

Mission of the University

The faculty, staff, administrators, and students of California State University, Stanislaus are committed to creating a learning environment which encourages all members of the campus community to expand their intellectual, creative, and social horizons. We challenge one another to realize our potential, to appreciate and contribute to the enrichment of our diverse community, and to develop a passion for life-long learning. To facilitate this mission, we promote academic excellence in teaching and scholarly activities of our faculty, encourage personalized student learning, foster interactions and partnerships with our surrounding communities, and provide opportunities for the intellectual, cultural, and artistic enrichment of the region.

Department Mission Statement

The Department of English supports the university's mission by providing opportunities for our students to develop literacy, critical thinking, and communication skills, as well as the knowledge of literature and aesthetic appreciation expected of culturally literate citizens and future teachers in our public schools.

The mission of the English department is multi-faceted, offering instruction in literature and language courses for Majors, General Education, Liberal Studies, Honors, and Humanities. In addition to these, the department provides university-wide composition and writing programs, academic support (remedial) programs, concentrations for pre-credential students, a certification TESOL, courses in service to international students, and graduate concentrations in Rhetoric and the Teaching of Writing, the Teaching of English as a Second Language, and Literature that produce master teachers for our secondary schools and colleges.

In Fall 2002, for example, programs offered or supported by the English Department are serving over 3,000 CSU Stanislaus students. The 17 programs and services currently provided on campus by the English Department are listed below with the number of students served by each in Fall 2002.

Program:	Number of Students served: fall 2002
General Education	587
Writing Center	550
Freshman Composition	366
Single Subject Preparation Program	325
Liberal Studies	250
WP classes	192
Humanities	178
Majors in English	161
Intensive Learning Experience (ILE)	146
Writers Workshop	136
MA programs (Literature, RTW, and TESOL)	50
ESL	30
Honors	27
TESOL Undergraduate Concentration	20
TESOL Certificate	12
Minors in English	11
Extended Education enrollments	22

In addition to the above programs serving university students, the English Department provides direct support to the EPT and WPST testing processes on campus and two major outreach programs to the high schools: the project director and trainers for the Collaborative Academic Preparation Initiative (CAPI) program (George Settera, full time; lectures Shea Mester and Paula Barrington Schmidt); and for the Precollegiate Academic Program (PAD), an assistant professor (Stephanie Paterson, 3 units per year).

One of the major trends over the last decade has been the increasing role of the English Department in courses and programs in service to the University. In fall 2000, in addition to the 587 students taking General Education English courses and the 496 that are in the major, minor, or single subject, there are another 800 students in the various writing courses: Freshman Composition, WP classes, the ILE, and Writers' Workshop. The composition program offers nearly half of the total number of sections in the department, and provides one of the most crucial academic support programs on campus. The Single Subject Preparation Program —students who are essentially English Majors — has grown steadily over the past decade, and currently enrolls 325; these are secondary educators of the future.

The key factor in the fulfillment of this multi-faceted mission is the dedication of the faculty to the teaching/learning process. As stated in our campus Strategic Plan *Pathways to the Future* (1999), our university's "learning-centered" mission must be accomplished through *the delivery of high quality academic programs taught by a faculty dedicated to student learning*.

CSU Stanislaus Institutional Goals

CSU Stanislaus has won a reputation for providing a positive learning environment for a highly diverse student body. Student surveys cited in the 1998 Self-Study for WASC and the campus Strategic Plan point out that Stanislaus faculty and staff have been rated by students as "significantly more supportive than at comparable campuses across the nation," and students consistently praise our campus commitment to "the quality of personal interaction among the faculty and students" (*Pathways to the Future*, page 6). The faculty of the English Department recognizes these learning-centered qualities as fundamental to the achievement of our goals.

To achieve the central mission of delivering high quality academic programs, the Department of English embraces the following ten goals that are presented in *Pathways to the Future* (page 7):

- *creating a campus environment conducive to excellence in teaching and learning;*
- *maximizing student access throughout the region;*
- *addressing the needs of a highly diverse student population;*
- *globalizing the curriculum;*
- *promoting research activities of faculty and students;*
- *providing the appropriate academic support services;*
- *promoting and rewarding continuous professional development of faculty and staff;*
- *creating dynamic co-curricular programs and services in support of the academic mission;*
- *expanding and creating new partnerships throughout the region, and*
- *creating the institutional processes necessary to accurately assess our progress.*

The Vision of the Department: Improve Student Learning

Of the ten institutional goals from *Pathways*, the goal that is central to the vision of the English Department is the first — *achieving excellence in teaching and learning, and creating within the department an environment that is conducive to that goal*. The other nine goals are, to a great extent, consequences of that primary goal.

The English Department recognizes its central mission as ensuring that Stanislaus graduates1) demonstrate appropriate levels of proficiency in both oral and written expression, and 2) demonstrate a broad range of interpretive abilities and literary awareness. These core skills are essential for the academic success and life-long learning of all students, but particularly for English majors.

Ensuring that all Stanislaus students learn how to write well has become especially central to our mission when considering that over the last decade more than half of the department courses

provide direct support to programs across the University. Thus, promoting the development and assessment of students' academic writing skills has evolved into one of our major institutional responsibilities.

The following plan places emphasis on developing the personnel and other resources required to deliver high quality literature, language, and writing courses, and to thoroughly and accurately assess the student learning outcomes in those courses, especially their writing skills.

This Strategic Plan

The following pages identify specific departmental objectives and strategic initiatives that are being or will be initiated to realize the CSU Stanislaus institutional goals. Within eight broad objectives, several specific strategies are presented. These numbers do not represent a ranking of department priorities. Objective number eight — Assessment — is the most detailed and comprehensive section as it addresses both program assessment and student learning outcomes. A set of principles are identified to guide the department in developing a "culture of assessment," and a chart, attached as Appendix A, presents a breakdown of how selected courses address specific learning goals. We conclude this plan with an Action Plan for 2003-2005 that lists specific objectives and assigns specific responsibilities.

Department Objectives

Objective 1: Ensure the continuation of a dynamic, diverse, and caring teaching faculty.

Objective 2: Offer a selection of classes and programs in both literature and language that reflect departmental priorities and respond to students' needs and to the needs of the community.

Objective 3: Update and reevaluate our advising strategies to ensure that they are more responsive to student needs and that they more closely track student progress.

Objective 4: Increase enrollment in the English major, minor, and graduate programs, with particular attention to enhancing diversity and quality through recruitment and retention efforts.

Objective 5: Provide leadership and support for the development and assessment of writing programs across the university.

Objective 6: Increase the number of contacts and partnerships between the department and area community colleges and school districts.

Objective 7: Create and codify a set of assessment strategies that address 1) programmatic and curricular priorities and 2) student learning outcomes, and 3) incorporate these strategies into the five-year review process.

Specific Strategies to Achieve These Seven Objectives

Objective 1: Ensure the formation of a dynamic, diverse, and caring teaching faculty.

1. Increase the number of tenure-track positions. Currently, half of the English teaching faculty is part time, and three faculty in Literature are FERPing. A process is under way is to convert two positions in writing/composition currently staffed by part-

timers to tenure-track positions. Furthermore, two tenure-track searches are under way: one for an English Education specialist to work primarily in the Single Subject Preparation Program (assisting Anna Bolling) and another to replace Renny Christopher in multicultural literature and postcolonial theory.

2. Replace retiring faculty and anticipate retirements of many in next decade.

There will be several retirements within the next five years. The current "junior faculty" consists of just one member under age 40. We anticipate replacing 80 percent of the tenured faculty over the next decade. Every effort will be made to hire faculty who reflect our student population and clearly dedicated to the teaching and learning process and who are motivated to work with a diverse population such as ours. Moreover, we must try to minimize the potential negative effects, such as the loss of institutional memory, of such a massive turnover.

3. Provide incentives and rewards for faculty professional development in their fields. The department will increase support in writing grants, released time, sabbaticals, and travel budgets for attending conferences. These activities have shown time and again to have a marked positive effect on faculty performance and program effectiveness.

4. Provide incentives and rewards for faculty who participate in classroom research and workshops on effective teaching strategies. Faculty will be encouraged to apply (through our Faculty Center) for faculty development grants that relate to classroom research and improving teaching and learning. The department RPT elaborations will recognize this area as one of importance in "research and professional development."

5. Ensure that faculty are assigned appropriate workloads. The Department will adhere to the MOU with respect to faculty workload; for example, ensuring appropriate credit for new course preparation, independent study, thesis advising, and other activities identified in the MOU.

6. Ensure that all full-time faculty are provided updated equipment and technical support. This support will include development and maintenance of department internet presence (e.g.: Websites for all faculty). Priorities must include timely provision of equipment, including regular upgrades and adequate technical support for tenure-general faculty, lecturers and instructors. All faculty will be strongly encouraged to establish Websites during 2003-2004.

Objective 2 : Offer classes and programs that integrate department priorities, students' needs, and the needs of the university.

1. Maintain enrollment in classes at numbers that facilitate a "process approach" to writing, small group discussion, effective feedback, and assessment. To provide these four learning- centered components in English courses, ESL and ILE-type courses are capped at 12 students and WP writing intensive courses are capped at 25.

2. Offer courses at times that are most convenient to students. In order to ensure timely completion of programs, develop more opportunities to offer more night, weekend, and distance learning courses. For example, starting in Fall 2004, 3920 (Masterpieces in Literature) will be offered on Saturday. In addition, the Department will seek opportunities to support additional course offerings at the Stockton campus.

3. Develop courses that will attract non-majors and that can be taught by current faculty. For example, literature for non-majors, fiction-to-film courses, and an upper

division-writing course are currently being considered. A new course in "Film Appreciation" will be offered in 2003.

4. Create an upper-division non-fiction writing course to debut in 2003. There has been a manifested demand by Liberal Studies students for an upper-division course for a creative non-fiction. This course will combine literary study of creative non-fiction, such as the literary or reflective essay, meditation, or memoir, with the practice of such forms of writing to develop student appreciation for and facility with a genre with an outstanding pedigree and renewed commercial appeal.

5. Respond to the new requirements in Liberal Studies. For example, increase the number of sections of 4800 (Second Language Acquisition), as well as 4620 (Children's Literature), and 3009 (Writing for Teachers), which have recently become requirements for Liberal Studies students.

6. Increase the number of sections of impacted courses offered in the Single Subject Preparation Program, which has been growing steadily. This increase will be facilitated by the current tenure-track search for an English Education specialist.

7. Revise the TESOL and RTW masters programs to improve the viability of the degree, to facilitate entry, and help ensure timely student completion of the programs. For example, recently, students have been encouraged to complete a dual concentration to make themselves more marketable to the community colleges. Furthermore, the thesis/project has been made optional in both concentrations; since the majority of students will opt for another graduate course rather than a thesis, the enrollment in graduate seminars is likely to increase.

Objective 3: Update and reevaluate our advising strategies to ensure that they are more responsive to student needs and that they more closely track student progress.

1. Define what is meant by advising and specify the roles, responsibilities, and workload. This will be one of the responsibilities of the Advising Director.

2. Establish a once-a year required advising meeting for every major, minor, and concentration student. For each student, create a worksheet that maps out the course of study throughout the program.

3. Set up a process by which faculty advisors will be assigned and monitored. This process will require the attention of the senior staff person of the English Department, and will be monitored by a department Advising Director.

Objective 4: Increase enrollment in the English major, minor, and graduate programs, with particular attention to enhancing diversity through recruitment and retention efforts.

1. Sell our programs. English faculty members are the key to enrolling students from the undergraduate ranks. Advisors and other faculty will "talk up" the benefits of our programs in their classes. Lower division students will be actively recruited into the major and masters programs. Faculty will identify potential graduate students and recommend them to advisors for the three MA concentrations (Schmidt for Literature, Stryker for TESOL, and Thompson for RTW).

2. Ensure that Liberal Studies advisors emphasize our programs as especially useful for teaching careers. The single subject and the TESOL concentration coordinators will participate actively in Liberal Studies Orientations. The new faculty in English Education will be expected to help Dr. Bolling in recruiting and advising for the SSPP.

3. Offer students courses that they want and need. Program advisors will look carefully at state requirements, student feedback, and enrollment figures to determine what these needs are. Prerequisites will be revised or created that attract future majors. New faculty in English Education and Multicultural Literature will be expected to take a leadership role in developing new course offerings in this area. Other areas that have potential to attract students are film studies, creative writing and courses on the Internet.

4. Increase scholarships and awards. The department currently offers two scholarships. The department will increase the number of scholarships and assistantships for our English graduate students. The recent tuition waiver for assistants is a step in this direction. The department will offer undergraduate essay contests that parallel the current contests at graduate level.

5. Increase enrollment in Masters programs. The steps described in objective three (above) regarding changes in requirements for the masters are steps in this direction. The creation of a dual concentration (any combination of two concentrations of the three that are offered) has attracted students. Since 1998 over a dozen students have been enrolled in dual concentrations. The deletion of 5960 (thesis/project) as a requirement will present the opportunity to increase enrollment in existing 5000 level courses and to offer two more courses at the 5000 level: starting in 2003, 5850 (Linguistics for Teachers) and 5883 (Advanced Grammar) will be offered in alternate years.

Objective 5: Provide dynamic leadership and support for the development and assessment of writing programs across the university.

1. Create tenure-track positions in Rhetoric and the Teaching of Writing. Given that the composition program offers nearly half the total number of sections in the department, and provides one of the most crucial academic support programs on campus, the department will create two tenure-track positions in Rhetoric and the Teaching of Writing in 2003. These positions will bring expertise in basic/developmental writing, instructing language learners, composition classrooms, writing in the disciplines, computers and technology, campus writing centers, and literacy development.

2. Support the continuing growth of the Campus Writing Center. The department will continue to recruit graduate students to work in the center through incentives such as salaries, individual study units, and internships. The two new tenure-track positions will directly support the growth and effectiveness of the Writing Center.

3. Provide the resources to carry out the existing plan for assessment of the competencies in the First Year Composition program. Funding must be provided for a WPA external program review in 2003.

4. Take leadership in supporting and monitoring the upper-division-writing programs. Many students delay taking the WPST (and WP class) until very late in their academic programs; thus, they may not be prepared for upper-division work. To address this problem, the following policy will be phased-in over the next three years and in place by Fall 2006: English 3100 (Literary Genres, WP) course will function as the gateway course to the major. All students will be required to pass the WPST prior to enrollment. Students who are not able to do so will be advised to enroll in the following courses in order to develop the required skills: 1) ESL 2), 3) an upper-division writing course (to be developed), and 3) upper-division General Education courses such as 3920 (Masterpieces of World Literature) or 3940 (Multicultural American Literature).

6. Add a Writing Certificate Program to the curriculum. There has been a manifested interest in a Certificate in Professional and Technical Writing. The new hires in RTW,

anticipated in 2003-04, will facilitate the creation of this certificate program. It can start as an undergraduate program that would include English, communication, and graphics courses. If this program is successful, it can be converted into a post-graduate program similar to the existing TESOL Certificate. A similar strategy may be undertaken in Creative Writing.

Objective 6: Increase the number and quality of contacts and partnerships between the department and the community.

- 1. Create service-learning opportunities for English students.** This can be accomplished by inviting guests from the schools to visit classes and recruit students to work at their sites along the lines of the current tutoring in the HOST program at Osborn School.
- 2. Pursue cooperative activities initiated with MJC regarding possible internships, tutoring support, and graduate projects.** A meeting was held on campus last spring with representatives from MJC to begin this type of cooperation starting in 2002-2003. If successful, this program should be expanded to other Community Colleges (Delta, Merced) in the area.
- 3. Support pre-academic preparation programs in the public schools.** CAPI and PAD have taken significant steps in this direction by partnering the department with the public schools to train English teachers and tutors. Professor George Settera is assigned full time to direct the Collaborative Academic Partnership Initiative (CAPI), and two English lecturers, Paula Barrington-Schmidt and Shea Mester, are assigned half time as instructors. The program currently serves four local high schools reaching 48 junior and high school teachers, and employing 29 Stanislaus students as tutors. The Precollegiate Academic Program (PAD), currently co-directed (with 3 units per year of released time) by Assistant Professor Stephanie Paterson, serves 25 junior and high schools in the region and will supply more than 1,000 hours of tutorial work in English in Fall 2002.

Objective 7: Create and codify a set of assessment strategies that address a.) programmatic and curricular priorities and b.) student learning outcomes, and incorporate these strategies into the five-year review process.

“Assessment” in this plan is understood to describe a broad range of evaluations that provide the department with feedback on 1) program evaluation: focusing the major, the minor, the concentrations and certificates, and 2) course-level information: student learning outcomes, course evaluation, and teaching effectiveness.

7a: Strategies for assessment of programmatic and curricular priorities:

- 1. Create a departmental evaluation form for courses.** The IDEA forms have not been adequate to provide faculty with the needed feedback concerning their courses. Consequently, starting in Fall 2002, the department will pilot a simple, one-page, course evaluation that will provide more personal and qualitative feedback to individual instructors concerning specific courses. This instrument (Appendix B) will be returned directly to the instructor and will not be used for any kind of faculty evaluation or RPT.
- 2. Conduct surveys from the department and the Institutional Research Office.** Starting in Fall 2002 the English Department will require that all exiting graduate students complete a program evaluation form (Appendix C). A similar form will be circulated among graduating seniors in all senior seminars starting in Fall 2002. The Office of Institutional Research will be asked to provide data for the analysis of our enrollment on an annual basis.

3. **Make the five year review a truly substantial self-study and strategic plan for the department.** This strategic plan will serve as a benchmark and guideline for the next five-year review (2006), with emphasis on reporting and analyzing the results of the assessments described in 8b below.

7b: Strategies for assessment of student learning

1. Create a culture of assessment in the department.

The Department recognizes that establishing and maintaining a culture of assessment of student learning requires committed faculty who work closely with the Faculty Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, guided by the following principles, which were adapted from those presented to the Faculty Senate in Fall 2002:

Principle 1: Assessment should be used not merely to measure but to promote student learning as well. Assessment is most effective when it reflects an understanding of learning as multi-dimensional, integrated, and developmental, that is, revealed in improved performance over time. Assessment works best when it is ongoing, not episodic.

Principle 2: Assessment of student learning should start with efforts to establish a clear and explicit identification of goals and objectives of learning and this identification should be made explicit in each syllabus and course description.

Principle 3: Assessment and instruction are continuous, recursive processes. Faculty in the English Department will use assessment data to improve instruction, assess whether the changes made had the impact intended, and then use the new information to re-shape the design of courses as well as vary instructional techniques.

Principle 4: Assessment procedures should originate at the individual faculty and departmental level and be geared towards individual needs and expectations.

These principles will be disseminated to all members of the department and will be the topics of ongoing discussions at future workshops and department meetings.

2. Assess learning goals in the major: English majors are required—in addition to the prerequisite Surveys of British and American Literature (12 units total) — to take 3100 (Literary Genres [WP]), 3101 (Critical Approaches to Literature) 4300 (Shakespeare), 4990 (Senior Seminar), 3 units each of British and American Literature, and 15 units of upper-division English electives. In these courses, students are required to demonstrate proficiency in a broad variety of learning goals that include close reading skills, breadth of reference, literary history, critical and technical vocabulary, background and context, intellectual and professional issues, essay composition, research and bibliography, grammar and language, and oral communication skills.

The chart in Appendix A, compiled with input from the English faculty, summarizes which classes address these skills in particular.

3. Implement a broader use of portfolio assessment. The Major Portfolio is a powerful assessment tool designed to improve learning and to give responsibility for highlighting strengths and skills to the students. Consequently, starting in Fall 2003, the English Department will begin implementing the "Major Portfolio Project." All new majors are required to take 3100 (Literary Genres [WP]); thus, 3100 is a logical starting point to introduce the Major Portfolio Project, which will require majors to take an active role in observing their own learning, describing, collecting, recording, scoring, and interpreting information about their learning in the major. The logical place to assess the Writing

Portfolio in the Major will be in 4990 (Senior Seminar) — the “capstone” course for the English major. The presentation of the portfolio will provide students the opportunity to demonstrate that they have acquired the skills expected of graduates, especially the oral and writing skills expected of an English major.

The components of the English Major Portfolio will be:

Section 1: cover letter;

Section 2: paper from 3100 (Literary Genres [WP]);

Section 3: paper of choice;

Section 4: paper from the capstone course, 4990 (Senior Seminar).

Through a series of faculty workshops sponsored by the department, the principles of learning-as-a-process will be demonstrated and discussed, and faculty members will learn how to design and implement portfolios to document students' growth and development as writers and thinkers.

English Department: Action Plan and Budgetary Priorities 2003-2005

1. Hire three new two new tenure-track faculty: one in English Education, one in Multicultural Education, and one in Composition/Rhetoric (with reduced workload for these hires in their first year to allow for course preparation).
2. Conduct a programmatic review of the English Major in order to determine the direction of the major (combining both students' perceptions and institutional needs).
3. Increased funding for undergraduate and graduate scholarships.
4. Implement the recruitment and retention plan outlined in this document:
 - A. creation and revision of departmental brochures,
 - B. creation of an online presence, and
 - C. revision of advising strategies
5. Implement the assessment plan outlined in this document:
 - A. portfolio assessment plan
 - B. revision of the senior seminar
 - C. new senior and graduate surveys
 - D. new departmental course evaluations
6. Implement the assessment of the Writing Program outlined in this document

Appendices

- Appendix A: a chart of learning goals for selected classes in the major.
Appendix B: samples of advising "roadmaps" for students
Appendix C: a departmental course evaluation form
Appendix D: a program evaluation form for exiting students
Appendix E: a model for a "capstone" Senior Seminar