisions in keeping with the trends in the discipline, and anticipate more to come in our action plan. Not only do we have a flexible curriculum (beyond the 21-credit core that also contains some of ADE's recommendations such as including an Introductory course and a writing intensive course), we also have a considerable focus on diverse literatures, including Latin American, LGBTQ+, African, Jewish, etc. The study of literary history (through survey courses) continues to be a staple part of our core curriculum, in keeping with trends in the discipline, and made more relevant to our students' interests by revising course content, course descriptions and course titles. An emphasis on literary periodization and a broad spectrum of genres is important

³ Nicholas Goldberg, "Where Have All the English Majors Gone?" *LA Times*, October 24, 2022.

⁴ Colleen Flaherty, "The Evolving English Major," *Inside Higher Ed*. 2018. Also see *A Changing Major: Report of the 2016–17 ADE Ad Hoc Committee on the English Major*. Web publication, 18 July 201. It is important to understand that the ADE information and analysis is built around only an 18% response rate from higher education institutions, and is skewed towards PhD and MA granting institutions rather than BA granting ones. While we have followed many of the best practices recommended by this report as part of our own program development processes, some of the recommendations do not take into account our identity as a regional public university and our program that has three tracks, including one that is dedicated to preparing high school English teachers.

for the success of the Licensure program, in particular. “Media studies” and “digital studies” are an area of growth within our program, where, in partnership with the Communications media department, we developed a new Digital Humanities major. We have a renewed focus on internship courses and skills training in our Capstone course that is also in keeping with the trends within the discipline.

In general, our program reflects the identity of “English studies, a term intended to show self-aware hospitality to media, composition, rhetoric, film, cultural studies and other interests that reside in English departments at all types of institutions.”⁵ We anticipate continuing on a process of refinement and change in the next few years to ensure that we consider the input provided from organizations such as the ADE, while keeping in mind the unique challenges and mission of our institution, which is primarily a four-year public higher education institution located in North Central MA.

Summary of recent changes that demonstrate our response to the trends in the discipline:

- Changing focus, renaming, and rewriting the course descriptions of our Literary history courses (surveys) to better communicate the “increased importance of issues of race, ethnicity, gender, and identity” in literary history while continuing the “focus on historical contextualization of literary works” as recommended by the ADE.
- Globalizing and diversifying the curriculum through our Literature courses such as The Global Middle Ages and a new hire on Multi-ethnic American Literature.
- Creating flexibility in our curriculum through recent changes to the Professional Writing track, as mentioned before.
- Infusion of media studies and digital humanities through collaborating on a new Digital Media Innovation major, as well as building courses such as Big Data etc. into the course offerings.
- A renewed commitment to skills training with increasing internship opportunities and revising the Capstone course. Building hands-on skills training through coursework in College Newspaper and Editing and Publishing.
- Promoting interdisciplinarity in our Literature, INIE, Speech and professional writing through interdisciplinary monies, team-taught courses and courses aimed at addressing the needs of other disciplines.

The changes and additions to the Graduate program likewise reflect current trends in the discipline, including creating the Creative Writing Certificate program and adding numerous graduate courses focused on a diverse range of texts, cultures, and nationalities.

7. Course delivery methods

See above “delivery mechanisms”

8. Learning experiences:

The chart below details some of the high-impact learning experiences offered by our department.

⁵ Colleen Flaherty, “The Evolving English Major.”

Learning Experience	AY 2018-19	AY 2019-20	AY 2020-21	AY 2021-22	AY 2022-23
Internships	2	0	4	2	3
Practica	3	10	3	4	2
Independent Study (Includes 5 writing associates)	7	9	3		1
Honors Thesis Research and Writing	6	5	3	5	4

The following internships were completed during AY 18-23:

Semester	Student	Faculty Supervisor	Internships location	Details
Spring 2019	Suzanne N. Karioki	Heather Urbanski	Pulse Magazine	Published 11 online articles, edited for Worcester Medicine (publication owned by the same company), was asked to continue freelancing for Pulse after internship concluded.
Summer 2019	Tenzin Dhakpa	Steven Edwards	Reading Ways	
Fall 2020	Jordan Costa	Steven Edwards	Office of Alumni and Development, Fitchburg State University	
Spring 2021	Zachary Houle	Steven Edwards	Making Opportunity Count (MOC): Housing, Childcare, and Family	

Spring 2021	Jordan Costa	Steven Edwards	Office of Alumni and Development, Fitchburg State University	
Summer 2021	Peter Canova	Wafa Unus	Harvard Press	Peter now works for Neiman Foundation at Harvard University. https://niemanreports.org/authors/peter-canova/
Summer 2022	Nicholas Valdez	Wafa Unus	Harvard Press	
Summer 2022	Andrew Esielionis	Wafa Unus	Harvard Press	
Spring 23	Jaxon Deary	Heather Urbanski	New England Clean Energy	Create technical articles for the New England Clean Energy blog and promotional content for social media platforms ranging from 4-5 posts per week.
Summer 23	Kyle Lockwood	Wafa Unus	Sentinel & Enterprise	Made front page eight times during summer internship.
Summer 23	Noah Connors	Wafa Unus	InterPrint Inc.	

We have the following internships in **AY 23-24**:

Semester	Student	Location	Supervisor	Details
Fall 2023	Nicholas Valdez	Sentinel & Enterprise	Wafa Unus	Covered Mayoral Debate. Interviewed both candidates after debate. Made front page twice.
Fall 2023	Mitch Walsh	Sentinel & Enterprise	Wafa Unus	Field reported on election night at the polls. Made front page.
Fall 2023	Noah Connors	Sentinel & Enterprise	Wafa Unus	
Spring 2024	Zoe Chrisostomides	Fitchburg Access Television/Sentinel & Enterprise	Wafa Unus	TBD
Spring 2024	Jared Catalano	Sentinel & Enterprise	Wafa Unus	TBD
Spring 2024	Nicholas Valdez	Fitchburg Access Television/Sentinel & Enterprise	Wafa Unus	TBD
Spring 2024	Julia Dufresne	Harvard Press	Wafa Unus	TBD
Spring 2024	Brady Elliot	Fitchburg Historical Society	Steven Edwards	TBD
Spring 2024	Brady Elliot	Archives	Steven Edwards	TBD

The following **Writing Associates** were completed from AY 18-23 with Dr. Heather Urbanski:

Fall 2018: Erica Foley

Spring 2019: Brooke Pellitier

Fall 2019: Autumn Battista, Samantha Foster-Smith, Tenzin Dhakpa

English Studies 2018 - 2023 Practicum Students and Placements ENGL 4860/4870 English Licensure Practicum [8-12] [5-12*]

Fall 2018

Hannah Britten Fitchburg: Fitchburg High School

Faculty Supervisor: Katharine Covino-Poutasse

Spring 2019

Courtney Meneely Fitchburg: Arthur M. Longsjo Middle School

Hannah Paquette Leominster: Leominster High School

Faculty Supervisor: Katharine Covino-Poutasse

Spring 2020:

Nicholas Elliott Leominster: Leominster High School

Heather Ferguson Leominster: Leominster High School

Matthew McCann Leominster: Leominster High School

Jake Warnock Fitchburg: Arthur M. Longsjo Middle School

Faculty Supervisor: Katharine Covino-Poutasse

Sean Carney Leominster: Samoset Middle School

Courtney Jensen Leominster: Samoset Middle School

Molly Potter Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical: Montachusett Regional

Sanya Sum Leominster: Samoset Middle School

Michaela Vick Fitchburg: Fitchburg High School

Alexander Voyiatzis Leominster: Leominster High School

Faculty Supervisor: Wendy Keyser

Spring 2021

Patrick Doyle Nashoba: Luther Burbank Middle School

Christoph Knoll Gardner: Gardner Middle School Completed

Kelly Mansfield Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical: Montachusett Regional

Faculty Supervisor: Katharine Covino-Poutasse

Fall 2021

Brett Levesque Worcester: Burncoat High School

Faculty Supervisor: Wendy Keyser

Angela Morin Leominster: Leominster High School

Faculty Supervisor: Katharine Covino-Poutasse

Spring 2022

Lindsay Connors Nashoba: Luther Burbank Middle School

Julia Leblanc Lunenburg: Lunenburg High School

Faculty Supervisor: Katharine Covino-Poutasse

Spring 2023

Emma Lee Richard Chapalonis Leominster: Leominster High School
Meghan Mahan Athol-Royalston Regional: Athol High School
Faculty Supervisor: Wendy Keyser

The information above shows that our department is very active in supporting our Honors students (see “Scholarly and Creative Productions” section for details), as well as our majors through Independent studies. The above list of practica shows the enduring commitment of our Licensure faculty in supporting students to a successful completion of their requirements. While internship during the academic year is hard for our students (reflected in the fluctuating numbers), we have offered many during the summer sessions. As mentioned earlier, internships are an area of growth for the department, where by 2018-2024, we would have supported at least 20 internships.

9. Department/Program policies or processes that affect curriculum

We are in the process of updating our Department Policies and procedures, to be completed by Spring 2024. Please see **Appendix 27** for existing department policies.

b) Students

1. Learning expectations

Students need to maintain a GPA of 2.0 to graduate with a degree in English Studies. They must also fulfill the requirements of their chosen track as well as core requirements.

2. Retention initiatives and learning supports

Retention of students is determined by many factors, some of which, such as financial costs and tuition burden, are outside the control of the department. As such, the university does not have a retention plan though there are several supports available for students on our campus through offices such as student services, TRIO and Tutoring and Career center. The university also uses the SSC system to flag at-risk students which our faculty utilize in large numbers. Also, faculty are provided with professional development opportunities to enhance their pedagogy and reflect on student learning experiences to address retention issues.

At the department-level, our retention activities are spread over multiple efforts.

One of our most important retention efforts is the care and empathy that goes into advising our students, where faculty provide guidance and social support on curricular, extra-curricular and career topics. The consistent and reliable availability of advisors over email and on campus, use of tools such as SSC and Degreeworks, and a clear articulation of what paths exist and what careers may result from the major, have all contributed towards the retention of students.

Prioritizing student needs beyond the demand of their workload has been a hallmark of our department faculty. Often, faculty have offered flexible modalities to accommodate student needs, and have generously taken on Independent and Directed Studies (with less than adequate compensation) to ensure that students meet their requirements towards graduation. Similarly, our

faculty have been active in locating and coordinating internships for our students over the summer and during the academic year, to help them gain valuable skills. We have reasonably small class sizes that also help in creating a mentorship bond between students and faculty and ensuring a fulfilling learning experience for our students. When possible, we use a range of technologies such as the Active Learning classroom, and other learning management tools such as Blackboard, YellowDig and Peerceptiv to enhance the classroom and learning experience. Also, our administrative assistant is dedicated to the success of our students and is very proactive in offering help to students, when approached.

As mentioned at several places in the document, the department also undertakes many student-centered activities during the academic year that range from creating extra-curricular opportunities to career orientation. These activities, such as English Club and the Writing Club, create a sense of community and belonging, crucial for student retention. Our faculty-run Student Success committee has been very active in connecting alumni with current students to showcase the possibilities of the English major. This has helped create a network and connection between peers. Department awards and scholarships also affirm student success and help them financially.

Our plan of study is built around a loose cohort model that begins with the introductory “Approaches to Literature” in the sophomore year, and concludes with the Capstone course in the senior year. This helps to build a sense of community among students (especially true for our Initial Licensure students), though sometimes impeded by students’ ability to conform to the plan of study (for many reasons).

Opening out the curriculum to new interests and possibilities in the ever-changing discipline of English Studies is yet another retention effort. To this end, our department continues to expand the identity of English Studies to include a range of writing skills beyond the traditional research paper, and with plans to revisit the core and other components of our program. We are in the process of harnessing the new general education program to provide more cross-disciplinary opportunities to our majors and have plans to develop new minors and certificates to enhance their learning and skills. Though this goal has been impeded by the pandemic, using our assessment activities to address the needs and impediments of the learning outcomes of our students is yet another area of intervention. We plan to extend our assessment into concentration-specific metrics in the next five years.

To address Graduate program retention, and particularly to facilitate current graduate students moving through the program smoothly and successfully, the Graduate Chair takes a proactive and hands-on approach to advising, including reaching out to grad students who have not registered for courses and/or those who have not taken a class in a couple semesters to talk about their options. Quick email responses and being available in person or online to address any issues that may come up have been key in retaining students. There is also a degree of flexibility in the program in terms of timelines for completing the MA thesis with a defense and thesis submission. This allows students—many of whom are working professionals—the adequate time to complete their work successfully. Faculty have been greatly supportive of their situation.

c) Faculty

1. Teaching responsibilities

We have 17 full-time faculty in the department, spread across Literature (8), Professional Writing (5), Initial Licensure and Speech courses/concentrations (2) and Speech (1). All faculty teach 24 credits each academic year, unless they have an APR (release time) for other professional activities. Except for Dr. Syfert, who teaches Speech courses, all faculty are required to and do teach freshman writing courses as part of their workload.

In order to meet the requirements for our major programs, minors, and service courses, FT and PT faculty (Writing and Speech courses) in the English Studies department have taught the following number of sections in the span of this Program Review period (including independent studies, practica, directed studies and internships):

	AY 2019	AY 2020	AY 2021	AY 2022	AY 2023
Literature Courses	57	51	38	31	34
Professional Writing Courses	21	18	16	14	14
Initial Licensure	11	8	7	10	7
Speech Courses	12	15	13	7	8
First-Year Writing	65	63	59	56	49
Total	166	155	133	118	112

With the permission of the Dean, faculty may teach one course in the Graduate Program as part of their undergraduate load or for a stipend. The latter has been the norm in the past five years. Several faculty routinely teach in the (SGOCE) School of Graduate and Continuing Education's evening undergraduate program during the academic year and winter and summer Sessions I and II. These courses may be traditional or online (summer and winter are entirely remote course delivery). See **Appendix 18** for a full listing of both undergraduate and graduate-level courses in the last five years.

In addition to the existing courses within the program, faculty have the option to offer special topics courses as a means of piloting a course for future development or as a means to capture student interest in a specific area. These courses are reviewed and approved by the Curriculum Committee, and then by the entire faculty as a whole. Faculty may also be enlisted to develop new courses that, with the approval of the All University Committee and the President, are integrated into our curriculum as regular offerings.

Faculty also have the opportunity to share their research interests with our Literature and Licensure English majors through the Senior Seminar and Major Authors course. In the Professional Writing program, “shell” courses create an opportunity for teaching a wide range of interests. In addition, English faculty routinely teach undergraduate directed/independent study projects, Honors theses, internships, practica, master’s-level theses and master’s level action research projects. Faculty also have the opportunity to "team teach" with colleagues in the History, Economics, and Political Science department.

A full list of the department’s courses can be found in the FSU Catalog:
<http://www.fitchburgstate.edu/academics/university-catalog/>

Part-time faculty: the department hires adjunct faculty for teaching a number of our Writing I, Writing II and Speech courses. The reasons for hiring PT faculty are several: faculty sabbaticals and leaves of absence, APRs that have course releases attached to them, and the need for our FT faculty to teach within their specialties to serve our majors, in the Gen ed programs and for supporting interdisciplinary minors. All adjunct faculty hold, at minimum, a MA in English, Journalism/Communications, or an MFA. Some adjunct faculty hold PhDs and one is PhD, ABD. See **Appendix 19** for CVs of our PT faculty.

The following is a breakdown of teaching responsibilities by FT and PT workload. This is affected by faculty leaves of absences, APRs, sabbaticals and faculty retirements.

Number of 3 credit sections offered (includes practica)	AY 2018-19	AY 2019-20	AY 20-21	AY 21-22	AY 22-23
Full-time faculty sections	113	117	120	101	105
Part-Time faculty sections (Writing I and II, and Speech, occasionally)	48	39	18	24	14
Total number of sections	161	156	138	125	119

Graduate-level teaching

Since the relaunch of our MA in Literature program, every semester (including the Summer sessions) has featured one MA course all taught by a full-time English Studies faculty. We also offer one Creative Writing Certificate course per semester, so far all taught by full-time faculty as well but with the hope of including adjunct faculty, writers from outside the University whom we recruit to teach those Certificate courses (with the first scheduled for Summer 2024). See **Appendix 28** for a listing of all graduate courses AY 2018-23.

2. Advising responsibilities

Our faculty are extremely devoted to their advisees and expend considerable time and energy to their advising both within and outside advising appointments. They assist students not only with course selection and their schedules, but also try to give students suggestions concerning career plans, as students often look for longer term guidance with graduate work and career advice. We try to develop a close working relationship with our students and provide significant support to them.

The availability of SSC, Degree Works and College Scheduler have made advising easier and more accurate by providing student easy-to-access pages and formats for their plan of study and course schedule. The department has “SSC fellows” to provide advice and assistance when needed. Recently, we also have General Education Ambassadors to help advisors navigate the new program. Both these roles have release time/stipend associated with them. SSC allows the department chair to access lists of unregistered students to remind them of courses available each semester. The Department Chair is also responsible for advising students enrolled in Minors.

As the numbers of English majors have reduced in the last five years from 90 to 38, English Studies faculty have a reasonable to low advising load, but depending on the size of the concentration and the number of students enrolled, faculty have different advising loads in our department, and this is sometimes an area of concern. Middle and Secondary Education faculty have a heavier load, while Literature and Professional Writing and Speech faculty have fewer advisees (see **Appendix 20** for advising breakdown). Faculty leaves of absence and sabbaticals have an effect on advising. Students have to be temporarily reassigned to other faculty and then reassigned once again when staffing has changed. Also, in order to maintain a roughly equal number of advisees, students are sometimes shifted to other faculty, and this breaks the continuity of advisor/advisee that we aim to maintain in ideal circumstances.

Graduate program advising is done by the graduate program coordinator through the year.

3. Professional development initiatives

Faculty have participated in a broad range of professional development activities. One primary source of professional development for members of our department is the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL). Since our last self-study, several faculty have participated in programs sponsored by the CTL including summer institutes and workshops on course redesign, inclusive teaching, service learning, and syllabus redesign as well training on AI, personal wellness, and anti-racism. In addition to attending programs at the CTL, faculty have facilitated events at the CTL in areas related to professional development. These include presentations on fostering critical thinking and reading, developing metacognitive skills, Real Talk pedagogy, General Education, and course redesign and assessment. Our faculty also regularly attend Fitchburg State faculty development days in the fall and spring. During COVID, we began regular, in-department virtual meetings among writing instructors - full-time and adjunct faculty - to share concerns and teaching strategies to address issues specific to the COVID moment. This continued post-COVID as a series of brown bags for which instructors volunteered to discuss their pedagogy. Faculty members have also served as General Education Ambassadors for the past two years, including for 1) Information Literacy, Reading, and Writing and 2) Civic Learning, Diverse Perspectives, and Speaking and Listening. Ambassadors develop professional development opportunities for those across campus teaching their designated learning outcomes

in the General Education Program. Several English Studies faculty members have also participated in the Faculty Academy, a three-year cohort professional development model centered on Real Talk pedagogy.

d) Quality Improvement Initiatives

Though the pandemic created disruption for the normal functioning of the department for at least two academic years, a number of quality improvement initiatives have been undertaken by the department in the last five years to enhance our enrollment, retention and program mission, that stretch from curricular revision to student opportunities and faculty scholarship and service. Details of these initiatives can be found in the Action Plan section. To summarize here, some of these initiatives include:

- Curricular revisions and updates across all concentrations.
- Capstone course that better prepares students for career options
- Increased number of internships and enhanced focus on career advice and opportunities
- Increase in events and activities for students
- Professional development support for faculty: conferences, training and pedagogic support.
- Conversations on first-year writing more broadly and related to experiences of multilingual students
- We participated in a development workshop run by then Director of Assessment, Merri Incitti in May 2019.

The department is discussing revisions to the core of the curriculum. Otherwise individual concentrations have their own improvement initiatives:

- Professional Writing: Faculty in this concentration are working on expanding offerings in business, technical, and science writing to be able to continue branching out with interdisciplinary and intra-departmental curricular opportunities as has already been done with Political Science and Game Design, as well as the Digital Media Innovation program, which integrates nine departments. The college newspaper, *The Point*, now has digital as well as paper editions, and students have a dedicated space—Journalism Lab—to use for planning. The students also host a podcast news show on the University’s new podcast network, called “Getting to the Point.”
- Middle and Secondary Education - Faculty in this concentration are working to widen student exposure to global literatures so teacher candidates are better prepared for the MTEL exam.
- Literature - Faculty in this concentration are piloting new courses in the area of LatinX literature, film studies, multi-ethnic literature and literature of war/imprisonment. There is an effort to address issues of diversity in courses as well as building a global component within appropriate courses. The literature concentration has also revised course content, description, and titles of the “survey” courses to better reflect the scope of these period-focused literary studies. Senior seminar and major authors courses show a renewed commitment to the theme of diversity in literature.

- Speech - As demand for Speech courses grows, course offerings will also expand. All on-the-books Speech courses (seven courses) have been recently taught and updated, except for SPCH 3100 General Semantics. This includes SPCH 2800 Rhetorical Criticism, which has not been offered since before the previous program review period. Additional courses are also at various stages of implementation, including Communication and the Environment, Rethinking Capitalism (cross-listed with IDIS), Science Communication, and Political Communication. All of these new and current courses have incorporated OER learning materials and have been revised with interdepartmental collaboration.

In addition, the department overall is committed to increasing the number of internship opportunities for our majors in the Literature and Professional Writing concentrations. Over the Program Review period, six internships were officially recorded for university credit.

Graduate program: Along with recruiting new students for both the MA in Literature and Creative Writing Certificate programs, the Graduate English program is likewise committed to responding to the needs of our current students. In the Certificate program for example, we are working to expand our course offerings and rotation, both by adding more subjects and by recruiting outside writers to teach some of those courses. And in the MA program, we have created and begun to teach courses that fit into a Gender Studies track in response to student interests and ideas.

3. Program Outcomes

a) Program

1. Graduates rating of the program (See Appendices 21 and 22)

Information from AY 2019-20 is based on 10 responses.

The rating for our program are as follows:

Select metrics	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Availability of classes	1	4	2	2	1
Frequency of course offerings	0	3	3	3	1
Size of classes	2	7	0	1	0
Quality of instruction	2	5	3	1	0

Quality of texts and other instructional materials	1	3	3	3	0
Availability of faculty outside of the classroom	2	2	4	2	0
Timeliness and relevance of course content	1	3	4	2	0
Quality of high impact (outside the classroom) experiences (e.g. internships, practicum, etc.)	2	1	1	3	1
Overall level of challenge in the coursework	1	4	3	1	1
Match between career goals and course-of-study requirements	2	1	2	2	1
Overall level of faculty advisement	2	1	2	2	1

Graduation surveys from 2021 and 21-22 indicate the following:

Select metrics	Very High/Very Well	High/Well	Average/Neutral	Poor
Overall satisfaction with my experience with Fitchburg State University	10	6	4	
Ability to appreciate various forms of artistic and literary works	10	4	1	
Ability to speak, read,	6	6	3	

write, and listen effectively				
Ability to think critically and synthesize ideas within and across disciplines	6	7	1	
Ability to apply experience, training and research when working individually or with others	6	3	4	1
Ability to articulate the relationships among local, national and global entities	3	4	5	1

From what data we have, the majority of the students have indicated a high level of satisfaction in most areas. Some areas that need attention are, the quality of high impact experiences such as internships and the match between career goals and course requirements. We are actively working on both these aspects of our program.

2. **Alumni Feedback Survey results:** We have a total of 18 respondents over three years of data collection. The information below reflects their response to some of the questions.

Select metrics	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Quality of Faculty Instruction	9	8	1	0
Level of individual attention	10	8	0	0
Quality of academic advisement	10	6	2	0
Curriculum linked to job related skills and knowledge	3	11	3	1
Preparation to meet the demands of my job	5	10	2	1

Career type		Career Satisfaction	
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Government Agency	7	Very satisfied	6
For Profit Corporation	8	Satisfied	8
Non-profit	3	Neutral	2
		Dissatisfied	1
		Very Dissatisfied	1

Career placement: 10 in Education; 2 in Law/legal services; 2 in Retail; 1 in Media/Journalism/Publishing; 1 Sports/Fitness; 1 Military/Defense; 1 Computer Science/Technology. The 2023 survey has a total of 8 responses and indicates that three of the eight were looking for jobs at the time the survey was administered. Out of the five that had employment, three were employed in the field of education, one in retail and another in landscaping.

Here, too, the data (though limited) indicates high levels of satisfaction with the curriculum teaching and advising in our program, but also that we need to bolster career pathways and opportunities for our students.

Graduate Program: We currently do not have information for the graduate program.

b) Students

Learning outcomes and Assessment Activities

Assessment Overview

Each academic year, the English Studies Assessment Committee evaluates student work from two key courses in our curriculum: ENGL 2999: Approaches to English Studies and ENGL 4999: Capstone. ENGL 2999 is our gateway course to the English major and enables sophomore-level students to learn and apply fundamental theories to the analysis of literature. Work from this class is analyzed in the fall semester. In ENGL 4999, senior-level students create and synthesize a Capstone Portfolio of their work in the English Studies major, showcasing the breadth and depth of their knowledge of the field; the portfolio also includes their metacognitive writing on their learning and growth as they have progressed through their studies. Additionally, it prepares students for their next steps in professional lives. Work from this class is analyzed in the spring semester.

Our assessment of these two courses focuses on evaluating students' skills in analyzing literary works, as well as their demonstration of research writing and information literacy skills. Each year, the English Studies Assessment Committee analyzes a set of papers from a complete section of ENGL 2999 and all the Capstone Portfolios from one section of ENGL 4999. They assess four objectives from students: Use and citation of primary texts (Objective 1); Use and citation of secondary texts (Objective 2); Critical engagement with primary texts (Objective 3);

Critical engagement with secondary texts (Objective 4). These are assessed on a scale of NA, 1 (Does not meet standard), 1.5 or 2 (Meets the standard); 2.5 and 3 (Exceeds the standard). Each document is assessed twice, and the data gathered represents the averages of those two scores. With this approach, we are able to draw some tentative conclusions about the degree to which English Studies students' skills progress in the course of our curriculum. We are also able to target skills that should be focused on as areas for improvement.

Due to the pandemic-related disruption to department business, the department was unable to undertake regular assessment activities in AY 2019-20 and 2020-21.

The data we have reflects information from the Annual assessment report in AYs 2018-19, 2021-22 and 22-23.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

English Studies Department Shared Learning Outcomes:

- 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.

Literature Concentration Learning Outcomes:

- 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

Professional Writing Concentration Learning Outcomes:

- 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.

5-12 Initial Licensure in English Concentration Learning Outcomes:

- 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

Assessment Plan of PLOs and the timeline for assessment:

PL O #	Assessment description (exam, observation, national standardized exam, oral presentation with rubric, etc.)	When assessment was administered in students' 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)
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).
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 7 cultures, and periods using and citing secondary texts (Objective 2)	ENGL 2999 in fall and ENGL 4999 in spring	All	Assessed on a scale of NA, 1 (does not meet standard); 1.5 and 2 (meets standard); 2.5 and 3 (exceeds standard).
3.	Be able to critically analyze texts and contexts. (Objective 3)	ENGL 2999 in fall and ENGL 4999 in spring	All	Assessed on a scale of NA, 1 (does not meet standard); 1.5 and 2 (meets standard); 2.5 and 3 (exceeds standard).
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).

The rubric used for assessment:

Rating→	1 Does Not Meet Standard	2 Meets Standard	3 Exceeds Standard
Indicator ↓			
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
Ability to use and cite	Demonstrates unclear	Demonstrates basic	Demonstrates

hard-copy secondary texts	or incomplete citation	use and citation	complex use and full citation
Critical engagement with primary texts	Demonstrates no critical engagement (ie, summary)	Demonstrates basic critical engagement	Demonstrates sophisticated critical engagement
Critical engagement with secondary texts	Demonstrates no critical engagement (ie, summary)	Demonstrates basic critical engagement	Demonstrates sophisticated critical engagement

Summary of findings by year (longitudinal data over the most recent five-year span)

AY 2018-19

In May 2019, the English Studies Assessment Committee assessed 12 final papers from Approaches to English Studies and 12 portfolios from English Studies Capstone. We assessed all those materials for four objectives and the rubric mentioned above. We assessed each document twice, and the data below represent averages of the two scores.

Data breakdown:

Approaches ENGL 2999 averages:

- Objective 1: 2.08
- Objective 2: 2.10
- Objective 3: 2.19
- Objective 4: 2.13

Students performed well on average with scores of over 2. The assessment indicates that they are learning the program objectives.

Capstone ENGL 4999 averages:

- Objective 1: 2.07 with one NA
- Objective 2: 1.98 with one NA
- Objective 3: 2.09 with one NA
- Objective 4: 1.98 with one NA

Students performed well on PLOs 1 and 3, but performed slightly below the desired level on PLOs 2 and 4. This indicates a gap we need to address, improving their facility with use and citation of secondary texts (PLO2) & their engagement with secondary texts (PLO4).

Reflection on the results (close the loop)

Need for Approaches to begin conversation done summarily in Capstone about preparing students for professionalization, graduate work and employment in related fields to English as well as to do the academic preparation (introduction to theories, analytical and research methods) that it does currently in order to bring students into the discipline of English Studies.

Need for Capstone to become more content-centered to redress deficits in PLO scores above, concerning use of secondary texts: use and citation (PLO 2) and also engagement with secondary texts (PLO 4). Also address the nature of the discipline of English in addition to the skills it emphasizes. Find measures to assess learning outcomes in this class regarding professionalization, resume creation, job letters, applications to graduate work and preparation for exit portfolio for professional employment in writing related fields.

AY 2019-20

We did not conduct assessment activities due to the pandemic-related disruption.

AY 2020-21

In AY 20-21, as we were unable to conduct assessment of PLOs due to pandemic-related disruptions, the annual reporting was around “Department lessons learned and accomplishments,” “PLO assessment impacted by the move to remote learning,” and “reflection on changes that the department has had to engage in given changes to teaching modality and especially capstone experiences”. Our inability to conduct assessment activities was mainly due to two obstacles: 1) student portfolios in Spring 2020 were not all digital and therefore during lockdown, these were largely submitted in hard-copy for Fall 2019, which was as a face-to-face class. Although in Spring 2020 these were requested digitally in the Capstone class, due to the lockdown and limitations with on-campus gatherings, 2) we were unable in the department to copy, scan and distribute the portfolios to our faculty members working remotely. Thus, there was no data reported to capture here.

AY 2021-22

Still in a mode of recovering from the post-Covid work adjustments, the assessment committee could not review the fall 2021 ENGL 2999 “Approaches” class. That class was reviewed by the chair and two other faculty.

Data breakdown:

Results for Approaches class: Overall averages for 7 final papers from the class.

- Objective 1: 2
- Objective 2: 1.5
- Objective 3: 2.7
- Objective 4: 2

Results for Capstone class: Overall averages for 5 portfolios

- Objective 1: 2.65
- Objective 2: 2.25
- Objective 3: 2.45
- Objective 4: 2.1

Reflection on results:

In our assessment results based on the two courses we evaluated for the common objectives of English Studies, we found that students meet the standards and show improvements from the sophomore to senior year.

Objective 1: 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.

Objective 2: This is an ongoing challenge at the 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.

Objective 3: In this area, students 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.

Objective 4: Students meet the standards generally, with scores above 2 in both classes, but this is an area that needs further bolstering.

AY 2022-23

In Spring 2023, the English Studies Assessment Committee assessed 10 projects from ENGL 2999: Approaches to English Studies and 10 portfolios from ENGL 4999: English Studies Capstone.

Data breakdown:

Approaches to English Studies

Objective 1: 1.975

Objective 2: 1.975

Objective 3: 2.025

Objective 4: 1.975

Senior Capstone

Objective 1: 2.35

Objective 2: 2.3

Objective 3: 2.3

Objective 4: 2.35

Reflection on results:

The longitudinal data here is encouraging, suggesting that between their sophomore and senior years our English Studies Majors are indeed strengthening these important skills at the use and citation of texts. It's also encouraging to see that even at the sophomore level our Majors are working above average with primary sources, and simply need more practice with secondary ones to further develop those skills. We will communicate this data to the faculty teaching these courses as well as all our faculty, so we can focus both in these spaces and across the board on continuing and further strengthening these goals.

Objective 1: Generally, students have some but limited 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 improved in the final year to 2.65, which suggests a trajectory of growth and improvement in literary analysis and writing.

Objective 2: This is an ongoing challenge at the 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.

Objective 3: In this area, students 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.

Objective 4: Students meet the standards generally, with scores near or above 2 in both classes, but this is an area that always deserves our focus.

Ongoing changes made to the program in response to the assessments (based on data collected and analyzed over the most recent five-year span)

As mentioned previously, two of the last five years were affected by the pandemic, leaving the department few opportunities to translate many of the findings into action. While both students and faculty returned to campus AY 21-22 and AY 22-23, the disruptions in learning and well being for both students and faculty required, and continues to require, a period of readjustment, flexibility and care. Incoming students who experienced learning loss due to remote learning and loss of social interaction during their high school years pose new challenges for faculty that we are beginning to respond to.

One key area is highlighted in the assessments above (even in the absence of adequate data): the need to emphasize information literacy in our literature courses so that students develop a better grasp and use of secondary sources. While this goal is a work in progress, the two most recent assessments suggest a positive move in that direction, where students show improvement between their sophomore to senior levels. To build on this, we have emphasized the goal of information literacy in our next five-year plan.

The department is planning to engage in concentration-specific assessments in the next five years.

Scholarly and creative productions: Honors students in ours and other programs have completed an Honors thesis under the guidance of department faculty. Graduate faculty have served as advisors to many Graduate theses as well.

Honors Theses: 2018 - 2023

Kaitlyn Chase: “‘Damned Mob of Scribbling Women’ Female Literary Pioneers and their Bold Contributions” (spring 2019)

Advisor: Dr. Frank Mabec

Anna Arisco Advisor: "Animals Across Cultures" (fall 2020)
Advisor: Dr. Ben Railton

Sean Carney: "Inclusive Education" (fall 2020)
Advisor: Dr. Diego Ubiera

Heather Ferguson: "The Importance of Representation in Secondary English Classrooms"
(fall 2020)
Advisor: Dr. DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld

Aidan King Advisor: "Writing A Pilot Script" (fall 2020)
Advisor: Dr. DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld

Kurtis Kendall: "The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Journalism" (fall2020)
Advisor: Dr. Wafa Unus

Brooke Pelletier "Crystal Hearts" (spring 21)
Advisor: Dr. Steve Edwards

Lorenzo Demalia: "Why I'm Happy" (spring 22)
Advisor: Dr. Steve Edwards

Benjamin Hunsicker: "Middleworld: An Interactive Fiction Game" (spring 22)
Advisor: Dr. Frank Mabee

Miranda Gustin: "Disability in the 14th Amendment" (spring 23)
Advisor: Dr. Kisha Tracy

Nicole Snow: "'Hunter:' The Process of Writing a Fictional Horror Novella" (spring 23)
Advisor: Dr. Steve Edwards

Sabrina Bailey: "How It Felt to Be Me Writing How It Feels To Be Me" (spring 23)
Advisor: Dr. Ben Railton

Our department also mentors students for participation/presentation in the Undergraduate Research Conference held annually on campus and other conferences at the regional and national levels.

- Dr. Kisha Tracy was the Faculty Sponsor, Plymouth State University/Keene State College Medieval and Renaissance Forum for student Alicia Protze in 2017. Dr.. Tracy was also Faculty Sponsor at the Fitchburg State Undergraduate Conference on Research and Creative Practice for Autumn Battista and Melissa Rheume (Poster) – "Communicating Significance of General Education" in 2018, and Miranda Gustin (Oral Presentation) on "Disability in the Fourteenth Amendment" in 2023.

- Dr. Ubiera's student Sean Carney presented at MassURC (Massachusetts Undergraduate Research Conference).
- Dr. Katharine Covino-Poutasse has mentored over 15 students for the FSU Undergraduate research Conference over the years. She also submitted a conference roundtable proposal with members of Sigma Tau Delta (Honors English Society) for undergraduate students at Fitchburg State University. Further, she attended the national conference in Cincinnati, Ohio (March 21st – March 24) and co-presented with the student group - #MeToo/#IHave: Censorship, Freedom of Expression, and Sexual Violence – From Social Media to Classroom Texts and Discourse – at the Sigma Tau Delta Convention – March 21-24, 2018. She has also mentored current students as well as graduates at a number of conferences as co-presenters. These conferences include NEERO - New England Educational Research Organization, NEATE - New England Association of Teachers of English, the Literacy Essentials Conference, and NCTE - National Council of Teachers of English.
- Dr. Frank Mabee was the faculty advisor for Game Design /Honors Student Benjamin Hunsicker who developed an interactive role-playing text adventure called "Middleworld" that he presented at the MassURC in 2022.

The following Graduate theses and Exit exams were completed from AY 2018-23:

Fall 2018

Minjung Kim: *Study Of The Roles Of Mothers And Daughters As Seen In Literature*
 Advisor: Dr. Irene Martyniuk

Fall 2019

Christine Pettis: *Writing A Horror Story for Women: The Limitations To Female Agency Exposed In American Horror Story*
 Advisor: Dr. Frank Mabee

Eammon Gosselin: “‘O’er the Tessellated Pavement Strew: ‘Mary Robinson’s “Sappho and Phaon, in a Series of Legitimate Sonnets, with Anecdotes of the Grecian Poetess” Mary Tighe’s “Psyche; or, the Legend of Love” and Ann Batten Cristall’s Poetical Sketches, in Irregular Verse and the Forgotten Voices of Early Anglophone Romanticism
 Advisor: Dr. Aruna Krishnamurthy

Spring 2021

Andrew P. DaSilva: *Franz Kafka & The U.S Immigrant Experience*
 Advisor: Dr. Benjamin Railton

Spring 2022

Natalie Chase: *Exploring The Impact of Young Adult Literature, Choice Reading, And Skill Focused Instruction*
 Advisor: Dr. Wendy Keyser

Fall 2022

Amy Gentile: *An Inheritance of Guilt: An Examination of the Reinterment of King Richard II in Shakespeare's Henry V*

Advisor: Dr. Lisa Gim

Spring 2023

Justin Roberts: *John Steinbeck And His Influence on The Evolution Of Naturalism And Realism In American Literature*

Advisor: Dr. Benjamin Railton

Master of Arts: English Exit Exam**Spring 2020**

Maura Bailey

Francesca Lewis

Jennifer Panarelli

Fall 2021

Kristen Sullivan

Internship and service learning scores/evaluations

We do not have data for this.

Trend Data Reflection/Analysis

Time to degree completion details are not available.

Graduation rates

Graduation rates are calculated based on the number of full-time freshmen that enter in a particular fall semester who then graduate in six years or less. Our four-year average was 62.5%. This compares to 56.0% for the overall institutional number for the same period.

Analysis and Action Plan for the Future**1. Comparative strengths and distinctiveness, and areas of improvement across all program levels**

Despite the pandemic-related disruption, members of the English Studies department have excelled in curriculum development, teaching excellence, service and scholarship, and student support and other areas in the last five years as detailed at numerous places in the document. Some select highlights of departmental achievements are as follows:

Curricular/program changes and revisions:

Professional Writing: For the Professional Writing Concentration, the two main accomplishments are the significant revision of the curriculum for the major and the minor and the return of a print version of the campus newspaper, *The Point*, from an online-only publication. In terms of the former, the Professional Writing concentration was revamped at the major (AY 2018-19) and minor (AY 21-22) levels, which involved the creation of a new required course, Foundations of Professional Writing, as well as a series of clusters (Rhetoric and Medium; Genre; Production) that provide a flexible yet structured curriculum. Moving the campus newspaper, *The Point*, from a web-only publication to one that also has a print edition has led to, in the past five years, students in the College Newspaper course, under the direction of Dr. Wafa Unus, producing 56 print issues, (with an estimated combined print run of 38,000 copies) of *The Point* for distribution on campus and in the local community. In addition, the website continues to have significant traffic, there is a new podcast related to *The Point's* reporting, and a City News Team of students publishes in the *Sentinel & Enterprise* (the local newspaper) through our partnership and initiative to address Fitchburg's status as an emerging news desert.

Creation of the Digital Media Innovation Major and Minor in collaboration with the Communications media department: Dr. Elise Takehana put tremendous effort into initiating and building the DMI program, collaborating with nine departments and academic affairs, shaping AUC proposals, and getting it passed by the BHE. She also shaped two new shell courses for this new major, as well as an NEH Humanities Connections Implementation Grant. The work for Digital Media Innovation was undergirded by a range of activities to explore and promote digital humanities that Dr. Takehana undertook in previous years. This included mapping lab and technology needs across campus, as well working on the idea of a Humanities lab, co-authoring a paper and making a web-page on digital humanities. One significant contribution in this area is the creation of a media recording studio in the library's underutilized room 208 and a redesign of the CTL space.

Speech: Since Dr. Collin Syfert was hired in 2019, all Speech courses were updated and adapted to use OER learning materials, as previously described. The new course Communication and the Environment was offered twice as a Special Topics, and will be moving through governance for permanent status this Spring. Other new courses are also being planned in collaboration with the new Sustainability program, the proposed Science Writing certificate program, and the Economics, History, and Political Science department. Beyond course updates and expansion, the Speech concentration is involved in the establishment of the Center for News and Information Literacy, Deliberative Democracy and Collaborative Journalism, which is hosting the First Annual Summer Institute for Journalism and News Media and the creation of a Speaking Center for peer-tutoring in presentation and public speaking skills.

Middle and Secondary Licensure: A major revision was completed for the Initial Licensure concentration in order to accommodate changes made to the requirements by the state Department of Education and the creation of the Program Area for Middle and Secondary Education (PASM). PASM brings together all of the middle and secondary licensure programs (including history, technical education, mathematics, biology, chemistry, and English) under one program of study. One benefit of this new structure is that Massachusetts DESE now counts our "completers" who receive licensure in one large group, across content areas, rather than in

separate groups; this change means that the smaller programs do not have to lobby DESE to remain in operation when they have fewer than five completers in five years. In the new structure of PASM, we created a common minor shared across all licensure content areas, and we added two required classes for all students in the minor: Diversity in Education and Teaching the Adolescent Learner. While these classes have the EDUC designation, our two English licensure faculty teach them on a regular basis. PASM also created an additional course in methods of teaching, so we now offer Methods of Teaching English (5-12) I and Methods of Teaching English (5-12) II. These courses are also taught by our licensure faculty. Within these two methods courses, we incorporated two newly required (by DESE) “gateway tasks,” which all licensure students must complete in order to progress towards eligibility for licensure. These gateway tasks are: adapting a lesson (which must be completed with the same prompt by content area) and presenting a lesson with feedback from an in-service educator. Please see “Curriculum” section in program processes for more detail.

The track boasts a 97% pass rate for its students and we are continuing to strengthen this component of the program through curricular revisions and opening other resources to students.

Literature: In the past five years the Literature track has added new courses on diversity to the program that include LGBTQ Literature, Jewish American Literature and Latin American Literature and continue to offer many specialized courses through our Senior Seminar and Major Authors shell. The track has also revised its “periodization” survey course titles and descriptions to better showcase a focus on the literature of under-represented communities, and diversity of race, gender, class, sexuality and ethnicities in these courses. The department hired Dr. Jennie Snow whose specialization includes Ethnic American and ELL areas. Dr. Lisa Gim is serving as the General Education Ambassador for Literary Inquiry and Analysis (LI), and has contributed expertise to the creation of a LI rubric for the General Education Program. Please see “Curriculum” section in program processes for more detail.

General Education: As discussed in previous sections, we also continue to provide significant support to the previous Liberal Arts and Sciences and new General Education programs, with the submission and approval of many English Studies courses with designations related to that program. First year writing has been assessed recently and our department is working on strengthening support for first-year writing students in the next three years (see AIF below). Also, see “Curriculum” section in program processes for more detail.

HEIF, Davis and Academic Innovation Fund grants for program development

Department faculty have been active and successful in applying for and receiving support for program development through the newly created Academic Innovation Funds from the Academic Affairs office.

In 2022-23, three English Studies professors—Drs. Snow, Urbanski and Ubiera—were awarded a three-year Academic Innovation Fund grant for the project, “Supporting Education Justice in First-Year Writing.” This project aims to gather information and perspectives from students, faculty, and staff on what it means to be a college-ready campus in terms of the first-year writing courses (primarily ENGL1100: Writing I and ENGL 1200: Writing II) with a particular focus on

multilingual students as well as potential COVID-learning loss. A survey was administered to freshman students in fall 2023 and plans are underway for spring 24 to discuss the findings and create an action plan. See **Appendix 23** for more details.

Two AIF proposals were submitted to Dr. Wafa Unus in 2022-23 that aimed to transform the newspaper into a community paper in the next five years. This plan included but was not limited to creating a news consortium, a center for news literacy, a minor in political reporting to address diminishing coverage of local government, a clear pathway toward employment for students who worked on the campus newspaper, and a multi-step plan that facilitated the growth of the existing publication allowing it to become self-sustaining and independent while increasing publication frequency and expanding its coverage area (see **Appendix 24** for more details). While that grant was not funded, Dr. Unus created a Political Journalism minor in collaboration with the EHPS department and set up a City News Team for promoting campus and local journalism. A second AIF grant aimed at creating a “Center for News and Information Literacy, Deliberative Democracy, and Collaborative Journalism” that was partially funded in 2023 and has led to the creation of a News Literacy Summer Institute. See **Appendix 31** for more details.

We have participated in the Davis Grant 2019-22 initiative, a plan to remake career and academic advising: a collaboration between the University’s Career Services and Advising Center and academic departments to develop and match core career competencies to disciplinary curricula, and provide credentialing for students that supplements their academic transcripts into assist our students in gaining and then articulating career competencies for the world of work. In 2022, we created a map of competencies that students in the English Studies major can utilize for internship opportunities or when interviewing with prospective employers. See **Appendix 3** for details.

We participated in the HEIF grant, an initiative designed to refine and expand the Heritage Language Program at Fitchburg State University and promote multilingualism and multiculturalism. Some action ideas that came out of the grant include: mentoring multi-lingual students, developing co-curricular support for ELL students and heritage language speakers, developing a Multilingual Scholars Seminar to provide credit-bearing support for students enrolled in our writing 1 and 2 classes in academic writing, reading, listening, and speaking, as well as specific assignment support. We are revisiting some of these ideas in conjunction with project “Supporting Education Justice in First-Year Writing.” See **Appendix 29** for more details.

Campus-Wide Initiatives and Leadership Roles of Faculty

In addition, English Studies faculty members have been instrumental in several consequential campus-wide initiatives, including the creation (2017-2019) and then implementation of the new General Education program, which is still ongoing (2019-present), as well as the development of the new First-Year Experience course and curriculum (2016-19). In terms of the latter, the new General Education program development, four faculty members (Kisha Tracy, Elise Takehana, Ben Railton, and Heather Urbanski) served on the development team, one is the current Program Area chair (Kisha Tracy), two are serving as General Education ambassadors (Collin Syfert and Steve Edwards), while three participated in the first round of program assessment in May 2023 (Steve Edwards, Jennie Snow, and Heather Urbanski).

As detailed in other places, several faculty members have been actively involved in campus-wide efforts to increase the use of open access textbooks and other course materials while others were instrumental in the creation of the Program Area for Middle and Secondary Education. Other university initiatives supported by our faculty members include workshops and presentations for the Center for Teaching and Learning, research presentations for the Center for Faculty Scholarship, the creation of the Falcon Scholars program within the Center for Faculty Scholarship under the leadership of Dr. Elise Takehana. Our faculty have participated in the campus-wide Self Study for NECHE accreditation, Strategic planning process, and Provost hiring committee. Our faculty have been active in the DEI work of the campus through Hispanic Student Mentorship Program (where Dr. Ubeira and Dr. Edwards played a leading role), Leading for Change and the Faculty Academy, where Dr. Unus has taken a leadership role. Two of our faculty have received the Deans' Anti-Racism funds to promote the work of anti-racism on campus.

Many of our faculty took on Leadership roles in the last five years:

Dr. Kisha Tracy has served as the General Education Coordinator for two years and as the Coordinator of the Center for Teaching and Learning prior to that. She also served as the AUC Co-Chair for four years.

Dr. Elise Takehana served as Co-Coordinator of the Center for Faculty Scholarship for four years. Dr. DeMisty Bellinger-Delfeld is currently serving in that role.

Dr. Wafa Unus has taken a leadership role in the Faculty Academy where she serves as a mentor for the second and third cohort of the Academy across our sister institutions.

Dr. Aruna Krishnamurthy has served as MSCA Fitchburg Chapter president, VP and Grievance Officer from 2017-2022. She has also served as the bargaining representative in both Day and DGCE bargaining.

Dr. Frank Mabee served as the IDIS Minor program coordinator.

Dr. Wendy Keyser and Dr. Katharine Covino-Potauuse have both served as PASM coordinators.

Dr. Katharine Covino-Poutasse has served as the University Undergraduate Research Conference Coordinator.

Dr. Diego Ubeira and Dr. Edwards have served as faculty mentors in the Hispanic Student mentorship Program.

Faculty Scholarship

Despite the demands inherent in teaching four courses every semester, and despite the pandemic-related disruption, our faculty have been exceptionally prolific in their contributions to the discipline through their scholarly and creative publications, books chapters and journal and magazine articles and numerous conference presentations (see **Appendices 4 and 5** for full

details). Our faculty are both experts in their fields and are deeply engaged teachers, dedicated to exploring and utilizing the best pedagogical practices in their English Studies fields. Our scholarly work in English Studies not only enhances our own teaching, but also serves as a model to our students. We have attempted to involve students in the scholarly process, often going beyond the classroom by mentoring and encouraging students to submit their work at undergraduate and graduate conferences, and to publish in campus and professional publications as well.

Marketing and Recruitment activities

We also reworked the English Studies presence on the university website, following new guidelines provided by the administration's web design team, and created brochures, participated in Open houses and Future Falcons program.

High school writing contest: Each year, the English Studies Department sponsors a High School Writing Competition, open to high school students from Massachusetts schools. Students respond to a faculty-designed prompt, submitting an essay, a collection of poems, a piece of short fiction, or even a multimedia creative project. A committee of faculty members reads the submissions and selects the winners; first place winners have their work included in our literary magazine, *Route 2*. A celebration is held in the spring, and student winners and their families are invited to an event on campus. After winners read from their work and have their photos taken, students are invited on a campus tour and given the chance to visit the campus bookstore with their gift certificates.

Student support

We have been very active in supporting students in our major through a number of activities. Through the Davis grant we have created a four-year action plan for our students where they work with their advisors to chart a post-graduation career plan. We have supported our students through panels with alumni, through the English and Writing clubs, Honor society, internships, awards, honors society, and other community-building activities.

Student Support and Success during the Pandemic

Our faculty proved tremendously innovative during the pandemic, maintaining frequent communication with students, sharing positivity and good cheer, and fostering determination and the love of literature, writing and teaching foremost in the minds of our students.

Our department adapted thoughtfully to the changes required by the pandemic. Remote learning was quickly embraced by faculty although we also continued to teach in some face-to-face modes in 2020-21. Because our department teaches foundational skills for all students across the campus – including Basic Writing, Writing 1 and 2, Speech and Literature courses – it was important to be there in a variety of teaching modes to support different student learning styles and university campus life for students during lockdown. We had some faculty teaching writing, education and literature classes face to face, many teaching online synchronously while other faculty taught their classes online.

Teaching Writing 1 and 2 remotely posed many unique problems: Keeping students engaged and focused on the writing tasks while they worked remotely and often solitarily was difficult. Faculty met frequently with their students in one-on-one and in group discussion sessions to encourage them and supplement remote work assignments; many faculty members innovatively used breakout group sessions to generate discussions synchronously. Our faculty created an online “Teaching Writing Support Group,” meeting via Zoom to share problems, solutions, resources, technology tips and strategies for teaching composition remotely during the pandemic.

Our Initial Licensure Educators found ways to observe students doing their practica teaching and to video conference and guide them in various remote ways. Our Speech teachers had students perform speeches sometimes traditionally in person but also remotely in video-taped and live synchronous versions.

Recognizing that the pandemic also generated financial hardship and anxiety, faculty reduced students’ costs by using Open Education Resources, (some with the library’s help and others independently) or free texts online, and by being careful to adjust our learning expectations, altering our courses to accommodate students’ challenges, set-backs as well as their fatigue and anxiety that inevitably accompanied this unusual crisis. Special attention was given to students struggling in both emotional and financial circumstances, in difficult learning situations and recognizing that many had new economic constraints. Our faculty worked cooperatively with the innovations that our Student Affairs Offices and IT Offices came forward with, and worked to help support Fitchburg’s student population in many ways—with extended advising, one-on-one sessions and by being extra flexible. Our faculty rose to the challenge, working admirably hard and well; we can count the efforts of our department’s faculty and staff efforts as some of Fitchburg State’s best successes in helping students complete their classes and to graduate during the COVID19 crisis.

Our faculty’s resourcefulness and dedication were extremely impressive and this was the case whether or not our faculty were full-time or part-time. Indeed, special praise should be given to our part-time faculty in English Studies teaching writing sections who frequently went above and beyond to help students complete their work.

Besides the above reflections, several key accomplishments that were part of our department’s response to the COVID crisis:

During the pandemic the student newspaper never missed a print issue. Instead, we shifted the newspaper to a subscription model and the printers mailed print editions of *The Point* to subscribers. During that time, we had subscribers all over the country because this was the only time student’s extended families could see their work in print.

A special public presentation and discussion of the publication of *The Insanely Awesome Pandemic Playbook*, co-authored by Dr. Katharine Covino-Poutasse from the English Studies Department at Fitchburg State and by Dr. Elizabeth K. Englander of Bridgewater State, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center was shared with the campus and surrounding community on December 16, 2020.

The Graduate Program is committed to continuing to support our current students while promoting the program in order to recruit many more and significantly grow both the MA and Creative Writing Certificate programs. Supporting current students means offering at least one MA and Certificate course every semester (including summer sessions), advising students toward and through the Thesis or Exit Exams depending on their interests and needs, and helping make sure students make effective and efficient progress through the program on a timeline that works for them. Our faculty are committed to the success of both programs, often willing to teach at a low rate of compensation (rather than full stipend) to keep the program afloat during the under-enrollment trend.

Promoting the Graduate Program is our main focus for the future, and includes a number of immediate plans such as: relaunching our Graduate Colloquium series with events in the Spring 2024 semester focused on both student work/voices and faculty research/voices; publishing new issues of our *Falconer* Graduate Program journal, featuring revised student papers, samples of MA Theses, and faculty voices; and marketing our Program both locally (such as to local educators) and globally (such as through advertising in a variety of settings).

Assessment activities

Though disrupted by the pandemic, we have engaged in continuous assessment of our learning outcomes of core courses and reflected on the outcomes to understand how to strengthen our program (more on this below). We participated in a development workshop run by then Director of Assessment, Merri Incitti in May 2019 and developed rubrics for assessing our concentrations. We plan to revisit these rubrics and embark on concentration-specific assessment in the next five years.

2. Opportunities to extend existing strengths and resources in place or needed

Recent developments at the university suggest the possibilities for positive growth in certain areas of our program. These include

- The Internship and Career center has additional financial resources, enabling our students to secure paid internships, get career and skills training and build networks.
- Internally, we are developing internship models for *The Point* and *Route 2* to enable our students to take advantage of high impact learning opportunities.
- We have the opportunity to enhance our program offerings and chart new directions by working other disciplines through the AIF process.

3. Weaknesses found during the self-study

Some of the weaknesses we found in the self study are as follows:

1. As our enrollment in the major and across the institution has fallen, it has impacted us in many ways. Low enrollment (less than 8-10 students) has often (though not always) led to course cancellations across all tracks in the department. This often impedes our ability to offer course rotations that will help our students fulfill the plan of study in a timely manner. Though we try to find workable solutions for our students through a process of

course substitution and by offering independent or directed studies, students often complain about their lack of choices in courses. Low enrollment and course cancellations have also affected faculty morale in the department, where some have expressed concern about not being able to teach what they love.

2. Our assessment outcomes suggest that our students need further emphasis and training in information literacy, especially regarding the use and citation of secondary sources. While that learning outcome has recently shown improvement, it is clear that pandemic-related learning loss has affected all our students, from our incoming freshman students to English Studies majors. Faculty teaching Writing I and II have reported a wide range of factors that impede student success, and have expressed concern about the course caps being too high across the board, particularly given the institutional investment in education justice. Others have voiced concern in the great disparities in student load by faculty, where some might have 20 students a semester and others 135. The rise of AI tools such as Chat GPT and its implications for our discipline and learning outcomes is also something we need to take stock of. Our campus currently has no policy regarding its use.
3. Though more robust and reliable data needs to be gathered from our graduating students and alumni, it is clear that we need to continue to build a career focus within our program and examine and communicate how our courses prepare our students for a viable career after graduation. While the Licensure students find career success as educators (10 of the 18 who reported) and continue to build their professional lives with advanced degrees, the other two tracks need more apprenticeship opportunities through internships and other high impact experiences. This is vital, given that the foreseeable future of English Studies depends on connecting learning with career in a demonstrable way. While our Capstone course continues to focus on this outcome, along with our other efforts in the department, we hope to revisit this topic in our discussions around the core curriculum.
4. While our core curriculum is well balanced with a grounding in literary studies and an Introductory, Capstone and writing intensive courses, the question of whether the core is serving all tracks well has arisen. Issues range from the absence of a World/Global course in the core—necessitating alteration of the core for our Licensure students—to including the option of more thematic literature courses over the literary surveys.
5. There is a disparity in the number of advisees across concentrations, where some faculty have no advisees and middle and secondary education faculty have a heavier advisee load. This fluctuates each semester, but is something that needs to be addressed.
6. As the university recruits students from under-represented communities, academic, financial and institutional support and resources need to be provided to ensure retention of students.
7. There is also a need to market English Studies in an effective way, showcasing its intrinsic value for critical thinking, cultural understanding, information literacy, and communication, writing and editing skills. The value of the English degree for a range of employment opportunities, including high school and college-level English teaching, and a whole host of jobs linked with writing and editing skills also needs to be better publicized. We need institutional support to continue our departmental recruitment activities, website redesign, and sharing of our promotional materials.

4. Opportunities for addressing weaknesses

Some of the issues identified have been addressed in our Proposed Action Plan.

5. Positioning of program to address future direction of the discipline in the next five years

The Proposed Action Plan that includes all concentrations and the graduate program is designed to address the future direction of the discipline.

6. Action Plan for next five years:

We have included a short-term set of plans here that we hope to work on during spring 24. This is followed by a proposed long term plan.

<i>Key Objectives</i>	<i>Actions/Method</i>	<i>Resources: Internal or External</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Measurable Outcomes</i>
Short-Term: Spring 2024 (pre-Review Action Plan period)				
1) Implement a change of degree to distinguish BA from BS.	Department-wide process	None	Spring 2024	Offer BA in English Studies
2) Revise department policies and procedures	Department-wide conversation	None	Spring 2024	Updated policies
3) Outreach to Pen and Anvil Press for possible internship opportunities	Creative Writing faculty		Spring 2024	Increase internship for students interested in creative writing
4) Create Graduate Fiction Writing course	Creative Writing faculty		Spring 2024	Increase courses in the certificate
5) Revive Commencement breakfast	Department-wide	Student News Room/Miller Oval	Spring 2024	Student support and community building
6) Create student-faculty interaction opportunities	2-3 lunches in spring with majors to gather some input on program		Spring 2024	Student feedback

Proposed Long Term Plans

<i>Key Objectives</i>	<i>Actions/Method</i>	<i>Resources: Internal or External</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Measurable Outcomes</i>
Department:				
1) Increase our majors/minors and build sense of community	Create a Department strategic plan that includes:	1) Marketing office 2) Admissions office	Spring 24 onwards	Increase in the numbers

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Working with the Marketing and Enrollment Office to share resources and create enrollment strategy specific to English Studies ● Bring prospective students to campus for English Studies; ● Survey current students as to why they selected Fitchburg State. ● Reach out to undecided students, especially in Writing I and II ● Understand best practices in recruitment and retention of English majors locally and national-wide ● Rotation of faculty at Open Houses/Future Falcons ● Communicate what we already do in better ways ● Pursue pathway agreements with local institutions and local schools ● Explore new and innovative directions for the program and curriculum by tapping into faculty expertise and using resources such as the AIF. ● Adopt a culture of care; coordination for passion projects; support student organizations 			of majors and minors
2) Consider revisions to the curriculum, especially to the core, and think creatively to better represent what we	1) Dedicate department time to considering revisions	1) Faculty time and labor	End of 2026	Address a range of issues,

<p>already do and current trends in our fields as well as changing student demographics</p>				<p>from including a global/diversity component in the core, to ensuring its usefulness across the concentrations.</p>
<p>3) Create an infrastructure to provide students with access to robust, in-depth, competitive and remunerated internship opportunities, study abroad, and professionalization with publications, conferences, and organizations across a wide range of industries and locations</p>	<p>1) Collect on past and current off-campus internship locations and develop and disseminate Internship handbook. 2) Provide more information on internships and the professional prospects of our majors to showcase the flexibility of studying English 3) Investigate options for on-campus internship opportunities 4) Provide students internship opportunities earlier in their career and provide professional development for students around internships 5) Develop resources for students to continue to attend professionalization events (conferences, competitions, etc.) 6) Join pilot program in the Alumni Office to pair current students and alum</p>	<p>Dean’s and Provost’s Offices for possible funding 1) Career and Advising Services 2) Davis Grant action plan. 3) Faculty lead/coordinator for Internships. Create an internships coordinator position to enhance the availability and outcomes of internships. 4) Alumni Office 5) English Studies Student Success Committee</p>	<p>1) AY 24-25: Internship handbook</p>	<p>Increase and strengthen career building activities to prepare students for discipline-specific and meaningful career after graduation</p>
<p>4) Balance class size, course caps, and equity of workload issues</p>	<p>1) Advocate for class size and course caps in conjunction with course numbering commensurate with discipline standards and student needs</p>	<p>Dean of Arts and Sciences</p>	<p>Spring 2024</p>	<p>Ensure a better learning experience and</p>

				outcomes for students.
5) Revisit department Vision Statement	Department retreat		AY 24-25	Align Vision statement with changes in the discipline
6) Assessment and analysis of data for concentration-specific learning outcomes on a rotation basis	In conjunction with (and not duplicating) General Education assessment for Literature, but also developing concentration-specific rubrics and implementing assessment for all concentrations.	General Education Program Area English Studies and departmental Assessment Committee	Spring 2025	Better understanding of the effectiveness of our curriculum
Key Objectives	Actions/Method	Resources: Internal or External	Timeline	Measurable Outcomes
First-Year Writing:				
1) Conduct an evidence-based evaluation of the First Year Writing sequence (ENGL0100: College Writing Essentials; ENGL1100: Writing I; ENGL1200: Writing II; HON1200: Honors English II) to align with education justice framework supporting linguistic diversity and nonremedial pathways for incoming students transitioning from high school, the workforce, the military, and/or other situations.	1) Collect input from FYW students (via focus groups) in S24 regarding linguistic strengths and goals; possible disability accommodations; and other support requests. 2) Collect input from Student Affairs offices like ACT Center and Disability Services 3) Collect input from FYW faculty regarding priorities re multilingual strengths 4) AY 24-25: Evaluate input from stakeholders and research peer institute models 5) Revamp and relaunch Writing Associates as on-campus internship (S24-F24) 6) AY25-26: Propose new support structures through faculty governance based on input from AY23-24, including expanding both	AIF grant through AY 25-26 HEIF grant review (AY 24-25) Student Affairs, Disability Services	Action Steps 1-3 (AY23-24) Action Steps 4 (AY 24-25) Action Steps (AY 25-26)	Create a more meaningful experience of freshmen-level writing for all students. Increase retention and recruitment through this effort.

	existing and future informal and formal partnerships and pathways with Student Support departments.			
2) Working with the General Education program area and librarians to develop more robust understanding of and tools to support the Information Literacy learning outcome in Writing II	1) Develop plan with the General Education Program Area (PAGE) and library representatives for identifying needs for materials and then plan for drafting them (S24) 2) Establish a departmental committee to coordinate with PAGE and library reps on current practices related development of tools needed for W2 (AY 24-25)	General Education Program Area Library representatives Faculty who teach Writing II (sharing classroom practices, pedagogical tools, etc.)	AY25-26 (complete)	Impart critical skill of Information Literacy, especially in an AI-infused world.
3) Developing a system to integrate the Gen Ed assessment reports into departmental assessment efforts, or via another mechanism (perhaps a reconstituted Writing Committee), to identify areas of effectiveness as well as those where additional support may be needed.	1) AY 24-25: Formalize Departmental Assessment Committee procedures to consider PAGE assessment data and determine future changes. 2) AY 24-25: Based on Departmental Assessment Committee recommendations, consider if a new standing committee for FYW advising and coordination is warranted.	General Education Program Area Department assessment and curriculum committees	AY 24-25 (begin) AY 25-26 (complete)	Better understanding of the effectiveness of our contributions to the General Education curriculum.
Key Objectives	Actions/Method	Resources: Internal or External	Timeline	Measurable Outcomes
Literature Concentration				
1)Examine course rotations and ensure that we attain the balance between depth and breadth in our offerings	Chair works with faculty		AY 24-25	A better exposure to the discipline beyond periodization courses.
2) Encourage students to take a wide range of courses during their program with various literature faculty representing different expertise; Assess what courses have been taken by majors	1) Department-specific advising guide with respect College Scheduler 2) College Scheduler guides	College Scheduler/SSC Champions	AY-24 onwards	Better exposure to the discipline.

in the last five years and identifying gaps in coverage	Make sure we offer a diverse schedule of courses at different times of the day and days of the week			
3) Develop professional opportunities for students beyond the graduate school option	1) Work with Career Services to encourage all students to consider internships 2) Explore ideas for a certificate	Career Services, guest speakers Alum	On-going	Create better career opportunities for Literature track that includes, but goes beyond, graduate school.
Key Objectives	Actions/Method	Resources: Internal or External	Timeline	Measurable Outcomes

Professional Writing Concentration

1) Reconsider curricular structure to better serve the needs of the on-campus publications (<i>Route 2</i> and <i>The Point</i>)	This might include adding additional required courses and revising the cluster system from the 2018 concentration revision. Reconsider the course numbering	Data from Institutional Research on student enrollment and success within existing PW concentration courses	AY 24-25: Evaluate current enrollment trends within concentration to identify areas for revision AY 25-26: Submit proposal for change in concentration to AUC	Help provide a more valuable experience of hands-on “production” work.
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<p>2) Create partnerships with local publications and organizations to provide students with the opportunity to participate in community-centered work as well as on campus options for student writers to practice their craft via service learning and civic engagement opportunities</p>	<p>This might include seeking out external funding for community and civic engagement work</p>	<p>AIF Grant for College Newspaper</p> <p>Explore grants to fund publication of both <i>Route 2</i> and <i>The Point</i></p> <p>Partnership with <i>Sentinel and Enterprise</i>; FATV; Pen and Anvil Press</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Enhance career training, skills and network for opportunities after graduation.</p>
<p>3) Seek out and further develop interdisciplinary work with both other concentrations within English Studies as well as other departments on campus where writing and creating for a public audience are essential for successful communication</p>	<p>Outreach to other majors on campus regarding Writing Intensive courses in PAGE as well as other possible coordination on supporting writing pedagogy outside of First Year Writing.</p> <p>Outreach to administration departments such as Marketing, Admissions, etc. to provide opportunities for PW students to produce public audience texts.</p>	<p>AIF Grant</p> <p>Work with Communications Media on implementing Digital Media Innovation major and minor program</p> <p>Work with Humanities on creation of Creative Enterprise major program</p> <p>Sustainability Minor (IDIS)</p> <p>Provost's Office</p>	<p>AY 24-25: Support Creative Enterprise Major Program through approval process; Continue supporting DMI major; Apply for AIF grants to fund identified additional interdisciplinary work</p> <p>AY 25-26: Campus outreach for Writing in the Discipline</p>	<p>Expand our curricular offerings in exciting new directions in keeping with trends in the discipline.</p>

			es; Support Humanities with imple mentation of Creative Enterpris es major program	
4) Investigate ways to become a hub for creative writing for the local community, with outreach to area middle and high schools as well as the regional population in order to share our and student work as writers and scholars with the on-campus and broader community	1) Utilize Theater Block 2) Utilize existing connections to Fitchburg Art Museum and Public Library to identify options for expanding joint programming 3) Contact Veteran Services to identify student demographics and possible interest in more community and/or on-campus events.	High School Writing Contest Fitchburg Art Museum Fitchburg Public Library Community Read events Theatre Block Veteran Services	AY 24 onwards	Open out writing opportunities as a service to the community. Increase recruitment of students.
5) Brainstorm ways to utilize Speech courses to encourage English Studies minors	1) Expand Speech offerings to meet demand of English Studies majors 2) Create a Speech minor 3) Consider adding speech courses to PW concentration	Communications Media (their minor?)	AY 24-25	Provide students with a valuable curricular opportunity to enhance their communication skills
6) Explore the viability of launching a Speaking Center and/or Debate Club. Peer tutors would help members of the campus community with presentation and interview skills.	1) Request an additional line for Speech 2) Revive Debate Club	Moot Court Career Services Academic Tutoring (Peer Tutors)	AY 24-25	Provide students with valuable high impact learning

				opportunities.
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Key Objectives	Actions/Method	Resources: Internal or External	Timeline	Measurable Outcomes
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Middle and Secondary Initial Licensure in English Concentration

1) Reflect on current practices and adapt state-sponsored MTEL support for students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Provide information concerning needs of Licensure students, especially with regard to the MTEL, to all English Studies faculty 2) Communicating MTEL support/scholarships to all faculty who advise INIE students 3) Build and support the cohort approach 4) Advise students to take MTEL prep as co-req with Methods I 	PASM and Education Department	Ongoing	Further increase MTEL success
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2) Continue conversations about non-licensure middle and secondary education minor in which English Studies licensure faculty will teach	Work with the PASM and INIE faculty	PASM	Spring 24	Provide students with an opportunity to utilize the leadership skills training offered by the non-licensure program to prepare for a range of careers.
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3) Continue conversations about reinstating the Post-Baccalaureate program	Collaborate with PASM to reinstate or revise this program	English Studies Graduate Program Education Licensure Office SGOCE PASM	AY 24-25	Serve the needs of students who are seeking to become teachers after graduating with a non-licensure degree.
4) Expand our articulation and pathway agreements to other local institutions (i.e. community colleges)	Work with the Academic Affairs office to achieve this.	PASM Education Unit	AY 24-25	Increased enrolments in the program.

Key Objectives	Actions/Method	Resources: Internal or External	Timeline	Measurable Outcomes
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Graduate Program and Certificate

1) Market certificate and our MA programs. Revive Graduate Colloquium Series and <i>The Falconer</i> . Create new course offerings for the MA and Certificate programs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Webinars featuring Graduate students and faculty 2) Work with existing faculty to create exciting new courses based on their expertise 3) Recruit adjunct faculty for the Certificate program 	Marketing Office SGOCE	Ongoing	Increased enrolments.
2) Move certificate from 15 to 7 week semesters	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Already in progress for upcoming Certificate courses 	SGOCE	AY 24-25	Better serve the needs of students in keeping with trends nationwide.

3) Sequencing certificate courses more formally	1) Adding to the Continuing Education pool of adjuncts	SGOCE	AY 24-25	Better experience and completion rates.
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