

STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2012
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
California State University, Stanislaus

This Strategic Plan represents an updating and revision of our Strategic Plan of 2007-2009¹. The department commits itself to using the Strategic Planning process and to considering the plan itself as a living document, an on-going refinement of our goals and objectives. The goals that have been met, altered, or added since the last Plan are detailed in each section below.

The Strategic Plan has evolved into a regular biennial project, is used for programmatic and curricular decisions, and forms the basis for short and long term planning within the department. It will be the benchmark and guideline for seven-year Academic Program Reviews.

The following pages identify specific departmental objectives and ongoing strategic initiatives that are being pursued to realize CSU Stanislaus institutional and departmental goals. Within seven broad objectives, several specific strategies are presented. These numbers do not represent a ranking of department priorities. We conclude this plan with an Action Strategy for 2007-2009 that prioritizes specific objectives and assigns specific responsibilities.

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.

CSU Stanislaus Institutional Goals

The key factor in the fulfillment of this multi-faceted University 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 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*, 1999, page 6). The faculty of the English Department recognizes these learning-centered qualities as fundamental to the achievement of our goals. Among the institutional goals expressed in *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. This dedication to the continuous improvement of teaching and learning is reflected in recent campus discussions on the continuing vision and strategic objectives of the University. In the 2007 institutional Strategic Plan, *Framing*

¹ For previous plans which include plans, actions, and results, see <http://www.csustan.edu/English/documents/Plan07-09.doc>, <http://www.csustan.edu/English/documents/StrategicPlan05-07.pdf>, <http://www.csustan.edu/English/documents/StrategicPlan03-05.pdf>

the Future, “California State University reaffirms and recommits itself to its core academic mission: the joy of teaching and learning.”

The English Department recognizes its central mission as ensuring that Stanislaus graduates 1) 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 is especially central to our mission when considering that, over the last decade, more than half of the department courses provide direct support to academic 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 assess, thoroughly and accurately, student learning outcomes--especially those that address writing skills--in those courses.

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 work of the English department is multi-faceted, offering instruction in literature and language courses for English majors, single-subject (secondary education) students, general education, liberal studies, honors, and humanities. The department also provides university-wide composition and writing programs, academic support (remedial) programs, concentrations for pre-credential students, a certification for Teaching of English as a Second Language (TESOL), courses in service to international students, and graduate concentrations in Rhetoric and the Teaching of Writing, TESOL, and Literature that produce master teachers for our secondary schools and colleges.

PROGRAM GOALS:

- Provide all Stanislaus students the opportunity to achieve appropriate levels of proficiency in written communication.
- Share with our students a rich variety of American, British, and World texts.
- Guide our students to develop a broad range of interpretive abilities and analytical skills.
- Present the historical, cultural, and technical information necessary for students to become competent readers and scholars.
- Assist our students in the continual process of improving formal writing skills.
- Provide opportunities for students to practice their oral communication skills.
- Support our students as they prepare for and enter into professional life.
- Engage prospective teachers in the philosophy and practice of teaching language arts in secondary schools.

STUDENT LEARNING GOALS / OBJECTIVES:

Successful English majors will:

- Master various analytical and critical reading skills, demonstrating the ability to read closely and to comprehend and interpret a variety of culturally diverse literary, non-literary, and visual texts.
- Gain broad knowledge of literature, achieving

- Familiarity with the development and significant periods and movements of American, British, and World literatures.
- Knowledge of literary, critical, and theoretical terminology.
- Understanding of background and contextual knowledge necessary for the well-informed consideration of various texts.
- Demonstrate formal writing skills by composing essays and other documents that
 - Make clear, organized, and well-reasoned arguments.
 - Analyze, develop, and synthesize concepts.
 - Reveal the ability to evaluate, incorporate, and document information.
 - Exhibit a sense of audience and occasion.
 - Display a mastery of grammar and language.
- Develop competent oral communication skills through class discussions and formal presentations.
- Gain understanding of intellectual and professional issues of the academy, including diversity, academic ethics, and canonicity.

Successful MA students with a concentration in Literature will:

- Master the techniques and practices of literary analysis.
- Become familiar with the history and current theories of literary interpretation.
- Acquire the abilities necessary to become professionals in the field of literature, whether as teachers or as other professionals.

Successful MA students with a concentration in Rhetoric & Teaching Writing will:

- Understand the historical development and major theories of rhetoric and composition.
- Master and apply the techniques and practices of rhetorical analysis.
- Acquire the abilities necessary to become professionals in the field of composition and rhetoric, whether as teachers or as other professionals.

Successful MA students with a concentration in TESOL will:

- Gain knowledge and understanding of relevant concepts from the areas of linguistics, applied linguistics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and language teaching methodology.
- Acquire in-depth knowledge and understanding of the interaction between second language acquisition theory and second language teaching and learning.
- Demonstrate expertise in curriculum design, assessment, teaching methods, and classroom management in various TESOL settings.

Department Objectives

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

Objective 2: Offer classes and programs that align department priorities with student and university needs.

Objective 3: Maintain advising strategies to ensure that they are responsive to student needs and that they closely track student progress.

Objective 4: Enhance 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 assessment strategies that identify programmatic and curricular priorities and track student learning outcomes.

Strategies for Objectives

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

- A. Recover FTEF losses resulting from layoffs and retirements.
 - a. Plan carefully the revision of the major.
 - b. Review general education, SSMPP, and LIBS obligations.
 - c. Review needs of the graduate program.
 - d. Involve all faculty groups in delineating staffing needs for all obligations with reference to needed TT, FT, PT, TA, and Intern staffing.
- B. Form a coherent plan to support the development of faculty scholarly and teaching activities, including outreach for extramural support.
 - a. Canvass faculty for their preferred types of support in teaching and scholarship.
 - b. Prioritize types of support.
 - c. Build resources for support into department schedules, budget documents, and program reviews.
- C. Revise department elaborations on the RPT criteria to emphasize the primacy of teaching and guidelines that assist candidates in describing a continued pattern of development while allowing the department to accurately assess and explain the contributions of candidates.
 - a. Continue current work on revision of elaborations on RPT, considering as well the broad range of scholarship and service activities important to the department, college, and university.
 - b. Clarify and codify the mentoring role of the DRPTC.
 - c. Clarify and codify the responsibilities of the candidates in the RPT process.

Objective 2: Offer courses and programs that align department priorities with student and university needs.

- A. Plan carefully the revision of the major.
- B. Revisit the plans to develop components of creative writing and rhetoric and composition in graduate and undergraduate programs.
- C. Revisit plans to develop lower-division and interdisciplinary courses in pop culture and African-American, Chicano, Native American, and Asian literatures to attract non majors.
- D. Review the use of the scheduling modules and consider plans for more night, weekend, distance, and offsite offerings.

Objective 3: Maintain advising strategies to ensure that they are responsive to student needs and that they closely track student progress.

- A. Continue to refine, through the COA, the current advising system.
- B. Emphasize fuller explanations of the various paths to teaching.
- C. Explore possibilities for online/distance advising and enhancement of career advising.

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

- A. See 1.A, 2.A-D, 3.A-C
- B. Strategize ways to increase numbers of graduate students as appropriate to program offerings.
- C. Advertise and celebrate scholarships, fee waivers, fellowships, and other awards.
- D. Explore extramural funding.

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

- A. Prioritize actions based on the external review and academic program review.
- B. Continue current work on professional development of writing faculty.
- C. Plan for the development of system-mandated Early Start Program.
- D. Develop program assessment plans through the DCC & DOC.

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

- A. Continue strong connections with between the department and the Great Valley Writing Project (and related programs such as RIAP), especially as recruitment and opportunities for graduate students.
- B. Continue outreach through the Early Assessment Program.
- C. Emphasize community service learning opportunities.
- D. Continue and improve connection with alumae/i.
- E. Explore extramural support.

Objective 7: Continue to refine program assessment grounded in program goals and objectives and student learning outcomes.

- A. Continue the cycle of assessment in the major with a cycle focused on content knowledge, writing, and oral communication.
- B. Consider development of an objectives/goals based program assessment of the graduate program.
- C. Continue use of the exit instrument for the SSMPP.
- D. Continue to collect and assess information from the department senior survey.

English Department: Action Strategy and Budgetary Priorities: 2010-2012

1. [The selection and ranking of priorities from an approved Plan will be part of the work in the fall.]