

English Department Strategic Plan

As part of its strategic plan, the Department of English is committed to pursuing, prioritizing, and focusing resources in ways that achieve the following agreed-upon goals and their entailments. The order of these goals and entailments does not mean anything about their priority. Many of them in fact overlap or work in tandem. Because this strategic plan is a working document, we as a department will revisit it periodically to assess whether any changes are needed.

(1) To sustain our core mission in research, teaching, and service.

1. As a department in the premier research university in the region, affirm our responsibility in advancing our disciplines.
2. Preserve and enhance the national reputation of our department as part of a leading research institution.
3. Sustain our core programs with all that those bring to the humanities, the university, and its publics.
4. Through advancement and other sources of funding, secure support for faculty research and travel reflecting our status as an R-1 department.
5. To hire and welcome faculty who reflect innovative areas of research and are committed to shaping undergraduate and graduate education in ways that align with our curricular goals and our diversity plan.
6. Reassess the undergraduate curriculum to realign with existing personnel and changing student interests, including exploring ways of being more imaginative in how we staff the full range and diversity of classes.
7. Explore ways to increase student credit hours without compromising our research mission or educational value, such as considering large lecture classes with no TAs or teaching in alternative formats.
8. Continue playing a scholarly and campus leadership role in the teaching and researching of writing.
9. Proactively recognize contingent faculty's range of contributions and address job security as central to the department.

(2) To promote inclusion, diversity, and equity, especially racial equity, by recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse population of faculty, students, and staff in ways that counter ongoing legacies of systemic inequity and settler colonialism, and their organizing epistemologies.

1. The University of Washington acknowledges the Coast Salish people of this land, the land which touches the shared waters of all tribes and bands within the Suquamish, Tulalip, and Muckleshoot nations. The Department's promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion values endeavors that build on this recognition as a means of transforming our research, pedagogy, and/or service.

2. Stage serious, capacious conversations that articulate how a commitment to countering ongoing legacies of systemic inequity transforms our discipline in intellectual and pedagogical contexts. These conversations should include mandatory workshops and other events. Within these conversations, it is essential that we are self-reflective about the historical and epistemological presumptions about the discipline.
3. Build capacity to listen to and work with each other across differences/communities through collaborations across programs, sharing committee work across areas, and supporting and consulting with programs and groups that are doing active and innovative work in using research, teaching, and service to counter ongoing legacies of systemic inequity.
4. Develop a speaker series on issues of diversity.
5. Further our commitment to diversity and equity through the development of best practices and conversations about the difficult pragmatics and experiences of pedagogy: teaching better, teaching differently, and failing forward. (This might include a mandatory workshop addressing issues of cultural literacy around the topic of not doing harm such as recognizing and addressing issues of micro-aggressions, cultural or unconscious exclusions, tokenization of authors of color, and insensitivity to differences in language use).
6. Continue to work towards a coherent and collective curriculum that is responsive to the questions that are transforming our disciplines (this might include considering the place of 202, 302, and the capstones, course development grants, etc).
7. Support opportunities for students who are underrepresented in our major to gather and be heard.
8. Create a culture of hiring to actively recruit underrepresented faculty. This cannot occur in isolation. In part, this pursuit should occur in relationship to our understanding of how a commitment to countering ongoing legacies of systemic inequity transforms our disciplines. Hiring proposals should not be overburdened in a way that would limit the pool of underrepresented applicants.
9. Thus in terms of recruitment and active retention of underrepresented faculty, stage departmental discussion of how faculty might more readily enter the intellectual and cultural frameworks of colleagues' work rather than primarily honoring an expectation that colleagues should somehow meet existing frameworks. This suggests that existing faculty, in addition to new colleagues, are responsible for transforming the department.
10. Share best and required practice documents concerning hiring. These documents have been created by our department and the Vice Provost of Faculty Advancement. They ought to be systematically incorporated into every search.
11. Be aware of the journey that students take prior to admission. With the goal of cultivating students who might otherwise be excluded or discouraged due to ongoing legacies of systemic inequity, work with existing programs at UW (UW in the High Schools, Summer Bridge, College Spark Grant, Alternative Spring Break, Access UW, Community Literacy Program, Running Start, Access UW) that reach out to students before they are admitted. These programs may be engaged directly or serve as a launching point for new programs.

(3) To create a departmental culture committed to building intellectual community, encouraging collaboration, nurturing professional growth.

1. Host appreciation and celebration events to recognize faculty, staff, and student achievements.
2. Include a wider range of announcements in the weekly department news.
3. Provide support, including small grants, for faculty collaborations, including cross-disciplinary events within the department such as colloquia, study groups, brown bags, and faculty teaching presentations.
4. Identify and find ways to support already existing sites of collaboration to showcase connections (e.g. the honors program faculty theme, peer teaching reviews).
5. Encourage co-teaching: develop suggested models and invite faculty proposals.
6. Consider ways that the selection and constitution of the EC consistently represents the diversity of voices and programs within the department.
7. Provide mentoring and support for research for faculty at all professional levels, e.g. book-drafting groups, articles, conference papers, book proposals, teaching in areas of research.

(4) To increase transparency, accountability, and workload equity.

1. Institute process wherein department committees submit beginning-of-year goals and end-of-year reports to create accountability and continuity.
2. Create and pilot annual review rubric based on the merit heuristic.
3. Discuss what constitutes the “plus” in the context of workload.
4. Restructure and/or downsize department committees to better reflect current and future size of department.
5. Make visible the roles of lecturers within the department with an eye to articulating faculty promotion, teaching opportunities, and reappointment practices.
6. Consider making annual activity reports visible within the department.
7. Consider the creation of a Personnel Committee to review merit materials. Also, include colleagues across all areas of the department in faculty reviews (reappointment, promotion, and peer teaching review).

(5) To communicate effectively our mission, values, and accomplishments to ourselves, the university, and the wider public.

1. To emphasize and explain our research and artistic production as a fundamental part of our work in the building of new knowledge.
2. Affirm our commitment to outreach to local high schools, community colleges, and other organizations, such as including expanding course offerings in UW in the High School program (beyond Eng. 131 and 111).
3. Increase social media presence, including PR to news media. Identify a coordinator for communication.
4. Emphasize interdisciplinary outreach with the goal of reaching students outside of traditional humanities orientation, for example: team teaching with other departments, promoting the writing minor in other disciplines, publicizing collaborations with faculty in other units.
5. Rethink focus and audience of department newsletter, *English Matters*.

6. Create and participate in public events as outreach, such as lecture series, lightning talks, podcasts, etc. Work with advancement to explore partnerships with Seattle Arts and Lectures, Humanities Washington, UW alumni association, Seattle Public Libraries, theconversation.com, local bookstores and book clubs.
7. Work on developing an alumni network.

(6) To enable and support public research, engagement, advocacy, and outreach.

1. Ensure that faculty work with respect to these activities is valued for merit and promotion discussions; share more about what we do in the community with each other.
2. Pursue job searches and incorporate into job descriptions language that values public engagement, advocacy, and outreach.
3. Add curricular and capstone options to enable undergraduate and graduate students to engage with diverse publics.
4. Provide workshops for faculty on how to judiciously use social media for advocacy.
5. Make and post videos on our website of faculty and student work in the community (work with student internships to do this).
6. Stage conversations about what counts as research, how to develop public scholarship, and how we might think about different kinds of publication venues.

(7) To continue our efforts to reinvent our graduate programs in light of ongoing, fundamental changes to the profession and to higher education.

1. Continue efforts to “right size” and reinvigorate the MFA program, including efforts to (a) fully and equitably fund those students and (b) maintain “best practices” enrollment numbers.
2. Continue efforts to “right size” the MATESOL program, including efforts to support funding for students and to better integrate the program with the broader department.
3. The DGS, GSC, and Director of Creative Writing make recommendations, such as annually repeating Winter 2019’s microseminar Humanities Career Exploration Course, for solidifying career pathways via internships or other innovative avenues.
4. Support and extend the placement committee symposium inviting recent graduates with alt ac careers to share their experiences.
5. Consider ways to increase graduate seminar enrollments, such as: exploring overlaps with undergraduate honors courses, allowing strong undergraduates into grad seminars, publicizing our graduate seminars to other departments, team teaching graduate seminars.
6. Assess the effectiveness of the portfolios being piloted in 506 in Fall 2018, and discuss how they can play a role in progress through the MA/PhD program and professional preparation.
7. Assess and reimagine the role of 506 as an introduction to MA/PhD graduate study and revise the course in line with ongoing discussions about our changing graduate program.
8. Survey other terminal MA programs and consider a proposal to offer either or both a terminal MA or a combined BA/MA.
9. Encourage departmental conversations around alternate and complementary assignments to the seminar paper in grad courses.
10. Seek to further integrate the successful teacher training and professional development we provide for graduate student teachers into other parts of their graduate education.