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Program Review: English Department

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**ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT KEARNEY**

APRIL 4-5, 2024

REPORT PREPARED BY:

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**Schedule for 2024 Academic Program Review
University of Nebraska at Kearney
Department of English
April 4-5, 2024**

Wednesday, April 3	External Reviewer arrives in Kearney
Thursday, April 4	
8:30 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.	Orientation Breakfast with Review Team members, Department Chair, CAS Dean, Graduate Dean, Director of Assessment Memorial Student Affairs Building, Sisler Room
9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Meet with Dr. Beth Hinga Director of Assessment and Assistant to SVCAA Memorial Student Building, Sisler Room
10:00 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	Meet with Dr. Paul Twigg Dean, College of Arts and Sciences Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room
10:45 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.	Meet with Dr. Mark Ellis Dean, Graduate Studies Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room
11:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Meet with students Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room
12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Lunch Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room
1:30 p.m.– 2:30 p.m.	Meet with Dr. Michelle Beissel Heath Chair, English Department Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room
2:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Meet with faculty Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room
7:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	Work sessions as necessary
Friday, April 5	
8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Follow-up meetings with students and faculty Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room

9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	Open time to schedule work or further interviews with faculty Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.	Preparations of recommendations for Exit Report Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room
12:00 p.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Working lunch Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room
1:15 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Oral Exit Report to English Department faculty and Chair Thomas Hall 106
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Oral Exit Report to College and University administration Dr. Julie Shaffer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs Dr. Paul Twigg, Dean of College of Arts and Sciences Dr. Mark Ellis, Dean of Graduate Studies Thomas Hall 117, Conference Room

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I. Overview, Mission Statement, Goals, and Stakeholders

A. Program History

The English Department provides a traditional liberal arts major that prepares students to teach English at every educational level, as well as pursue graduate degrees and employment in various professions, including publishing, writing, law, and librarianship. The major emphasizes critical thinking, writing, research, and text analysis. The Department has a longstanding reputation for outstanding teaching and research. Members of the faculty are among the best in the nation and publish actively in their specializations. Faculty expertise and commitment to excellence inform their mentorship of student research and creative activity. Since the Department's last Academic Program Review (APR) in 2014, several strategic changes have been made in both undergraduate and graduate programs, which represent innovation, growth, and consolidation, as well as a response to institutional changes at UNK.

B. Department Mission Statement

a. Undergraduate Mission

In accordance with the liberal arts mission of the university, the UNK Department of English has both a broad practical mission and a specific disciplinary mission. Broadly defined, our department mission consists of activities associated with a liberal education:

- To provide a broad cultural background for the understanding and appreciation of literature, composition, creative writing, English language, and film.
- To improve communication skills through practice in diverse types of expository and imaginative writing.
- To develop critical thinking through exposure to and interpretation of various world views represented in literary works.
- To increase appreciation of language and literature, their backgrounds, history, and values, through analysis and discussion of written texts covering a wide range of attitudes, perspectives, and styles.

The Department's specific disciplinary mission is two-fold:

- To prepare future teachers of Language Arts and English at the elementary, middle, secondary, and college levels.
- To prepare students who wish to pursue careers in occupations related to English and those who wish to pursue advanced degrees in English through graduate study.

The Department has identified the following learning outcomes for its students pursuing degrees in English: English majors/minors should communicate proficiently and/or artistically both in writing and in speech; recognize rhetorically effective uses of language; place themselves in a progression of ideas found in literatures of diverse cultures; analyze a work of literature from a variety of critical and artistic perspectives; understand literary movements and contributions made by major figures; place modern English in the context of the history of the language; be aware of major curricular developments in English; and recognize the impact of electronic media on the individual and society.

b. Graduate Mission

The mission of the Graduate Program in English is to offer programs of study that are in keeping with and that foster the campus and department undergraduate missions, both of which are supported by the quality of faculty the graduate program allows us to draw to the department and through the direct involvement of graduate students and faculty in the undergraduate program, especially in the teaching and study of first-year composition. More particularly for our graduate students, the mission of the Graduate Program is to expand the knowledge and skillset of scholars, creative writers, and current and future teachers of English locally across Nebraska, and beyond. Students completing the MA in English—with focus areas in Creative Writing; Composition, Rhetoric, and Language; Literature; and Childhood and Youth Studies—will acquire a deepened knowledge and appreciation of world, British, American, and multicultural literatures. Specific to their chosen focus areas, they will achieve a greater mastery of the language and of critical thinking through the study of linguistics, literary criticism, and composition/rhetoric; they will hone their creative writing abilities across literary genres; and they will acquire habits of speaking, listening, reading, and writing that are the essence of reflection, dialogue, and academic discourse.

In addition to developing these lifelong learning habits, our students will be able to conceive, undertake, research, and complete extended and culminating projects that indicate a considerably greater mastery of arts and skills than what is expected at the undergraduate level. Students will acquire an appreciation of the humanistic tradition while reaching a level of competence sufficient to take the next step, whether that be into the professions, into more secure and effective roles as teachers, into jobs that value creative and critical thinking and communicative competence, or into further study in doctoral or MFA programs.

C. Goals

The English Department's primary goal is to maintain the integrity of its programs with high quality instruction, innovative pedagogy, and conscientious mentoring. The Department plans to focus on recruitment to increase undergraduate enrollments in our courses and to increase the number of majors and minors. Our recruitment goals include offering courses in areas of interest such as medical humanities and popular culture, removing prerequisite barriers to upper-division courses, and implementing an accelerated BA-to-MA program. In response to institutional uncertainties, we intend to build morale and foster collegiality in the Department by offering more creative, intellectual, and social gatherings.

D. Primary Stakeholders

The English Department serves students in Nebraska and the region who seek certification in English and plan to teach English at the middle school and high school levels. We also serve students who plan to pursue a master's or doctoral degree in English with the aim to teach literature and writing at a two- or four-year college or university. In addition, our program is designed to give substantial training in academic and creative writing, which attracts and supports students geared toward careers in writing, editing, and publishing. Other stakeholders include pre-law and library science students. Over the years, many English majors have pursued these two professional paths, earned higher education degrees, and taken positions in law firms and libraries. The Department's Graduate Program primarily serves in-service teachers, many of whom wish to teach dual-credit courses at their schools, gain enhanced knowledge and training, and/or secure increased pay. It also serves students who wish to publish creative or critical pieces, attend an MFA or Ph.D. program, or teach at a community college.

II. General Program Characteristics

The English Department is one of the departments that make up the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), which itself was created when the former College of Fine Arts & Humanities and the College of Natural & Social Sciences were merged in 2018. The Dean of CAS reports to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs; the Chair of the Department reports to the Dean and to English Department faculty. Other key leadership figures in the Department (they report to the Chair and to the English Department faculty) are the Assistant Chair, the Graduate Program Director (also called Graduate Program Chair, or GPC), and the Composition Coordinator. The Assistant Chair is a new position created in Spring 2024 in response to significant changes at the University and recognition at the departmental level that the work of the Chair had become too much for one person. The GPC leads the Department's Graduate Program while the Composition Coordinator is in charge of the first-year composition program. Departmental faculty serve on one of three departmental standing committees: the Curriculum & Writing Committee, the Graduate & Assessment Committee, and the Recruitment & PR Committee. The chairs of each of these committees, along with the Assistant Chair, form the Chair's Advisory Committee. We no longer have an office associate, as recent changes at the College level have distributed office associate workloads across multiple people, but with fewer individuals overall to complete office associate tasks. One consequence of this change is that there will no longer be an office associate present in the Department to greet students or respond immediately to questions or situations. Detailed information about the Department's leadership positions, governance procedures, and committee structures and charges are included in the recently revised *Department of English By-Laws* and *Department of English Handbook of Policies and Procedures*, which can be accessed on the English Department's Canvas page.

III. Strategic Plan

While the English Department has a strong sense of mission, our strategic plan is a work-in-progress, and necessarily so. Institutional instability and continuous changes in recent years pose serious challenges to realistic strategic planning. Changes include the following: the merging of two smaller colleges into one large College of Arts and Sciences, dramatic realignment and reduction of the General Studies program, the elimination of academic programs (most notably Theatre, upon which our Education majors rely for coursework), reduction in faculty (including all adjuncts at this point), and loss of our office associate. The academic, creative, and research endeavors of the faculty and students represent considerable strengths to build on and potential for growth; it is these strengths that will constitute the bedrock of strategic planning. For details, see Goals section above, Faculty CVs (**Appendix I**), and sections on faculty and students below.

IV. Major Developments and Program Initiatives since Previous APR

A. Emphasis on writing in all programs

Faculty members created three experiential learning (EL) courses, two of which are focused on writing in the professions. Following the reduction of the number of required General Studies writing credits, the Composition Coordinator worked with faculty across campus to develop themed sections of ENG 102 focused on writing in the disciplines, further described below. The Reynolds Chair created an editorial board for our literary journal the *Carillon*, which gives students pre-professional experience. Faculty capitalized on our regional location in the development of two new courses: Nebraska Life Writing and Rural Literacies. In addition, writing has become a key feature in recruitment efforts. For

example, with student groups and UNK's American Democracy Project, we have developed an Emerging Writers and Artists competition for Nebraska high school students, which has been incorporated into our Student Language and Literature Conference. We are currently seeking scholarship funding so that we can offer scholarships to competition winners to attract them to UNK and the English major.

B. New online Graduate Program and strategic use of technology

Since 2014, our Graduate Program has moved entirely online, and enrollment has increased dramatically. We restructured the program to focus on departmental faculty members' strengths and student interests and developed a substantial array of new courses that reflect depth of knowledge, new pedagogical methods, and innovative approaches to digital delivery. We now offer focused online offerings on the undergraduate level as well to meet the needs of different student populations, such as Transitional Certification Program (TCP) students.

C. Global engagement and collaboration

English faculty have become increasingly more aware of global aspects in the study of English and the global reach of scholarly/pedagogical collaboration. One faculty member received a Globalizing the Curriculum grant to develop a World Englishes course. Another faculty member currently plans to teach Fall semester courses in Montreal as part of a Study Abroad program. Faculty members are engaged in collaborative work with scholars in Italy, Spain, and England. These recent developments build on faculty expertise and student interest; we foresee continuing to build in this area.

V. Degree Programs, Curricula, and Assessment

A. Undergraduate degree programs and curricula

At the undergraduate level, the English Department offers two BA degrees (this will reduce to one within the next catalog year or two), two BAEd degrees, and six minors. The current BA degrees are in English and English Writing. Given recent shifts in how the state's coordinating commission counts majors/graduates for departments, we are combining these two degrees into one. The change is primarily superficial: the combined English major will still allow students to choose between emphases in literature and writing and to take the same classes they would otherwise. Our BAEd degrees are a Secondary English 7-12 Teaching Subject Endorsement and an English Language Arts 7-12 Teaching Field Endorsement. Given recent structural changes at the University, we are creating new theatre courses within the Department to allow our students to complete state requirements for the Language Arts Field Endorsement. Our undergraduate minors include English (with either a literature or writing emphasis), Childhood & Youth Studies, Creative Writing, Film Studies, Popular Culture, and English for Elementary Education. Given the consistently low number of minors in the Elementary Education minor, we may consider discontinuing it. Full descriptions of our undergraduate programs can be found in the University's undergraduate academic catalog.

Our undergraduate BA degree is designed to offer students a wide range of English classes that give them a comprehensive understanding of the field. Required classes are therefore split between the fields of Literature, Writing, and Language – students may choose to focus on Literature or Writing, but the degree requires students to take a range of literature classes and at least one class in the other two categories. One particular strength of our course offerings is that they are split between traditional courses such as ENG 404: History of the English Language and ENG 436: Seminar in Shakespeare and

less traditional courses such as ENG 373: Film Genre and ENG 455: The Graphic Novel. The variety allows students to get a comprehensive understanding of literature alongside a broad cultural background that illustrates a range of ideas of different peoples, societies, and cultures while also exploring how those ideas are evolving in the contemporary imagination. Students finish the BA with the ability to think critically, to write effectively, and to refine and edit works by themselves and others.

The two undergraduate BAEd programs have a similar range of courses but are designed more specifically with the secondary teaching curriculum and state standards in mind. Students are required to take courses in American, British, and World literature in order to assure coverage, and they must take two language classes rather than one in order to gain a better understanding of how language is structured and how variation is a natural feature of any language. In addition, there are two courses, ENG 424: Teaching Secondary School English and ENG 427: Electronic Literacy, that focus specifically on delivering English material to students in a classroom. We recently added two required courses: ENG 426, Literature for Adolescents, and an advanced composition course. The addition of these courses is meant to assure that our future teachers are knowledgeable in the types of texts that may appeal to many of their students and that their own writing skills, as well as their knowledge of writing as a discipline, are strong. The program also requires essential Teacher Education (TE) courses and ends with student teaching. What the program lacks in flexibility, it makes up for in range, thoroughly preparing students for their future teaching.

The two different programs allow students to focus their attention in two different directions. The Secondary English 7-12 Teaching Subject Endorsement allows students to focus on English but add a minor or second endorsement (such as a History Endorsement) if they so choose. The English Language Arts 7-12 Teaching Field Endorsement, meanwhile, focuses on language arts more broadly, requiring students to take additional courses in Journalism, Speech, and Theatre alongside their primarily English courses. The Field Endorsement frequently attracts students who are looking to add roles such as speech coach or play director to their qualifications for being an English teacher. It is not unusual for our students to supplement their English endorsement with a Theatre endorsement or to minor in Theatre. As such, the University's decision (Spring 2024) to eliminate the Theatre program will affect our majors in ways that we cannot yet entirely foresee.

Recent conversations with the Dean of CAS and the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs have indicated that, to prevent coordinating commission concerns in the future, departments are able to combine multiple majors into a single major with core classes and several emphases. The English Department did this to combine our English and English Writing majors, but the conversations clarified that all of the Department's majors—including our teaching majors—may be able to be combined this way. Offering one major with multiple tracks would be advantageous to the Department in terms of reporting purposes. The Department will begin exploring this option soon.

Our English minors provide a range of options. The English minor is structured similarly to the English BA major and allows students in other departments to supplement their major with a traditional course of English study. The English for Elementary Education minor is only available to students seeking an Elementary Education Endorsement and is designed to give them a stronger background in literature. The English minor in Creative Writing is a newer minor that leverages the popular field of creative writing. It asks students to explore creative writing by studying at least two of the major genres (fiction, poetry, screenwriting) and to develop their skills in at least one of those genres at a more advanced level. Many of the students in this minor are English majors who wish

to develop their creative writing skills beyond the confines of the major, though some are also from different departments who have a focus elsewhere but nevertheless want to write creatively.

The other three minors are all interdisciplinary, with courses in Art, Music, Psychology, Criminal Justice, Family Studies, Sociology, Journalism and Mass Communications, Foreign Language, History, and Theatre. The minors in Film and Popular Culture combine less traditional courses offered in our department with similar courses in other departments. Many of the students in these minors are also English majors who wish to further develop their knowledge of a sub-section of the field, in this case in the context of other related fields, though some students from different majors also choose to learn more about these topics. The final minor, Childhood and Youth Studies, was created in conjunction with the field of study at the graduate level. During our last APR, the review team complimented the Department on the innovation of such a program, especially because our department is unique in Nebraska in our ability to offer a strong program due to having two experts in the field. Therefore, in addition to pursuing the emphasis at the graduate level, we also created a minor with the hope that it would appeal to some English majors, some TE majors, and others in fields that center around children, such as Early Childhood and Family Advocacy or Social Work.

B. Graduate degree programs and curricula

The authors of the 2014 APR report argued that maintaining a viable graduate program was the single most important need for the English Department. They repeatedly urged the English Department to create an MA in English with an emphasis in children's and adolescent literature, given faculty expertise, to appeal to both secondary English teachers and elementary teachers; to take the graduate program online to increase enrollment while filling "a niche in the MA in English Market" beyond central Nebraska; and to offer options for program completion in addition to the thesis. The Department acted on this advice and, as a result, has a thriving online MA in English that features a focus area in Childhood and Youth Studies and offers students a choice of doing a thesis or a comprehensive exam. Childhood and Youth Studies graduate courses are popular, especially among teachers in our MA program and students taking these courses as corequisites for graduate programs in the College of Education and for the English endorsement in the online TCP. This focus area also makes our program stand out beyond a regional level. Closely related to pedagogy, our Composition, Rhetoric, and Language focus area has attracted increasing numbers of students who wish to teach dual credit writing courses. It was the focus area for the winner of the University's Outstanding Thesis award for 2022. Creative Writing is another popular focus area for students who want to explore creative writing within the structure of a class. The literature focus allows the Department to maintain its excellence in literary studies. Students value the flexibility that the program offers and the opportunity to explore all four areas. In addition to choosing a focus area, students take required colloquiums in British and U.S. literature (one each) and a required theory course. The number of electives students take, or whether they essentially complete a second focus area, depends on whether they choose the thesis or comprehensive examination as their culminating program experience. A full description of our graduate program can be found in the University's graduate academic catalog. Our graduate program is currently ranked third in "Best Online Master's Programs in English" nationwide by Online Master's Degrees (OMD).

C. Assessment

For recent undergraduate and graduate assessment reports, see **Appendix II**.

VI. Indirect Measures of Student Success

A. Job placement and graduate school

Most of our Field Language Arts and Subject English Education majors find jobs in secondary schools in Nebraska. Currently, no fewer than 121 graduates from our undergraduate program hold English teaching positions in middle schools and high schools across the state. It should be noted that immediate graduate school interest is not limited to our BA students: two of our BAEd students, currently student teaching, have been accepted into MFA programs for next year. Former students have risen to take high-level administrative positions, as well, including school principal. Many of our students pursue the master's degree in English at UNK, UNL, and other institutions such as University of New Hampshire, University of Kansas, and Northeastern University. Some students have earned (or are in the process of earning) the Ph.D. at UNL and further afield (e.g., Loyola University-Chicago, University of Arizona, University of Pittsburgh, University of Missouri-Kansas City, and University of Texas-San Antonio). Our students have also continued their studies in MFA programs at UNL, Bowling Green State University, Wichita State University, and elsewhere. After majoring in English, our students pursue higher degrees in other fields, as well. In a recent survey of alumni career outcomes conducted by the English Department's Assessment Committee, students reported pursuing higher degrees in Library and Information Science (Emporia State University, Simmons University), Law (UNL, University of Iowa), History (University of New Mexico), and Theology (Augustine Institute). While we have limited access to information about former students' professional lives, some of our former students' notable positions include Assistant Editor and Blog Co-editor of *Mid-American Review*; MFA Director and English faculty member at Randolph College; Acquisitions Editor at University of Nebraska Press and Mari Sandoz Society Board Member; Executive Director of the Western History Association; President of the Kansas Association of Teachers of English; College of Arts, Letters, and Sciences Dean at Southwest Minnesota University; Associate Attorney at McGrath, North, Mullin and Kratz (Omaha), Associate Attorney at O'Neill, Heinrich, Damkroger, Bermeyer & Shultz (Lincoln), and publisher of Nebraska's *Alliance Times Herald*.

B. Alumni honors, awards, and publications

Graduates from our undergraduate program have received scholarships, fellowships, and TA positions in master's and doctoral programs across the country. In the English Department's recent survey of alumni, former students indicated receiving the following awards: Secondary Education Teacher of the Year, university teaching awards, faculty research and development grants in higher education, and Dissertation of the Year. Our graduates include nationally recognized authors, such as Kassandra Montag (*After the Flood*, Harper Collins), as well as emerging poets such as Tyler Michael Jacobs (*Building Brownville*, Stephen Austin UP). Jacobs recently received a Pushcart Prize nomination for his poetry. We plan on tracking alumni honors and awards more closely in the future to compile a more complete list of their accomplishments.

C. Professional conference presentations and publications (while at UNK)

One significant aspect of educational success for English students lies in the recognition of their excellence in writing and research skills. Our undergraduate and graduate students routinely produce essays and creative pieces that are accepted for conference presentation and juried publication. These acceptances are not only for UNK conferences and journals such as Student Research Day, the English Department's Student Conference in Language and Literature, the *Carillon*, *Undergraduate Research*

Journal, and *Graduate Review*, but also for distinguished national and international conferences and journals. For a partial list of these achievements, see the section on mentoring under “Retention, Advising, and Mentoring.” Early success with conference presentations and publications provides a foundation for future success in writing, research, and employment, as can be seen in the brief lists above in “Job placement and graduate school” and “Alumni honors, awards, and publications.”

D. Comparison with peer institutions

UNK’s undergraduate programs in English are comparable in number and emphases to those of our peer institutions, most of which feature options in literature, writing, and teacher certification. Our peers offer a range of major/minor programs that include Creative or Professional Writing, Teaching English as a Second Language, Mass Communications, and Film. We share a common goal in working towards professionalizing our students, which is reflected in the education degrees, as well as the focus of minors. Most of our peers have chapters in Sigma Tau Delta and a few of them indicate on their websites that they facilitate internship opportunities. Due to falling enrollments on an institutional level, as well as other factors, our peers like UNK have experienced declines in the number of undergraduate English majors, minors, and faculty. What is notable in looking at the data, however, is how UNK as a regional university and English as a department have fared comparatively well, though we have not been immune to the economic and social forces that have influenced declines in enrollment in state schools and in humanities majors.

Since our last APR in 2014, undergraduate enrollments at our ten peer institutions have declined, some of them precipitously, except Sam Houston State University (Texas), a school more than twice the size of UNK. The University of Central Missouri’s total Fall undergraduate enrollments, for example, went from 13,988 in 2016 to 10,530 in 2021; University of Northern Colorado witnessed a decline from 12,050 in 2014 to 9,067 in 2023; and Minnesota State University-Moorhead went from 6,172 in 2014 to 4,679 in 2022. In comparison, UNK’s Fall enrollment numbers from 2014 were 5,274 and in 2023, enrollment was 4,224.

Our peer institutions witnessed subsequent declines in numbers of English majors and graduates from their programs. Even Sam Houston with its student body increase experienced a fall in graduating English majors, from 66/year in 2014 to 39/year in 2023. Other notable examples of declines: In 2014, Minnesota State University-Moorhead had a total of 227 students in their four English programs (including an English and Mass Communications major). By 2022, that number had declined to 65. Western Illinois University’s English majors fell from 198 in 2014 to 66 in 2023, and their faculty numbers from 67 to 22 in those years. Northern Michigan University’s English major numbers have declined modestly in recent years from 127 in 2019 to 116 in 2023. Faculty numbers, however, declined notably from 35 in 2014 to 25 in 2024. In comparison, while UNK’s undergraduate English major numbers from 2014 also show a substantial decline, more recent numbers show a modest decline: in 2019, our numbers were 88 majors, 35 minors, and in 2023, 73 majors and 17 minors. Increases in numbers in our graduate program have helped offset our declines, so that the total number of English majors and enrolled graduate students in 2023 (122 students) was actually higher than it was in 2019 (117 students), though our minor numbers were lower. English faculty numbers since 2014 have been reduced from 14 to 12 tenure-track and tenured faculty (and Reynolds chair), 5 to 4 lecturers, and at this point, we have no adjuncts. With a concerted effort in recruitment focused on student success and professionalization, we can work towards reversing the downward trend.

VII. Experiential Learning, Internships, and Community Outreach

A. Experiential Learning

The English Department has always had a strong commitment to professionalizing our students through experiential learning opportunities, but until recently they have not been part of the curriculum. With the new experiential learning (EL) requirement, English has designed three new courses with the intention of making professionalization part of every student's experience.

Two of our new courses are directly related to the different career paths many of our students are looking to take. Students seeking a BA degree are often looking either to write professionally or pursue a degree in academia. In both cases, students need to learn how to present their work—either creative or critical—in a conference setting; they also need to find research avenues for publication, and to revise their writing in order to submit for publication. We now have two courses, ENG 435: Creative Writing Professionalism and ENG 436: Critical Writing Professionalism, that allow students to take work that they have already written in other classes and revise and present it in just these ways. While these courses allow students to professionalize their work in these ways, they also give them a better sense of the publication field, which is another career path that some students might find themselves pursuing.

The third course, ENG 361B: Nebraska Life Writing, approaches experiential learning from a different perspective. Though professionalism is evident in the course's culminating panel presentation assignment, the course emphasizes field and archival research and interdisciplinarity, extending its appeal beyond the field of English. The specific areas of study in the course are based on student interest, but include how Nebraskan writers and institutions, past and present, commemorate history; how they address the narratives of immigrants and refugees who come to Nebraska; how they incorporate their surrounding landscape into their writing; and how they use forms of life writing to tell Nebraskan stories. The course has the added benefit of providing an EL class that does not have an upper-division prerequisite, making it accessible to students of all disciplines.

In addition to coursework, English Department students have other EL opportunities. Students pursuing a BAE_d, for example, undertake student teaching in their final semester. The Department's annual Student Conference in Language and Literature provides students with an exceptionally valuable experiential learning and pre-professional opportunity. Students present papers and attend formal sessions featuring the best of their critical and creative work produced in their courses. Awards are given for outstanding scholarship and creative achievement, and the award-winning pieces are published in the *Carillon*.

Sigma Tau Delta's literary journal, the *Carillon*, itself offers yet another experiential learning opportunity. Published annually by the English Department, this journal has a student-run editorial board consisting of at least three editors and an editor-in-chief. Student editors work closely with a faculty sponsor to learn and hone skills essential to the publishing world: editing, proofreading, communication with authors and printers, and text design. The *Carillon*'s standard of professional excellence (including the establishment of an editorial board five years ago) has increased in recent years under the guidance of our current Reynolds Chair.

B. Internships

Students interested in gaining professional experience as interns have been successful at finding internships—and employment—in the field of publishing and editing. They have served as interns and, in some cases, secured jobs as project editors at university presses, such as the University of Nebraska Press and Sandhills Publishers. Our majors have pursued other kinds of educational programming/publishing internships at non-profit organizations, such as 826DC in Washington, DC. They have also had internships at newspapers such as the *Kearney Hub*, *The Sidney Sun Telegraph*, and the *Journal Advocate* (Colorado). The current editor-in-chief of the *Carillon* has applied for a summer internship with Sigma Tau Delta's national office to work on their journals. We plan on encouraging eligible Sigma Tau Delta students to apply for this internship annually. The English Department has discussed creating internship and independent research courses for EL credit, as well as making a *Carillon* course for EL. The budget cuts, however, have slowed down that process by focusing the Department's attention elsewhere.

C. Community service and outreach

Students have been active in community service and outreach, working primarily in educational capacities as tutors, para educators, and administrative assistants. The organizations they have served include Kearney Literacy Council and Kearney Community Learning Center (academic-based programs in Kearney's elementary schools), Kearney's middle schools, and PAWS University (now Loper Launch) for elementary students.

VIII. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The English Department supports UNK's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) goals primarily through curricular offerings and inclusive classroom practices. Our primary curricular strength in raising the level of equity and inclusion is driven by reading and discussing diverse texts from writers who represent a range of human diversity in terms of language, religion, culture, national origin, ethnicity or race, gender, and ability. We have courses dedicated to reading Non-Western and Multicultural American literature where every text offers new perspectives. Examples include ENG 359: Contemporary Multicultural American Literature, ENG 859: Colloquium: US Literature 1855-Present, and ENG 855: Contemporary American Literature. These courses apply an intersectional lens of analysis to the study of diverse literature, which includes the voices of Indigenous, African American, Asian American, MENA, and LGBTQIA+ authors. Students are guided in discussing issues of migration, colonialism and globalization in ENG 333: Postcolonial Literature in a Global Context. Some of the Department's courses are included in the Women's, Gender, and Ethnic studies minor. Additionally, several of our composition courses, including our developmental writing course, use contract grading as their assessment method. This is more transparent than traditional grading methods and makes all grades achievable for all students regardless of language or academic background, as it rewards effort and engagement rather than subjective assessments of writing ability. In Summer 2020, the Writing Committee (now called the Curriculum and Writing Committee) revised the placement procedure for our first-year composition courses. Rather than relying on standardized test scores, which can disadvantage students with disabilities and those from underserved groups, students are guided in choosing the most appropriate course via a reflection survey. Research shows that this method results in more accurate placement and a greater sense of belonging for at-risk students.

The English Department also helps UNK meet DEI goals by offering general studies courses that meet Loper 10 (Respect for Human Diversity) outcomes. See link: [Lopers General Studies Program](#). We offer 4 courses that satisfy Loper 10 outcomes. These include ENG 235H: American Studies, ENG

253: Introduction to Literature: Non-Western Literature, ENG 255: Introduction to Children's Literature, and ENG 260: Images of Women in Literature.

In a recent report about the state of DEI in the English Department, faculty indicated that “[W]e need to have more focused attention on inclusive excellence as a department. Many of us are doing great things related to inclusive excellence as individual faculty, but we need to do more as a departmental unit to address DEI specifically.” In response to a question about support for advancing goals in DEI, they wrote, “Everyone needs to contribute to inclusive excellence, so we need incentives to encourage people who may be reluctant to get involved, partly because everyone is strapped for time. We need assurance that we will be supported in our efforts, given the current statewide political climate. UNK needs to prioritize hiring diverse faculty and support them, so they don’t feel isolated.”

IX. Collaborations with Other Academic Programs and Extracurricular Activities

English faculty put a premium on collaboration with faculty and students across campus and with other academic programs. Notable examples of collaborative work and extracurricular activities since 2014 include the following:

- Participants in World Affairs Conference: planning committee and attendance
- Participants in No Limits! Conference: planning committee and attendance
- Participants in “Pearl of a Program”: planning committee and attendance for 30th anniversary of Women and Gender Studies program on campus
- Participants in comics and medical humanities conference: planning committee and attendance
- Participants in Orphan Train colloquium and commemorative event with the Departments of Music, History, and Social Work: planning committee and attendance
- Annual Student Language and Literature Conference, with Modern Languages Department
- Mentors of students in Undergraduate Research Fellows and Summer Student Research Programs
- Presentations on research in the humanities for undergraduate research campus organizations (office of undergraduate research and student organization for research and creative activity)
- Reynolds literary readings, featuring nationally recognized writers, open to the public
- Organization of and presentations at CAS Faculty Book Festival, with faculty from other disciplines and UNK Library
- Shakespeare festival with Sigma Tau Delta students, and other university faculty and students
- Organization of interdisciplinary public events such as *Elizabeth I: In Her Own Words* show and master class, with Theatre and Museum of Nebraska Art, and the 500-year celebratory Reformation lecture, with History
- Collaboration with Music faculty at UNK and UNL for a program called *Shakespeare Reimagined* (performed at UNK, UNL, Chadron State, Scottsbluff)
- “Modlin Songs,” a vocal/instrumental piece by composer Robert Gross, which set our Reynolds Chair’s poems to music: performed by Kearney Symphony Orchestra
- Dramaturg, workshops, individual instruction in Shakespeare for Theatre faculty and students
- Film Studies club
- Working with Phi Eta Sigma, Sigma Tau Delta, and the American Democracy Project on the Emerging Writers and Artists contest

- Presentation as part of a cross-campus faculty research panel for a UNK LGBTQIA+ Research and Community Symposium
- Serving as faculty co-advisors for interdisciplinary honor societies Mortar Board and Phi Eta Sigma

X. Institutional Contributions

The English Department makes institutional contributions through the General Studies program, interdisciplinary programs, courses for future and in-service teachers, and specialized versions of our courses for the Thompson Scholars and Honors programs. Our largest contribution is to General Studies, specifically through the Composition Program, which makes up over half of the courses taught by the Department. The Department's Composition Coordinator oversees these courses and works to advance the curriculum according to current research in composition studies. Another large area of responsibility lies in our contributions to the Teacher Education programs, for which we provide courses in literature, linguistics, and writing. In all cases, department members have developed specific curricula for these additional programs; we continue to assess and revise our curricular offerings on a regular basis.

A. General Studies

a. Previous program (through Spring 2020)

In the general studies program that was offered from Fall 2010 through Spring 2020, students were required to take a minimum of 45 hours of GS courses. These courses were split into four categories: 1.) The Foundation Course, which consisted of twelve hours of courses from the categories of written communication, math, oral communication, and democracy in perspective; 2.) Portal Courses, which consisted of a special topics course with a focus on global awareness that a student could take in any discipline, preferably a discipline other than their own and preferably in their first year at UNK; 3.) Distribution, which consisted of 27 hours that needed to be split among six categories: Aesthetics (3-6 hours), Humanities (6-9 hours in at least two different disciplines), social sciences (6-9 hours in at least two different disciplines), Natural Sciences (7-11 hours in at least two different disciplines with at least one lab course), Analytical and Quantitative Thought (0-6 hours), and Wellness (0-6 hours); and 4.) Capstones, which consisted of a special-topics course with an interdisciplinary focus that would allow students to synthesize their GS knowledge and that students could take in any discipline, preferably a discipline other than their own and preferably in their junior or senior year.

Under this program, the English Department offered courses in five of the different sub-categories: Written Communication (ENG 101 & ENG 102, designed and required to be taken in a two-semester sequence and based on the Council of Writing Program Administrators' Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition); Democracy in Perspective; Humanities; Portal Courses; and Capstone Courses. Life Studies was taught in Fall 2021 as part of UNK's O.N.E (Online Networking Experience) Loper initiative, a program designed for first-year students who were taking classes online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of three courses in the program, it served the simultaneous purposes of fulfilling the Portal course goals and introducing these temporarily online students to UNK's campus, culture, and community. Many sections of our humanities courses were Writing Intensive (WI) at one time, and most remained so even after the WI requirement and designation were abolished. The combination of small class sizes with careful attention to writing in these humanities literature courses

that focus on critical thinking have been a valuable component of the liberal arts core of the GS program.

In our previous APR, the review team recommended closely monitoring our General Studies numbers as previous changes to the GS program decreased our credit hour production. Overall, our numbers show a slight decline across this period. There are two reasons for this decline. First is the number of students taking English composition courses before they come to college: a growing number of students are taking dual enrollment courses or community college courses for their General Studies classes, particularly English composition, so we have seen a general decline in those numbers. Second, this period showed a decrease in enrollment at UNK overall. The decrease in the number of students in literature classes at this time is in line with the overall decrease in UNK students. We therefore feel that we were able to maintain enrollments in the General Studies program as best as could be expected, particularly by creating new classes in the Portal and Capstone areas that appealed to student interest.

b. New LOPER General Studies program (Fall 2020 to present)

Starting in the fall of 2020, the General Studies program was reduced from 45 to 30 hours, with each department having the option to require an additional 7 department-specific hours. The new organization consists of ten categories in which a single course is required, plus an optional eleventh category. The English Department has courses in LOPER 1 (First-Year Seminar, or LOPER 126), LOPER 2 (Writing Skills, EITHER ENG 101 or ENG 102), LOPER 6 (Humanities), LOPER 9 (Civic Competency and Engagement), and Loper 10 (Respect for Human Diversity).

Our department has tried to adapt to this new program and help in the effort to see it succeed in several ways. First, we resubmitted all of our GS humanities courses to the LOPER 6 category, along with two new classes. We hope to add a film class to this category soon. Second, many of our classes address topics related to diversity and democracy. We therefore submitted several of our humanities classes (LOPER 6) to double count as meeting one of the diversity (LOPER 10) or democracy (LOPER 9) requirements also. Third, we have worked with other departments around campus to create two classes that fulfill the first-year seminar requirement, LOPER 126. One of these courses meets the needs of online students and one is for the Thompson Scholars program. These two courses were developed quickly at the request of the General Studies Council because the swift implementation of the new GS program required that courses be created for the next class of incoming Freshman. These LOPER 126 classes have filled consistently and are frequently over-enrolled; however, with projected cuts to our faculty, we may need to minimize or even eliminate our faculty's involvement with these courses as we will need our faculty to teach English department-specific courses instead.

Finally, we have also had to adapt our composition courses to accommodate the new program. Since only one course is required per LOPER category, most students can fulfill their LOPER 2 Writing requirement by taking only ENG 101. A few programs, including Teacher Education, Health Sciences, and (of course) English, still require students to take ENG 102 as part of their additional seven GS hours; however, many do not. The previous dean wanted to make a college-specific requirement for CAS students to also take ENG 102, but this was rejected by a previous Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. The decision to remove ENG 102 from General Studies was made against the recommendation of the English Department and its Composition Coordinator, as well as against the conclusions of the General Studies Council at the time, which had just arrived on a plan to include it in the GS curriculum. One semester of writing instruction is simply insufficient to prepare students for the complex and varied writing situations they'll encounter throughout their college careers and

beyond. Students arriving on campus post-COVID and its disruptions to education are, unfortunately, even less prepared in writing instruction than previous generations of students have been.

To help address some of these concerns in the limited ways we can, the English Department has revised its First-Year Writing curriculum to incorporate more instruction on research into ENG 101 (to account for the large number of students who do not take ENG 102). ENG 102 is now more focused on advanced research and critical reading, with a particular focus on research and writing in the disciplines. We've also begun offering sections of ENG 102 focused on special topics to direct students to sections focused specifically on writing in their discipline, officially renaming the course "Special Topics in Academic Writing and Research" as of Spring 2022. While we put out a campus-wide offer to work with other departments on developing these discipline-specific ENG 102 sections, so far only Communication Studies and the sciences have taken us up on our offer. Perhaps even more disappointingly, these sections have seen lower enrollment than our general ENG 102 sections and are often cancelled. Since Spring 2022, we have been able to offer the following special topics sections: Research & Writing for Communication Professionals (Spring 2022), Science & Technical Writing (Spring 2023), Wellness (Fall 2023), and Telling Others' Stories (for Communication, Spring 2024).

Unsurprisingly, we experienced a sharp drop in enrollments, particularly in the spring semesters when most students previously took ENG 102. We have tried to mitigate the drop in humanities enrollments by submitting courses that would count for two different LOPER requirements and offering more courses online for the online-only students. While these efforts have helped, the number of students enrolled in our humanities courses falls more every semester. The recent GS changes have been especially devastating to our humanities enrollments for US and British literature courses and for our ENG 102 offerings. Because many students in Teacher Education programs, for example, are required by the state to take history, many students are simply not taking, or are not able to take, literature to fulfill their Humanities GS requirement. Although the reduction in GS hours overall is designed to enable students to take other classes, we have been told by professional advisors at UNK that unless a course is required, students are not likely to take it. We hope to build our General Studies numbers back to some degree by increasing the number of special topics courses that we offer, trying to adapt our offerings more toward popular interests (we are offering a Taylor Swift-themed special topics literature course in Fall 2024) and interdisciplinary topics, but we also need to plan to continue to offer fewer GS courses now that the GS program is not as large. Overall, we are hoping to find additional ways for students and departments to include more of our writing and literature courses in their curriculum.

B. Honors Program

The English Department has collaborated regularly with the Honors Program for both General Studies and upper division classes. For General Studies classes, for a long time we offered two sections of ENG 102H every semester, one section of ENG 101H in the fall, and one section of an Honors literature course every semester. On average, we served just over 50 students per semester. These numbers have decreased significantly since the new LOPER GS program was implemented, but we still offer one section of ENG 102H every semester and one section of ENG 101H in the fall. Cuts to our faculty may affect our ability to offer Honors courses in the future, but we hope to be able to offer at least ENG 102H every fall. In our Honors classes, instructors create assignments that challenge students to work at a high level, not only cultivating skills but pursuing intellectual curiosity.

The English Department also supported the Honors Program for many years through one of our lecturers who was the program's Assistant Director and a frequent instructor of Honors courses. When she retired in 2020, that position moved to another department, which severed the close tie English had with the Honors Program.

C. Thompson Scholars courses

Our department has been and continues to be highly active with the Thompson Scholars Learning Community (TSLC), a living/learning community for first- and second-year recipients of the Susan Thompson Buffett Foundation Scholarship, which is awarded to Nebraska high school students based on academic potential and financial need. Many students in this program are first-generation students—84% of the 2023-2024 cohort identify as such. Additionally, 66% of this cohort identifies as a member of a historically underserved ethnicity. The TSLC provides mentorship, connections to campus resources, and community-building activities for their students, including special class sections designated for Thompson Scholars, to help them succeed at UNK and beyond. Each year, our department offers on average 2 sections of ENG 100A, 101, or 102 specifically for the TSLC. Enrollment in ENG 102 decreased this spring, however, which suggests that we may have to reduce offerings in the future.

English also contributes to TSLC by offering a co-taught interdisciplinary First-Year Seminar (LOPER 126) for TSLC students focused on identity. All first-year Thompson Scholars enroll in this course, and it fulfills their LOPER 1 General Studies requirement. Due to anticipated further cuts in English faculty, we may have trouble staffing LOPER 126 courses in the future. For the TSLC LOPER 126 in particular, the faculty member who has taught this course will be needed to teach more sections of ENG 100A. The Department is committed, however, to maintaining some TSLC courses as the Thompson faculty do an exceptional job of creating community and meeting the academic needs of students in this program. They attend orientation sessions, hold individual meetings with their first-year scholars to get to know their goals and backgrounds, participate in community dinners alongside their students and TSLC staff, and check in regularly with program directors to aid in student retention and accountability.

Our faculty has also organized several events that offer unique experiences while showcasing TSLC students' outstanding work to the larger campus and local community. Most recently, TSLC co-curricular activities have included such projects as a presentation of short films that scholars made about their literacy communities at the World Theatre in Kearney, an online gallery of multimedia projects on writing and communicating in scholars' respective fields, and Zoom visits / Q&A sessions with the editor-in-chief of the *Journal of Undergraduate Research and Scholarly Excellence* and memoirist Rebekah Taussig, who also hosted a public Zoom reading for the UNK and Kearney community.

D. TE programs

The English Department collaborates extensively with the Department of Teacher Education. In addition to the two teaching endorsements offered within the English Department that are described above, we also offer a number of courses that are taken by education majors and TE graduate students or are offered almost exclusively for education majors.

a. Undergraduate

In addition to offering its own two teaching endorsements, the English Department supports TE programs at the undergraduate level through a concentration in language arts, which students can choose in both the Middle Level 5-9 Teaching Subject Endorsement and the Special Education 7-12 Teaching Subject Endorsement. The variety of courses for the language arts concentrations provides future middle school and special education teachers with a solid background in literature, language, and writing, and it gives them especially strong knowledge of the types of texts that their students will most likely be reading.

Prior to the fall of 2019, TE students also took ENG 303: Introduction to Linguistics as a part of the Teaching English as a Second Language supplemental endorsement, but that requirement was removed. Until then, the course gave students an important understanding of the principles of language that helped them to navigate the difficulties inherent in code switching. Changes to language course requirements have also meant that the English Department is now planning to offer ENG 304: Grammar only in the fall rather than each semester.

In addition to integrating TE students into classes that include mostly English majors, the English Department also offers classes that are taken almost exclusively by TE majors. The Elementary Education Teaching Field Endorsement requires a course in children's literature and the Middle Level 5-9 Teaching Subject Endorsements require both a children's literature course and a course in adolescent literature. Because the adolescent literature course is also of interest to potential high school teachers, this course is made up of a combination of TE and English students. The children's literature course sections, however, tend to consist of over 90% TE majors.

Historically, the Department's undergraduate children's literature course was ENG 425: Children's Literature. However, with the advent of the new GS program, TE students could no longer take both an introductory level literature class (which they took to fulfill one of their two humanities requirements; they now take only a history class) and ENG 425. The TE faculty therefore requested that the English Department create a new course that would offer an introduction to the same texts at a less advanced level. In response, we created ENG 255: Introduction to Children's Literature, and offer two or three sections of that course each semester. The course, following trends in the field, focuses on a range of literature produced in demographically, geographically, sub-culturally, and historically diverse contexts and thereby fulfills students' LOPER 10 (Respect for Human Diversity) GS requirement as well as the Humanities GS requirement.

b. Graduate

TE programs similarly require English classes at the graduate level. For example, the Reading PK-12 program requires a childhood or youth studies English course (typically, ENG 848/848P: Literature for Adolescents, if the student has taken children's literature as an undergraduate) and has English courses as elective options. Similarly, the Early Childhood Education concentration in the Curriculum and Instruction program requires that students take ENG 847/847P: Children's Literature. Between these curricular needs and our M.A. program's population of primarily in-service English and Language Arts teachers, our ENG 848 and ENG 849: Children's and Adolescent Literature courses are in high demand. These courses provide on-going engagement with literatures the graduate students are already professionally working with, but in a context where they can think freshly, outside of praxis, as well as debate issues with others online working with similar questions but geographically apart. These courses also provide a valuable opportunity for our M.A. student in-service teachers to gain and maintain currency with accountable rigor. Demand for these courses is so great that we tend to need to

offer multiple sections of them over the summer in addition to our childhood and youth studies offerings during the academic year.

Finally, the Curriculum and Instruction program also has a Secondary Education concentration, which requires that students take 12-18 credit hours from a specific content area. English is one of those content areas. Recognizing these students' needs, as well as our own students' frequent teaching backgrounds, we regularly try to offer courses of especial interest to English and Language Arts teachers, such as "Language and Composition in Secondary Schools" and "The Teaching of Composition."

E. Transitional Certification Program and additional endorsements

The Transitional Certification Program (TCP) at UNK is an online alternative teacher certification pathway for individuals with a baccalaureate degree or higher who wish to earn an Initial Teaching Certificate issued by the Nebraska Department of Education. Because the need for teachers in the state is so great, students who meet the qualifications to start the TCP are eligible to be hired by a Nebraska public school to begin teaching in their endorsement area even before they have earned their teaching certificate. Current certified teachers in Nebraska's schools can also add endorsements through this process.

TCP requirements for the Secondary English and English Language Arts (ELA) endorsements are the same as those required for English BAEd students. TE courses for the program are online; however, many of the courses needed for the Secondary English or ELA endorsement are in person. Given that many of the students in the program are already engaged in full-time teaching, so that they cannot take time off to attend classes in person, the Department allows substitutions based on a transcript review and students in the program are allowed to take online graduate courses that correspond to the required undergraduate courses.

The number of students in the program has started to draw the Department's attention as these students are not always fully prepared for graduate coursework in English. As some of these students do not come from English or even Humanities backgrounds initially, this is not surprising; however, as many of these students are currently teaching English courses in middle and high schools across the state, it is in the Department's best interest to make sure these students are as supported and fully prepared to teach English and Language Arts as possible. We have begun, therefore, to strategize ways to better serve these students.

One of the ways in which we have striven to better serve these students is by designating a professor in the Department with expertise in English pedagogy to assist people pursuing additional endorsements in English. On behalf of the English Department, this professor meets with and answers questions prospective students have about the TCP program and English endorsements; evaluates the transcripts submitted; advises students, either in the program or those who need more English credits before they can enter the program, about the courses they should take; and communicates with the faculty and staff on the TE side. The Department has also sought to offer online versions of undergraduate courses those students need, particularly courses that cannot otherwise be easily substituted (such as ENG 234: Reading and Writing about Literature) or where the graduate coursework would be especially challenging in an online format (such as ENG 804A/P: History of the English Language, when students need ENG 404: History of the English Language). Our English majors are better served by, and most interested in, in-person courses, so, unfortunately, as there are rarely enough TCP students who need the same class at the same time, it is difficult for the Department regularly to be able to offer

online undergraduate versions of courses needed by TCP students. We continue, however, to seek ways to further help these students. We will also monitor any changes needed to the program as a result of Rule 25.

F. International Studies

The International Studies Program offers a major and a minor that are made up largely of classes in other departments on campus. The major is organized around three Thematic options (Global Human Rights and Justice; Global Strategic Studies; and Global Resources, Development, and the Environment) and four Area Studies (Europe; Latin America; Africa, Asia, and the Middle East; and North America), and students must choose one thematic option and one area outside of their home region to study. English offers several courses in three of the areas: Europe; Africa, Asia, and the Middle East; and North America.

As literature courses, these classes offer an important perspective on the cultures that they represent. Most of the courses fall under the traditional division of British and American Literature, though we have some non-Western options as well. We hope to be able to develop these additional options more, especially by adding courses to the Latin America area as our university moves to become a Hispanic-serving institution. The recent budget cuts are making it likely that International Studies will become a minor in the Modern Languages Department. As changes occur, we will try to work with Modern Languages to find ways we can continue to serve International Studies.

G. Women's, Gender, and Ethnic Studies Program

The Women's, Gender, and Ethnic Studies Program has two minors: Women's and Gender Studies and Ethnic Studies. Both minors include electives from a wide range of departments. Concepts of diversity and inclusion are central to many English courses, and they are therefore appropriate for these two minors. The English Department in fact frequently offers courses for these minors. With some of the recent developments in the Department, we now have more classes that could be relevant to Ethnic Studies in particular, such as ENG 255: Introduction to Children's Literature and ENG 333, which is being retitled "Postcolonial Literature in a Global Context." We will work with the current director of the program to update the courses we can offer. The University's budget cuts make it likely that the minors will be moved to Sociology. Given English's long history with the Women's and Gender Studies program (two of our emerita faculty were the founders of the program), we will also work to ensure that the English Department continues to have a place in Women's, Gender, and Ethnic Studies.

H. History Department

The History Department recently developed two new minors, one in Nebraska Studies and the other in Medical Humanities. English has contributed already-established courses to these minors as well as created new courses for them, including courses with experiential learning components and that meet the university's new Experiential Learning requirements.

History is also working to bring Mari Sandoz archives from Chadron State to UNK. If the History Department is successful in doing so (the Mari Sandoz Heritage Society board has recently voted to explore the possibility), English will play a key role for the archives, likely including working to create annotated scholarly editions of some of Sandoz's works; exploring the unknown papers included in the

archives, which are suspected to be rich and revealing of both the author's professional and personal lives; and mentoring a graduate research student in archival research.

XI. Student Profile and Support Data

A. Student data

The total number of English students enrolled at UNK has increased slightly in the last five years, with a peak in 2021. The majority of these students are white (on average, 85.0%), though we also have a few Latino/Latina and multi-ethnic students. Our students also tend to be largely female (on average, 77.2%). Recently, our enrollments have shifted in terms of the balance of undergraduate and graduate students: while we still have more undergraduate students, the numbers are closer.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
English	21	13	12	13	9
English -- Writing	18	12	16	13	13
LA Field Endorsement	13	12	17	21	27
English Subject Endorsement	36	45	41	36	24
Total Undergraduate Majors	88	82	86	83	73
English MA	29	42	56	52	49
Total English Students	117	124	142	135	122
English Minor	7	7	3	1	1
Childhood & Youth Studies	2	2	5	2	0
Creative Writing	14	10	8	11	13
Pop Culture	5	4	3	2	1
Film	5	4	5	5	2
English (Elementary Ed)	2	0	0	0	0
Total Minors	35	17	24	21	17
Total Majors & Minors	155	156	173	166	139

Table 1: Number of majors and minors

The table above includes only unduplicated majors in the fall semester, as provided by the UNK Factbook. In other words, students who double major and have English listed as the second major are not counted in the Factbook or in the table. Also, the number of students enrolled as recorded by the UNK Factbook is not equivalent to the number of students matriculated in the program. Because many of our graduate students are in-service teachers, they do not enroll every single semester. We therefore have more English MA students than indicated in the Factbook or in the table.

The data in the table, however, shows that, at the undergraduate level, the total number of majors has been slowly decreasing over the last decade. This is especially true of the BA students. Since the last APR, the number of BA students has decreased by 58.4%. The number of our BAEd students has also decreased. Both are, unfortunately, nationwide trends: according to *Education Week*, for example, traditional programs in teacher education have seen enrollments drop by 35% (Madeline Will, *EdWeek.org*, March 22, 2022). The English Department's BAEd enrollments have only dropped by 8.9% since the last APR, which shows the relative strength of our programs. At the graduate level, the

table shows that the number of students enrolled in classes is overall on the rise, though the number peaked in 2021. Since we moved the program online and restructured it to include four focus areas that are particularly relevant to our faculty's expertise and our student body, we have grown the program substantially: it has increased by 122.7% since the last APR. The combination of a decrease in undergraduate numbers with an increase in graduate numbers means that our overall numbers have only decreased by a total of 9 enrolled students.

The shift in our student body from mostly undergraduate students to a larger proportion of graduate students can also be seen in our graduation rates.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Undergraduate	21	24	17	17	22
BA	11	16	9	10	8
BAEd	10	8	8	7	14
Graduate	6	10	9	20	15
Total	27	34	26	37	37

Table 2: Student graduation rates

At our last APR, the graduation rate for our graduate students was low enough that we were in danger of losing the program due to coordinating commission guidelines. We now far exceed the threshold of 7 students per year. While our undergraduate programs have decreased, the BA (combined English and English Writing) and BAEd degrees both likewise have over 7 students per year graduating.

Our time to graduation fits within the UNK norms: the number of students who graduate within four to six years after entering UNK as an English major is similar to, if not higher than, the number of students who do so at UNK overall. Though the number has dropped somewhat recently, that is likely due to COVID, and we feel confident that we can increase the percentage back to its previous levels.

		After 4 years	After 5 years	After 6 years
Fall 2015	English	26%	58%	63%
	UNK	29.6%	49.8%	58.0%
Fall 2016	English	35%	59%	59%
	UNK	28.5%	47.7%	54.1%
Fall 2017	English	50%	64%	64%
	UNK	34.8%	52.1%	59.8%
Fall 2018	English	30%	40%	
	UNK	33.0%	51.2%	

Table 3: Time to graduation by cohort for students entering with an English major vs all UNK students.

B. Recruitment

Due to the recent decrease in students enrolled in our program at the undergraduate level, our department created a dedicated Recruitment and Public Relations Committee (we formerly had a Student Relations, Recruitment, and Retention Committee, but it was dissolved in favor of a more general but less structured effort from the entire faculty). Focused on undergraduate recruitment, this committee has adopted some new strategies: its members have increased our social media presence by

posting more regularly on Facebook and created an English Department Instagram page; its members have placed additional signage and regularly updated bulletin boards around the Department to increase our department's visibility; and its members have been in touch with former students who are now English teachers to begin planning an "English Day" in which we get high school students onto campus. The committee is also planning to give guest lectures or run workshops in the high schools; this is something the Department has done in the past but would like to do more regularly. The committee will also send out information to students or teachers to raise interest in our program. Discussion with students and their parents at recruitment meetings shows that both students and parents do not necessarily see an English major as good preparation for a prospective career. Our message, then, will be to show ways that English teaches transferable skills such as good writing and insightful critical thinking that are desired in any number of jobs. At the end of February, the Academic Advising and Career Development office sent the English Department a list of over 30 employers actively seeking English majors at its March career fair. The Department will strive to highlight these employment opportunities to students and parents. In addition, we can highlight how needed English teachers are during our current teacher shortage, allowing many of our students to get hired even before they finish their student teaching.

Other recruitment activities by the Department include members of the faculty regularly participating in recruitment days and college fairs on the UNK campus and elsewhere in the state (e.g., the Annual Nebraska Cultural Unity Conference at Younes Center). Recruitment efforts have also included facilitating job shadowing for high school seniors interested in the English major; holding workshops in poetry, Shakespeare, and other literature for students in Nebraska middle schools and high schools; and offering teaching presentations on Zoom for teachers (for example, Poetry in the Classroom: UNK's Virtual Poetry Event, 2021).

One major concern that we have about recruitment is how elements beyond our control will negatively impact our enrollments. In particular, the loss of the Theatre program will likely hurt our ability to recruit students to one of our growing programs, the English Language Arts Field Endorsement. This program is designed for students who wish to teach English while also coaching speech, running a school newspaper, or directing a high school Theatre program. While we do have an English professor who specializes in drama and can offer the necessary courses to fulfill the degree, students who are excited about Theatre and who wish to teach it will likely choose a school where they will be able to get more hands-on experience and participate in a vibrant Theatre program. This may also affect our BA students, several of whom have, in the past, chosen a Theatre minor or participated in productions.

Through the Department's recruitment efforts, we hope to be able to increase the number of English minors as well. Although one of the goals of changing the General Studies Program from 45 to 30 hours was to allow students to take additional minors, we have not seen any effect on our number of minors. We have therefore made some targeted changes to our minor requirements to increase our enrollments. First, we reduced the number of hours of the longer minors so that all of them are now 21 credit hours. Second, we added more courses to some so that students would have more options and would be less likely to find themselves struggling to find the classes they need to complete the requirements. And third, we changed the prerequisites to the upper-division courses that primarily serve the minors (such as ENG 373: Film Genre and ENG 337: Special Topics in Popular Literature) so that students in different majors can take them without having to take ENG 234. In addition, we are trying to make more students around campus aware of how an English minor might benefit their degree program by visiting ENG 101 and ENG 102 classrooms. We also hope in the future to host some events that teach and showcase skills that might be useful to all students, both to help students and to illustrate the value of adding an English minor to their program of study.

At the graduate level, recruitment is the responsibility of UNK Online (Graduate Studies) and our department's GPC and Online Coordinator. UNK Online advertises through targeted Facebook marketing; limited program-specific physical and digital advertisements in certain publications, most of which are geared toward Nebraska teachers; and yearly contacts via email to Nebraska educators and recent UNK English graduates. Graduate Studies also makes connections for all UNK programs at events such as education fairs at UNL and UNO and the National Conference on Undergraduate Research. Our faculty and staff have recently added recruitment tables at two relevant conferences, NCTE and AWP, and our Online Coordinator directly contacts students who make inquiries about our program. We are also in the process of creating a 4+1 program for our undergraduates, allowing our especially capable undergraduates to take up to 9 credit hours in our MA program to count both as part of their undergraduate degree and as the beginnings of an MA degree with us. After the initial growth in our MA program, our numbers have remained essentially stable. While we do not want the program to get too large, we are hoping these additional efforts will increase enrollment and that the possibility of a 4+1 degree will serve as an undergraduate recruitment tool as well.

Overall, while we are fairly pleased with our graduate numbers, we are hoping to increase our undergraduate numbers back to previous levels. At this time in the state of Nebraska, an English Education degree is very advantageous to graduates because the teacher shortage almost guarantees them a job. Some of our recent graduates were recruited for English teacher positions in the state while they were still taking classes as undergraduates. Other careers also benefit from the learning outcomes of an English degree, so we hope to communicate to more students how the degree would be right for them, or that a minor or second major would greatly improve their eventual success on the job market.

XII. Retention, Advising, and Mentoring

English faculty regard departmental community, mentorship, advising, and professionalization as the essential ingredients of student retention. Retention has generally been a strength of the Department. The nature of humanities courses—critical thinking, literary analysis, discussion, peer review of writing—enables us to provide an all-important sense of community for our students in the classroom. Events such as literary readings, open mics, and film screenings, sponsored in part by Sigma Tau Delta, help create community outside of the classroom. Advising and mentoring are crucial to retention, as well. By giving students individual attention and support, faculty get to know the academic needs of our majors, helping them navigate their programs. Faculty also mentor students in EL professional writing courses, theses, and UNK research programs, guiding them towards professional opportunities in preparation for taking teaching positions, attending graduate school, seeking English-related jobs, and publishing. Last, but not least, the Department offers ample financial support to our majors and graduate students.

A. Financial support

The English Department offers a sizable number of scholarships to returning students. For undergraduates, we have ten different general scholarships, plus one specifically for creative writing students, which are funded by foundation accounts. Many of these have a minimum requirement of a 3.0 or 3.5 GPA but can otherwise be assigned based on scholastic achievement and financial need. We generally try to give some support to every student who is eligible for these scholarships; although we cannot give them a huge amount of support, the money we do have can be useful to bolster other forms

of financial aid. The University and Department also offer funding for undergraduates to present at regional and national conferences.

At the graduate level, the Department has two general scholarships and one creative writing scholarship funded by the foundation. In addition, we always nominate two of our students for the university-wide Reichenbach Scholarship, generally successfully. Finally, we offer three student GA positions, which carry full tuition remission and a small stipend funded by the Graduate Office (UNK Online). Graduate students are eligible for additional research and conference support funding through UNK's Research Services Council (RSC). The Department also offers conference support funding for graduate students and is exploring using one of the foundation scholarship funds we have traditionally devoted only to undergraduates to support graduate students as well (the fund would allow for this, but as we have traditionally had far more undergraduate than graduate students, we have not previously considered using it in this way).

B. Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society

The Xi Beta chapter of Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society at UNK confers distinction for high achievement in English language and literature at the undergraduate, graduate, and faculty levels. Our chapter hosts events throughout the year to promote literacy and partners with multiple organizations on campus to foster interest in all aspects of language, literature, and writing. Annual campus events include open mic readings, Date with a Blind Book fundraiser, literary festivals, Banned Books week, and film screenings. Through Sigma Tau Delta's regional and international conferences and publications, we provide professional and scholarly development opportunities for current students. Additionally, our chapter produces the *Carillon*, UNK's premier student-run literary journal featuring the best selections of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and artwork from students across UNK. Students in our chapter gain hands-on editing experience while producing the *Carillon*.

C. Advising

Our faculty is committed to in-depth, individual advising that welcomes students into the English Department and gives ongoing personal support and help as they navigate their programs. The complexities of the Secondary Education majors require the faculty's careful monitoring of students' degree audits and informative discussions about course selection and program planning. With recent and anticipated curricular changes, advising is an area in which faculty will need to remain informed and committed.

D. Mentoring

English faculty provide mentoring to students through the Undergraduate Research Fellows and Summer Student Research Programs, the Student Conference in Language and Literature, and master's thesis direction. We work extensively with students on their scholarly and creative work, which has been accepted for presentation at numerous national and international conferences, including the following: International T.S. Eliot Society, International Congress for Medieval Studies, South Central Renaissance Conference, Hellenic Culture Conference, Society for the Academic Study of Social Imagery, Studies in the History of the English Language, The Medieval Studies Institute Annual Symposium, Southwest Popular/American Culture Association Conference, Conference on College Composition and Communication, Children's Literature Association Annual Conference; Northern Plains Conference on Early British Literature, NCUR, Sigma Tau Delta National Conference, Sigma Tau Delta High Plains Regional Conference, European Studies Conference, No Limits: Women's and

Gender Studies Conference. Faculty mentor students who are working towards submitting their creative pieces and scholarly essays to journals. Students in English have published their work in many journals and essay collections, including *The English Languages: History, Diaspora, Culture*; *Good Madness: A Collection of Essays on the Work of Neil Gaiman*; *Watcher Junior: The Undergraduate Journal of Whedon Studies*; *Literature and Belief*; *The Cellar Door*; *The Good Life Review*; *Aironaut*; *Flash Fiction Magazine*; *Plainsongs*; *Burnt Pine Magazine*; *LAMP Anthology*; *Thin Air Magazine*; *White Wall Review*; *Sierra Nevada Review*; *Open: A Journal of Arts & Letters*; *The Carillon* (UNK), *Graduate Review* (UNK), and *Undergraduate Research Journal* (UNK). One faculty member won the Faculty Mentor Award for the College of Graduate Studies in 2022.

XIII. Faculty Data Summaries

The English Department has 16 full-time faculty members: eight tenured professors, three tenure-track professors, one professor on special appointment (the Reynolds Endowed Chair of Creative Writing), three permanent lecturers (two of whom hold the rank of senior lecturer), and one temporary lecturer. All tenured and tenure-track professors have graduate faculty status and hold a Ph.D. Our four lecturers hold an MA and/or MFA. In response to UNK's budget concerns, we reduced our reliance on adjuncts in Spring 2024; we plan to hire a graduate-level (adjunct/part-time) lecturer with a Ph.D. to teach creative writing for our MA program in Summer 2024. The Department also relies on 3 part-time Graduate (Teaching) Assistants and a Graduate (Research) Assistant for our composition program.

For our full-time faculty, eleven identify as female and five as male. One full-time faculty member identifies as multi-ethnic, one as Asian, and fourteen full-time faculty members identify as White.

English Department Full-Time Faculty (Spring 2024)

Name	Rank	Hire Year	Specialization	Highest Degree	Inst. Granting Degree
Beissel Heath, Michelle	Professor	2009	Childhood and Youth Studies, British Lit of the long 19 th century	Ph.D.	George Washington University
Graham, Janet	Assistant Professor	2020	Secondary Education, Pedagogy, Contemporary American and Refugee Literature	Ph.D.	University of Hawaii, Manoa
Hartman, Megan	Professor	2011	Medieval Literature, Historical Linguistics, Grammar, Poetics, Speculative Fiction	Ph.D.	Indiana University
Honeyman, Susan	Professor	2002	Childhood Studies, Youth Literature & Politics, Cultural Studies, Folklore, Comics, US lit	Ph.D.	Wayne State University Detroit
Lee, Jay	Lecturer	2021	Composition and Basic Writing	MA	Fort Hays State University
Long, Seth	Associate Professor	2015	Digital Humanities, Rhetorical Theory, History of Rhetoric, Corpus Linguistics	Ph.D.	Syracuse University
Meyer, Bobby	Lecturer	2014	Composition	MA	UNK
Modlin, Brad	Associate Professor	2018	Poetry, Creative Nonfiction, Fiction, Creative Writing Pedagogy, Poetry and Wellbeing	Ph.D.	Ohio University

Sladek, Amanda	Associate Professor	2016	Composition and Basic Writing Pedagogies, Literacy Studies, Antiracism and Linguistic Justice	Ph.D.	University of Kansas
Steinke, Annarose	Assistant Professor	2018	Modernist Poetry & Poetics, Religion, Women, and Medicine and the Body in Modernist Lit	Ph.D.	University of New Mexico
Tassi, Marguerite	Professor	1997	Shakespeare, Early Modern Drama and Lyric Poetry, Ancient Literature, Lit & Visual Arts	Ph.D.	Claremont Graduate School
Thompson, Jan	Senior Lecturer	2005	Composition and Creative Writing	MFA	UNL
Turman, Jenara	Senior Lecturer	2005	Composition	MA	UNK
Umland, Rebecca	Professor	1989	19 th Century British Lit, World/European Lit, Arthurian Legend, Film Studies	Ph.D.	University of Iowa
Van Renen, Denys <i>On leave, AY 2023-2024</i>	Professor	2012	Milton, Restoration & 18 th Century British Lit, Cultural Studies, Scottish Studies, Ecocriticism	Ph.D.	University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
Ziolkowski, Theodora	Assistant Professor	2022	Fiction Writing, The Gothic, Body Poetics, Humor Writing	Ph.D.	University of Houston

A. Faculty expertise

a. Research and teaching excellence, awards, and grants

In keeping with UNK's institutional mission, English Department faculty consistently demonstrate excellence and innovation in teaching and scholarship. See faculty curriculum vitae (**Appendix I**). The Department has won four campus-wide teaching awards since 2001. Department faculty members have been honored with 14 Pratt-Heins Awards and 5 Leland Holdt/Security Mutual Life Awards. They have received UNK awards such as Faculty Mentor Award and Honors Program Faculty Award, international society awards, such as the Scholar Award from the International T.S. Eliot Society, and scholarly publication awards, such as the Children's Literature Association's 2020 Honor Book, and creative writing awards such as the Marion Barthelme Award in Creative Writing (just to name a few). Since 2014, faculty have published 13 books (with 5 additional books currently under contract), and approximately 55 articles in peer-reviewed journals. They have given papers and chaired panels at dozens of national and international conferences and received numerous grants from state, national, and international sources. Funding institutions include University of Nebraska system, UNK, Nebraska Arts Council, Humanities Nebraska, Spain's Ministry of Science and Innovation. Grants have included money to support campus and community interdisciplinary workshops, lectures, performances, and colloquia (e.g., "Elizabeth: In Her Own Words" and "Rethinking Comics as a Therapeutic and Education Tool"). Faculty routinely secure institutional grants through the Research Services Council and receive Professional Development Leave Fellowships (sabbaticals). Since 2014, six faculty have received sabbaticals, which is an outstanding record for the Department considering the institution did not award any sabbaticals for two of the years between 2014 and 2023. UNK is once again not awarding sabbaticals for professional development, which affects English faculty and morale, as we have at least three professors with research projects who would be eligible to apply for this fellowship.

b. Service to the institution

The English faculty has a longstanding tradition of providing service to the institution at every level of the University of Nebraska system. Beyond the departmental level, English faculty collectively have served multiple terms on Faculty Senate, all four Dean's Advisory Committees, Rank and Tenure Committee, Education Policy, General Studies Council, Graduate Council, World Affairs Committee, International Studies Advisory Council, Women's, Gender, and Ethnic Studies Advisory Council, Undergraduate Research Services Council, Outstanding Senior Ceremony Committee, Artists and Lecturers Committee, Academic Program Reviews, the CAS Dean's Search Committee, faculty and staff position search committees, and the UN system's Outstanding Research and Creative Activities Committee. English faculty also serve as advisors for UNK's chapters of two national honor societies: Mortar Board and Phi Eta Sigma, the Honor Society for first-year students.

B. Teaching assignment patterns

Teaching assignment patterns in the Department are currently in flux, as we are in the midst of a period of great uncertainty. Changes in the University's GS program significantly affected our GS offerings, reducing greatly the number of composition and GS literature sections we can offer. Larger budget cuts this year are threatening our faculty resources: we lost one tenured faculty member this academic year and we are told we are likely to lose our temporary lecturer this coming fall as well as a permanent lecturer the following fall. These losses will have a dire effect on the courses we will be able to offer, particularly our ability to teach in programs outside of the Department and for specialized student groups. As a result of these changes, there are fewer literature courses for lecturers and tenured/tenure-track faculty to teach and greater need for our tenured/tenure-track faculty to teach composition courses. With the potential loss of two lecturers, that composition need will increase further. Our ability to offer majors courses for undergraduates has also decreased, in part due to decreases in majors/enrollment; however, the increase in enrollments in our graduate program has offset that a bit. At the moment, we try to offer all tenured/tenure-track faculty at least one "majors" course, or undergraduate course somehow connected to an area of their specialization, or a graduate-level course, per year. Depending on specialization and need/demand, some faculty have more than one per year. Availability of classes to teach also depends on the semester: with the loss of ENG 102 for General Studies, we now have uneven semester offerings, with more composition courses needed to be offered in the Fall than in the Spring. This typically means we need to ask our Graduate Teaching Assistants to teach more composition sections in the fall than in the Spring, and to serve as Teaching Assistants for upper-level courses in the Spring instead.

C. Faculty hires and transitions

Whenever an opportunity arises for a faculty hire (generally when a faculty member retires), faculty meet to discuss departmental needs and current practices in the field to propose an area of expertise for that hire. We advertise as broadly as possible, including through the MLA database, to encourage as diverse an applicant pool as possible and we aim to interview a diverse pool of applicants who meet the expertise needed for the position. Several of our more diverse recent applicants have unfortunately chosen to pull out of our applicant pool with concerns about living in Nebraska. To counter such concerns, we have attempted to highlight the welcoming nature of our department and its faculty. Faculty who retire are nominated for emeriti faculty status and are given departmental office space for one year after they retire to help with their transition.

D. Support for faculty involvement in interdisciplinary or cross-unit academic programs

The English Department has long supported involvement in interdisciplinary and cross-unit academic programs. Two English faculty members were founders of the Women's and Gender Studies program and a faculty member in the Department has consistently served on the Women's, Gender, and Ethnic Studies advisory board since its founding. A faculty member also consistently serves on the International Studies advisory board. Both forms of service are strongly encouraged by the Department and the Department has consistently found room in its schedule to support faculty in teaching in those programs as well as in teaching for specialized student groups such as Honors and Thompson Scholars, as well as for General Studies. Unfortunately, with the proposed loss of faculty, some of that support will likely need to decrease: teaching for the University's online LOPER 126, for example, may not be possible as early as this coming fall: we simply may not have the faculty to cover the Department's needed composition courses. We are hoping to protect our Thompson Scholars and Honors offerings; however, we may also need to reduce some of those offerings simply due to lack of faculty resources in the Department.

E. Workload Analyses

Over the past few years, we have paid close attention to workload analyses, striving to ensure workloads are equitable for all. This has meant asking some faculty to step up their service obligations, reducing the number of departmental standing committees, and seeking course releases and/or stipends for leadership positions in the Department. It has also meant watching student enrollment numbers in LOPER 126 courses and keeping track of faculty work on independent studies, directed readings, and directing theses and ensuring that faculty can take periodic course releases when they have earned them for taking on this additional work (the GPC maintains a spreadsheet of thesis/independent study course accruals for this purpose). All tenured/tenure-track faculty receive a course release for research.

F. Support for faculty development

Fortunately, with available Foundation fund grants and funds available to us through Thompson Scholars, Dual Credit, and Undergraduate Research, faculty have consistent support for professional development, which includes travel for conference presentations and obtaining pedagogical and scholarly materials.

G. Use of adjunct faculty and faculty retention efforts

Due to budget cuts, we have minimized our reliance on adjunct faculty; unfortunately, the continued rounds of budget cuts have contributed to a significant lack of morale on campus, particularly in the arts and humanities. Although we have made great strides in improving conditions and morale for many at the departmental level, our attempts at faculty recruitment and retention – made most apparent through repeated rounds of failed faculty searches for a position in composition – show that we are facing an uphill battle, both because of conditions in the state and at the university.

XIV. Resource Bases

A. Physical space and staffing

The English Department shares space in Thomas Hall with the Modern Languages Department and Philosophy Program. The CAS Dean's office suite has recently been moved to the building, as well.

Each full-time faculty member has a private office. Our graduate assistants are housed in THMH 103, a large area with 5 desks. Rooms in Thomas Hall seat from 15-30 students. All are smart classrooms, meaning they are equipped with projectors, computers (w/ internet connection and DVD player), and a camera to facilitate Zoom classes.

Classroom space in the building is becoming challenging. Since the Dean's office moved into Thomas Hall, the building has lost at least four classrooms: one classroom and two offices (English and Modern Languages) were lost when the Dean's office first relocated to Thomas Hall. One small classroom was converted into a now-empty office, another was transformed into a conference room for the Dean (making for, at the time, three conference rooms in the building), and a larger computer classroom is now being used to store materials for the Music Department. Given that we now must schedule classes outside of Thomas Hall at peak times, and there were no classrooms available when the Modern Languages Department needed to conduct placement exams, the return of one or two of these spaces to classrooms is a much-needed priority.

As a result of there being, briefly, three conference rooms in the building, English transformed its own conference room into a student/faculty lounge. This newly refurbished space is proving quite popular: students use it for their own meetings, study periods, and lunch, and faculty hold small committee meetings in it. We updated some of the furniture in English areas of the building, adding to previous efforts, including a former dean's creation of a sofa space downstairs. We hope to expand this updating of furniture to create more welcoming spaces downstairs, as that is where the majority of our students take classes. Facilities is trying to do what it can, but the building's heating and cooling systems need to be updated and the roof leaks. The two sets of bathrooms in the building are not insulated/heated/cooled.

The English Department's staff positions are currently in a state of uncertainty. In part as a cost-saving measure, the CAS Dean has decided to remove all office associate positions at the departmental level (the Dean's office still retains an administrative associate and an office associate, the latter of whom will be taking over contracts for the College). As part of the process, the number of office associates in CAS has been reduced from twelve to seven, with the expectation that by being more specialized (some will just focus on budget, some on student support, some on travel, etc.), they will be able to do the same amount of work. Given that the English Department was already struggling to accomplish what it needed to with a half-time office associate, we have concerns about this new plan. Now in its early stage of implementation, many details remain unclear, and the directory that outlines the associates' work/support areas is incomplete, still a work in progress. We are experiencing a rocky start to this new arrangement with some of the workload formerly taken on by our office associate now on the Chair's plate. We will continue working with the current group of office associates and the Dean's office to learn more about who is responsible for each of the areas of support needed for our department to run smoothly.

The Online Graduate Program Coordinator is a newer position in the English Department. We gained this position after we moved our Graduate Program fully online and it grew substantially. The Online Program Coordinator works mainly for the Graduate Program Chair, helping with advising, recruitment, and organizational tasks. For a list of the Program Coordinator's duties, see the *Department of English By-Laws* and *Department of English Handbook of Policies and Procedures* on Canvas. Gaining an online coordinator has been extremely beneficial to the English Department overall and to the GPC in particular. Through the help of the Online Program Coordinator, we have been able to increase our recruitment and free up the GPC to work on curricular issues. Again, though, this position is not dedicated entirely to the English Department; our coordinator is shared with

Modern Languages. We hope that as our graduate program continues to prosper, we will eventually be able to have an online program coordinator whose sole job is in the English Department.

B. Funding sources and accounts

The English Department has a variety of funding sources and accounts. For the University budget, these include English's main cost center, Thompson Scholars funds, Dual Credit funds, Undergraduate Research Fellowship funds, Online Program Funds, and several grant funds. The Department also has a wide variety of Foundation funds at its disposal. A dozen of these are endowed scholarships for undergraduate and graduate students. Two funds provide endowed chair positions for faculty: the Reynolds Chair of Poetry/Creative Writing and the Martin Distinguished Professorship for senior faculty with outstanding research and teaching. Two additional funds provide grants/awards to faculty for research and professional development, including one devoted to "further[ing the] study of creative literature" and one devoted to "support of projects/programs for language/writing skill development." The remaining two Foundation funds, including Friends of English, are for general departmental discretionary use.

The Department receives University funds for teaching Thompson Scholars courses; their designated uses are primarily for individual faculty who are teaching the courses (they receive a small stipend or professional development funds) and for pedagogic purposes related to Thompson Scholars classes, with remaining funds available for other departmental needs. The Department receives dual credit funds for offering dual credit courses in Nebraska high schools; these funds are for general departmental use. Online Program Funds are provided by the Graduate/UNK Online office in support of our graduate program and online courses. These funds are often used for summer salaries and for resources for recruiting for our graduate program, such as for booths at conferences. Undergraduate Research Fellowship funds are specific funds for faculty and students in support of specific research projects and larger professional development. We have used funds from dual credit and our main cost center recently to create the student/faculty lounge and to update some of the furniture on the second floor. We may use some of our Thompson Scholars funding this year to upgrade some of the furniture on the first floor. We are also using Thompson Scholars funding for travel and professional development for faculty members. Dual credit funding has been earmarked this year (and likely next) to enhance student recruitment, particularly undergraduate recruitment.

The two Foundation funds for awards to departmental faculty, the Mary Major Crawford Faculty Endowment Fund and the UNK Language Arts Research Fund, have been under-utilized. A goal for the Chair's Advisory Committee and the Department as a whole over the next few months will be to develop award criteria to help better use these funds, ideally returning them to annual awards for faculty members.

In addition to departmental funds, faculty can apply for travel funds through the CAS Dean's office. These awards are generally for presentations at conferences and tend to prioritize junior and untenured faculty members. RSC funding is available for faculty research, student-faculty collaborations, graduate student research, and faculty course releases. English Department faculty members have been consistently successful in securing RSC research grants and fellowships. Sources outside of the university include Nebraska Humanities grants and other federal and local grants and fellowships.

C. Library resources and support

For a comprehensive report that details the UNK Library's resources for English faculty and students, see **Appendix III**.

XV. Future Direction

A. Summary of strengths: foundation for future growth

English faculty create a welcoming climate of intellectual inquiry, exchange of ideas, and mutual respect in their classrooms. Students are encouraged to hone their critical thinking skills and to cultivate a high level of literacy through research and writing. Secondary English majors with Subject and Field endorsements are served well by our program's rigor and by exemplary faculty who ensure that our students have the literary and linguistic proficiencies they need to teach and inspire students at any level in Nebraska's educational system. Assessment reports demonstrate that our students meet or exceed all benchmarks. Writing is, hands down, a strength of our faculty and an interest of our students. Our students and faculty alike excel in all forms of critical and creative writing. We're publishing and presenting in highly visible and competitive venues, getting grants and book contracts, and sweeping the Student Research Day awards. Our writing students are served well by vibrant, nationally recognized faculty who are committed to mentorship and innovative curricular development on undergraduate and graduate levels.

B. Plans for future development

Because of UNK's budget cuts, declining enrollment, reduction in force, and elimination of the Theatre Program, the English Department is giving careful consideration to its mission and strategic plan. Of necessity, our strategic plan is a work-in-progress, as noted above. We have started some significant partnerships, both for academic and co-curricular purposes, in the last couple of years, that we will want to keep solidifying and growing: the Nebraska Emerging Writers and Artists Contest, the Medical Humanities and Nebraska minors and possibly the Mari Sandoz archive with History, and Sigma Tau Delta's collaborative events with other departments. We would like to build regular partnerships with local and regional schools, appealing both to education majors (future Nebraska teachers) and writers. In looking ahead five years, we would like high school guidance counselors and English teachers to be able to say, "If you want to be a teacher or a writer, go to UNK!"

a. Undergraduate Program

We consistently look for ways to improve curricular content and adjust requirements according to students' intellectual interests and, for Secondary Education majors, state requirements. Recently, we changed our curriculum to improve our adherence to Rule 24 requirements. Starting in Fall 2023, our BAEd students will need to take English 426: Literature for Adolescents and an upper-division composition class. With the elimination of the Theatre Program, the English Department plans to propose two courses formerly taught by Theatre faculty that are required for our English Language Arts teaching majors. In this way, we plan to use the dramatic literature and theatre expertise of English faculty rather than general education faculty to address the discipline-specific needs of our students.

b. Graduate Program

From the 2022-2023 Assessment Report: “We will continue looking at the creative writing focus as the additional area of assessment in addition to the core classes for 2023-2024. We are in the process of getting a Language, Rhetoric, and Composition Colloquium approved for the next graduate catalog. We are also planning to create a 5-year BA-MA, which is poised to begin in Fall 2024. We will have ongoing discussions about this program as we move toward launching it. We will consider how to grow our program while maintaining high standards. The enrollment numbers in the program are holding steady, but we believe we can grow in the near future. The increase in nondegree-seeking students has helped with credit hour production but many of these students are not as prepared as the students in our MA program. Some students in the transitional certificat[ion] program, in particular, seem to have the impression that they can do the work whenever they want to because it is an asynchronous class. However, discussions, for example, need to be completed within a specified time so as to create a conversation among students about the readings. The GPC will strengthen relationships with the transitional certificat[ion] faculty to help students understand the expectations for our online graduate classes. We also seek to bolster our numbers through better coordination with the marketing department through targeted emails, social media, and print ads. The online program coordinator and selected faculty will have booths at three national conferences in 2023 and 2024 to attract new students for our online MA program: NCTE, AWP, and NCUR [UNK Online has decided to have a booth at NUCR for the university’s graduate programs as a whole]. We plan to contact students at the end of their program for feedback about their experience and possibly to obtain contact information. The online coordinator will assist the committee in creating and administering such a survey. We know who is graduating, so it is not difficult to contact them.”

Appendices

Appendix I:	Faculty CVs
Appendix II:	Assessment Reports
Appendix III	Library Support and Resources for English

**APPENDIX I:
FACULTY CVs**

MICHELLE PATRICIA BEISSEL HEATH**ACADEMIC POSITIONS****UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, KEARNEY, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH:**

Department Chair (May 2023-); Interim Department Chair (January 2023- May 2023); Tenured Full Professor (August 2019-); Graduate Director (July 2019-August 2023); Tenured Associate Professor (August 2015-July 2019); Associate Professor (August 2014-July 2015); Assistant Professor (August 2009-July 2014)

TULANE UNIVERSITY, DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH: Postdoctoral Fellow (August 2008-July 2009)

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, WRITING CENTER: Assistant Director (August 2002-July 2003)

EDUCATION: Ph.D., English. The George Washington University, Washington, DC; M.A., English, University of Maine, 2001; B.A., English, History, & Spanish, cum laude, Gustavus Adolphus College, 1999.

SELECTED ACADEMIC GRANTS & FELLOWSHIPS

UNK Faculty development fellowship (sabbatical), Spring 2025; Humanities Nebraska Mini-Grant, 2019; UNK Course release, Spring 2019; UNK Faculty development fellowship (sabbatical), Fall 2016; Children's Literature Association Faculty Research Grant, 2015; Mary Valentine & Andrew Cosman Research Fellowship, The Strong National Museum of Play, Rochester, NY, 2015; UNK Seed grant, Summer 2015

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**BOOK**

Nineteenth-Century Fictions of Childhood and the Politics of Play, Routledge (formerly Ashgate), 2018.

JOURNAL ARTICLES

“Reveling in Restraint: Limiting the Neo-Victorian Girl.” *Children’s Literature*, vol. 48, 2020 (May), pp. 80-104.

“Recycled Stories: Historicizing Play Today Through the Late Nineteenth Century Anglo-American Play Movement.” *Journal of the History of Childhood and Youth*, vol. 7, no. 1, Winter 2014, pp. 107-133.

“Oh Golly, What a Happy Family!: Trajectories of Citizenship and Agency in Three Twentieth-Century Book Series for Children.” *Jeunesse: Young People, Texts, Cultures*, vol. 5, no. 1, Summer 2013, pp. 38-64. *Reprinted in “Allan Ahlberg.” *Children’s Literature Review*, edited by Carol A. Schwartz, volume 233, Farmington Hills, MI, Gale, Cengage Learning, 2020, pp. 20-33.

BOOK CHAPTERS

“Forming the Victorian Child,” *History of Children’s Literature*, vol. 2, 1830-1914, edited by Zoe Jaques, Eugene Giddens & Louise Joy, Cambridge University Press, forthcoming.

“Catherine Ann Dorset,” *The Routledge Companion to Romantic Women Writers*, edited by Ann Hawkins, Cathy S. Blackwell, and E. Leigh Bonds. Abingdon, Oxon, UK, Routledge, 2023, pp. 200-206.

“The U.S. as Wonderland: British Literature, U.S. Nationalism, and Late Nineteenth-Century Children’s and Family Board and Card Games.” *Playing Games in Nineteenth-Century Britain and America*, edited by Ann R. Hawkins, Erin N. Bistline, Catherine S. Blackwell, & Maura Ives, Albany, NY, State University of New York (SUNY) Press, 2021, pp. 193-213.

“Socialization: Civilizing Child’s Play,” *The Long Nineteenth Century (1800-1920)*, edited by Naomi Wood, A Cultural History of the Fairy Tale (edited by Anne Duggan, Bloomsbury’s Cultural History Series), volume 5, London, Bloomsbury, 2021, pp. 149-166.

“‘Just think – How Many Girls Have Special Powers Like You?’: Weird Girls and the Normalizing of Deviance in Early Readers.” *The Early Reader in Children’s Literature and Culture*, edited by Annette Wannamaker and Jennifer Miskec, London, Routledge, 2016, pp. 190-216. *Book Collection received a 2018 Children’s Literature Association Edited Book Award.

“The ‘Rubbing Off’ of ‘Art and Beauty’: Child Citizenship, Literary Engagement, and the Anglo-American Playground Movement.” *Kidding Around: The Child in Film and Media*, edited by Alexander N. Howe and Wynn Yarbrough, New York, Bloomsbury Academic, 2014, pp. 71-94.

SELECTED MENTORING

Anna Wagemann: Summer Student Research Project (SSRP) on gender, diversity, & the literary history of the Norton Anthology of English Literature, 2016; SSRP presented at the NoLimits! Women & Gender Studies Research Conference in Kearney in 2017; project won inaugural Diversity Award at UNK, 2017; Undergraduate Research Fellow project on adaptation & 21st century Newbery winners, Academic Year 2015-2016; essay on “The Monstrous, The Mysterious, and The Mystic: Reanimating Childhood Classics through The Feared City” won first place at UNK for undergraduate oral presentation in 2016 and was presented at NCUR and at the Children’s Literature Association

annual conference in 2016; awarded a \$375 Council on Undergraduate Research Arts & Humanities Division (CURAH) travel grant in support of her ChLA presentation.

Amanda Slater: SSRP on publication influences on youth war diaries, Summer 2016; essay, “Adult Influences in the Construction of War Diaries,” presented at NCUR and published in the University of Nebraska, Kearney’s Undergraduate Research Journal, 2016; essay also presented in poster form at the Council on Undergraduate Research’s annual “Posters on the Hill” in Washington, DC, 2016.

Shaye Champ-Mino: essay, “Isolation and Fear in Neil Gaiman’s *The Ocean at the End of the Lane*, *The Graveyard Book*, and *Coraline*,” published in *Good Madness: A Collection of Essays on the Work of Neil Gaiman* (Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2014).

Jessica Albin: independent study on children’s & young adult dystopian fiction, 2014.

Jessica Madron: SSRP on adaptations & current interest in Jane Austen, 2013; essay, “Pride and Prejudice: Adaptations Contrast Fine Lines between Byronic Hero and the Contemptible,” presented at NCUR, 2014.

GRADUATE THESES (M.A.)

Chair for Jim Lambert, “Warnings Against the Exploitation of Children in Young Adult Dystopian Literature,” 2023; **Reader for Braska (Patterson) Grundmayer,** “Life Cycles,” 2023; **Chair for Shaye Champ-Correll,** “Stories of Social Justice: How the Art of Story Telling in Tristan Strong Can Help Heal Racial Trauma in the United States,” 2022; **Reader for Danielle Williams,** “I Can Sing & Tell a Tale”: Perception & the Self Reflexive Nature of the Old English Poet,” 2021; **Reader for Sara Bartling,** “Recognizing the Silent Truth: Subversive Silences in Character Development of Marginalized Identities,” 2021.

SELECTED SERVICE

TO PROFESSION

External Reviewer, English MA program at Tarleton State University, March 2022; ChLA, elected, Judith Plotz Emerging Scholar Award Committee, June 2016-June 2019; ChLA, invited, Graduate Essay Award Committee, Spring 2016; ChLA, appointed, Publicity Committee, June 2013-June 2016

UNIVERSITY

CAS representative (two-year terms), Faculty Senate Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee, Fall 2021-present; Secretary, Fall 2022-Fall 2023 [elected service]

Member (three-year term), Graduate Council, Fall 2021-present. [elected service]

Graduate College representative, Faculty Senate Library Committee, September 2022-present.

Member, Student Appeals Committee, July 2010-present.

Chair (two-year term), Artists & Lecturers Committee, Fall 2019-Fall 2021. [elected service]

Member (one-year term), College of Arts and Sciences Rank and Tenure committee, Fall 2020-Spring 2021. [elected service]

Member, College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) Advisory Committee, Fall 2018-Spring 2020. [elected service] Co-Chair, CAS Outstanding Seniors Planning Committee. Fall 2020-Spring 2021. Member, Fall 2018-Spring 2020.

Member, Undergraduate Research Services Council, July 2011-Fall 2021.

Member, Women’s, Gender, and Ethnic Studies Advisory Council, Spring 2017-Spring 2020. Member, Women’s, Gender, and Ethnic Studies Committee planning event to commemorate 30th anniversary, Spring-Fall 2019.

Member, Orphan Train Fall 2018 Colloquium Committee, Spring 2018-Fall 2018.

Member, Dean’s Advisory Committee, College of Fine Arts and Humanities, Spring 2018.

Member, Undergraduate Research and Creative Activity Academic Program Review Team, Spring 2017.

Member, Department of Modern Languages Academic Program Review Team, Spring 2017 & Spring 2011.

Member, Search Screening Committee for Director of Sponsored Programs, April 2013-April 2014.

DEPARTMENT

Chair, English Department, May 2023-Present [ELECTED]

Director, English Department Graduate Program, July 2019-August 2023 [ELECTED]

Interim Chair, English Department, January 2023-May 2023

Chair, English Department Graduate Committee, July 2019-August 2023

Chair, Promotion and tenure committee for faculty members, Fall 2021 & Fall 2019

Chair, English Department Curriculum/Teacher Education Committee, Fall 2017-Spring 2019 (Member, Fall 2019-Spring 2020 & Fall 2009-Spring 2017). Chaired/organized 25th and 26th anniversary Student Language and Literature Conferences for the English Department, Spring 2018 & Spring 2019

Co-sponsor, Sigma Tau Delta Xi Beta chapter, August 2010-May 2016

Chair, English Department Student Relations, Recruitment, and Retention Committee, 2013-2014 & 2009-2010 (Member, Fall 2009-2014)

JANET J. GRAHAM

REFEREED PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

“Derek Walcott’s Poetics of Naming and Epistemologies of Place.” *Journal of West Indian Literature*, vol. 28, no. 2, November 2020, pp. 33-47.

“Vietnamese Refugee Journeys and the Fallacy of Certainty.” *Crossings: Journal of Migration and Culture*, vol. 13, no. 1, October 2022, pp. 203-216.

Journal Articles Under Review

“Related to Water: Layered Conjuncture as an Ecocritical Method,” submitted to *Environmental Humanities* on November 22, 2023.

Book Chapters

“The Ghost Mother in Two Vietnamese American Refugee Novels: A Critical Refugee Analysis” in *Reclaiming Migrant Motherhood: Identity, Belonging, and Displacement in a Global Context*, editor, Maria D. Lombard, Rowman and Littlefield, 2022, pp. 79-91.

Other Publications

Review: Hà Nội at Midnight by Bảo Ninh, *World Literature Today*, March/April 2024. (forthcoming)

“Bending the Long Arc of War to a Vision of Peace: An Interview with Nguyễn Phan Quế Mai”: Multimedia Review, *Journal of Vietnamese Studies*, Vol. 16, no. 4, Fall 2021, pp. 68-89. Co-authored with Quynh Vo.

“Annual Bibliography of Works about Life Writing.” *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly*, vol. 43, no. 1, 2020.

Under Development

The Narrative Recuperation of Complex Personhood for Survivors of Captivity (Working Title of Book Project).

PRESENTATIONS

Selected National Conference Presentations

“‘Big Kids’ like Picture Books, Too! ‘Greening’ the English Curriculum with Environmental Justice Children’s Literature at All Grade Levels.” NCTE Teaching with Heart, Hope, and Humanity, Boston, Massachusetts, November 21, 2024. Co-presenter is Dr. Catherine Lammert. (Submitted)

“On Asian American Poets Confronting American Style Hate,” *Critique the Anti-Asian Sentiments and Racialization in Asian American Literature and Culture, Panel I & II*, MELUS Roots/Routes of Resistance and Resilience,” Dallas, Texas, April 11-14, 2024. (Accepted)

“Toni Morrison’s Theory of Community” MELUS Crossings & Crossroads Conference 2023, Indianapolis, IN, April 20-23, 2023.

Invited Campus Presentations

“On Reading Refugee Writers,” *Refugees: A Problem or an Opportunity*: Panel Presentation at UNK, November 16, 2021, 4-5 pm, Copeland Hall 130.

AWARDS:

Phi Eta Sigma “Going Above and Beyond” Award, Fall 2021.

MAJOR SERVICE TO UNIVERSITY:

Executive Committee Member for James E. Smith Conference on World Affairs: For Better or Worse: Crossing the Line, November 14-15, 2022.

Completed the NDE and CAEP Accreditation Folios and Annual Program Assessment for the BAE for Secondary English and English Language Arts in conjunction with the College of Education, Fall 2023.

Chair of College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Senior Ceremony Committee, Fall 2021-Spring 2024.

Transitional Certificate Program Advisor and Liaison to the College of Education for Secondary English and English Language Arts Endorsements, Fall 2021-Present

MEGAN HARTMAN

Education:

Indiana University, Bloomington, IN: Ph.D., English, January 2011; M.A., English, September 2005
University of New Hampshire, Durham, NH, B.A., English, *summa cum laude*, 2003

Professional Appointments

Professor of English, University of Nebraska at Kearney, 2021-present
Department Chair, Department of English, University of Nebraska at Kearney, 2020-2023
Associate Professor of English, University of Nebraska at Kearney, 2016-2021
Assistant Professor of English, University of Nebraska at Kearney, 2011-2016

Selected Publications

Monograph:

Poetic Style and Innovation in Old English, Old Norse, and Old Saxon. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2020.

Edited Collection:

with Peter Grund. *Studies in the History of the English Language VIII: Boundaries and Boundary-Crossings in the History of English*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2021.

Articles:

- “Hypermetric Narrative in the Old English *Daniel*.” *Tradition and Innovation in Old English Metre*. Ed. Rafael J. Pascual and Rachel Burns. ARC Humanities Press, 2022.
- “Integrating Literary Approaches: Translation and Modernization.” *Teaching History of the English Language*. Ed. Colette Moore and Chris Palmer. Modern Language Association, 2019. 235-43.
- “New Applications for Word Foot Theory.” *Early English Poetic Culture and Metre: The Influence of G. R. Russom*, eds. M. J. Toswell and Lindy Brady. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2016, 73-91.
- “Metrical Alternation in *The Fortunes of Men*.” *Old English Philology: Studies in Honor of R.D. Fulk*. Eds. Leonard Neidorf, Rafael J. Pascual, and Tom Shippey. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2016. 311-330.
- “A New Justification for an Old Analysis of the Hypermetric Onset.” *Notes and Queries* 62 (2015): 513-16.
- “The Limits of Poetic Conservatism in Old English Poetry.” *The Dating of Beowulf: A Reassessment*. Ed. Leonard Neidorf, Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2014. 79-96.

In Progress:

- “Old Norse Hypermetric Meters,” preparing to submit to *Studia Metrica et Poetica*.
- “Discourse in the Old English *Guthlac*,” for a forthcoming volume on discourse and diversity

Selected Conference Presentations:

- “Verbal Acumen and Strategic Speech Acts in *Lokasenna*.” 58th International Congress on Medieval Studies, Kalamazoo, MI, May 2023.
- “Discourse in the Old English *Guthlac*.” Studies in the History of the English Language 12, Seattle, WA, May 2022.
- “Repositioning HEL in the English Curriculum through Literary Analysis.” Forty-Sixth Annual Sewanee Medieval Colloquium, Sewanee, TN, April 2021.
- “Stretching Formulaic Diction,” Studies in the History of the English Language 11, Bloomington, IN, May 2019.
- “Hypermetric Narrative in the Old English *Daniel*,” Anglo-Saxon Metre and Literary Studies, Oxford, England, October 2019. (Invited Presentation)
- “Hypermetric Tools in Old Saxon,” Frontiers in Comparative Metrics 3, Tallinn, Estonia, September 2017.
- “Old Norse and Old English Hypermetric Connections,” Germanic Linguistics Annual Conference 22, Reykjavik, Iceland, May 2016.
- “Gnomic Meter in *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*,” The Structure of Verse: Formal, Experimental, and Computational Approaches, Leiden, The Netherlands, March 2015. (Poster Presentation)

Selected Teaching

English 101: Introduction to Academic Writing
 English 188: Portal: Old Norse Mythology in History and Popular Culture
 English 254: Special Topics: Children's and Young Adult Fantasy
 English 303: Introduction to Linguistics
 English 304: Grammar I
 English 388: Capstone: The Evolution of the Superhero
 English 404/804P: History of the English Language
 English 462/872P: Early and Middle English Literature
 English 826: Prosody: The Music of Poetic Form
 English 883: Colloquium: British Literature through 1700
 English 895: Directed Graduate Reading – Old English Literature and Meter

Selected Mentoring

Master's Theses Chair:

Laura Gregory, in progress.

Danielle Williams, "'I can Sing and Tell a Tale': Perception and the Self-Reflexive Nature of the Old English Poet," successfully defended July 2021.

Student Publications

Danielle Williams, "When Exact is Not Literal: Translating Compounds in *The Wanderer*." *The English Languages: History, Diaspora, Culture*, December 2022.

Kaitlin Schneider, "Slaying Stereotypes or Stuck in Stasis?: A Study of Heteronormativity and Gender Performativity in Buffy the Vampire Slayer's Anya Christina Emanuella Jenkins," *Watcher Junior: The Undergraduate Journal of Whedon Studies*, 2018.

Presented "Caught in a Web of Convention: Black Widow's Character Regression in *Age of*

Karyn Hixson, "The Breastplate of Righteousness: The Preparation, the Position, and the Protection of God in Judith, Juliana, and Elene," *Literature and Belief*, 2017.

Natalie Hall, "I Told Him/Her/It/Them: The Problem of Epicene Pronouns," *UNK Undergraduate Research Journal*, Spring 2015.

Selected Professional Service

Departmental:

Recruitment and PR, UNK, 2023-present (Chair, 2023-present)

CTE Committee, UNK, 2013-2019.

Co-Sponsor, Sigma Tau Delta Xi Beta Chapter, 2012-2018

College:

Education Policy Committee, UNK, 2012-2016, 2018-2019 (Chair 2013-2016; Secretary, 2013)

Dean Search Committee, UNK, 2018-2019

Academic Program Review committee member: Department of Art and Design, 2015, 2024.

University:

Faculty Senate, UNK, 2023-present

General Studies Council, UNK, 2023-present

ORCA Selection Committee, NU System, 2022-present

International Studies Advisory Council, UNK, 2014-present.

World Affairs Conference Executive Committee, UNK, 2012-2019.

SUSAN E. HONEYMAN**EDUCATION**

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY, Ph.D. in English, December 2001

FIELD STUDY

UNIVERSITÀ DI VERONA: VISITING RESEARCHER IN THE DIPARTIMENTO DI LINGUE E LETTERATURE STRANIERE; (MARCH-MAY 2022)

UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN'S COLLEGE OF LAW: SUMMER SCHOOL IN INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S RIGHTS, JULY 6-10, 2015. LEIDEN, NETHERLANDS

CASA COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE, 2014-2018

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, INTERIM ASSOCIATE DEAN, UNK, 2018-2019

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-KEARNEY, 2002-present

Courses taught: Composition I&II; 253—Non-western Lit; 254—Queer Lit; Love, Marriage, Baby Carriage;

Murder Lore and Lit; 406/806—Principles of Literary Criticism; 255—Children's Literature; 426/848—

Adolescent Literature; 455/863— Graphic Novel; 853—American Literary Realism; 857 Colloquium US Lit to

1855; 861--Fairy Tales and Folklore

PUBLICATIONS (refereed)**Books:**

PERILS OF PROTECTION: SHIPWRECKS, ORPHANS, AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS, University Press of Mississippi, January 2019 ChLA Honor Book, 2020

CHILD PAIN, MIGRAINE, AND INVISIBLE DISABILITY, Routledge, 2017

CONSUMING AGENCY IN FAIRY TALES, CHILDLORE, AND FOLKLITERATURE, Routledge, 2010.

ELUSIVE CHILDHOOD: IMPOSSIBLE REPRESENTATIONS IN MODERN FICTION, Ohio State University Press, 2005.

Articles (2016-present):

LOSING KIN, CHOOSING KITH: CHILD AUTONOMY BEYOND THE PROTECTIONIST NUCLEAR FAMILY. JOURNAL OF THE HISTORY OF CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH. (17.3 FALL, 2024)

FEEDING DICKENS'S DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILIES with Sidia Fiorato for Literary Cultures and Nineteenth-Century Childhoods collection edited by Michelle Smith and Kris Moruzi in Palgrave's Literary Cultures and Childhoods (2024)

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION. THOMAS MINEHAN'S BOY AND GIRL TRAMPS OF AMERICA, UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI PRESS (2023)

NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS: BRUNO VINCENT'S FIVE ON BREXIT ISLAND AND FIVE ESCAPE BREXIT ISLAND for Liverpool Law Review (2023)

PAIN PROXIES, MIGRAINE, AND INVISIBLE DISABILITY IN RENÉE FRENCH'S H DAY REPRINTED IN DISABILITY ARTS AND CULTURE: INTERNATIONAL CRITICAL APPROACHES ED. BY PETRA KUPPERS (2019)

LIES WE TELL SICK CHILDREN: MUTUAL PRETENSE AND UNINFORMED CONSENT BY PROXY IN 'CANCER BOOKS' FOR KIDS. THE LION AND THE UNICORN. 40.2 (2016): 179-195.

PRESENTATIONS, 2023

INVITED LECTURE SERIES, UNIVERSITÀ DI VERONA: IN THE DIPARTIMENTO DI LINGUE E LETTERATURE STRANIERE; (OCTOBER 2023):

"WHAT ROMEO, FOLKLORIC FORMULAS, AND THE DSM-V CAN TEACH US ABOUT ROMANTIC LOVE," VERONA, ITALY. OCT. 23, 2023

"WHAT JULIET'S MATH CAN TEACH US ABOUT ROMANCE AND FAMILY ABOLITION," OCT. 25, 2023

"NEO-MALTHUSIANISM, REPRODUCTIVE ANXIETY, PAUL EHRLICH'S THE POPULATION BOMB (1968), AND THE WANTING SEED, BY ANTHONY BURGESS (1962)," IN GRADUATE SEMINAR ON ECO-CRITICISM. OCT. 27, 2023
 "CHILDHOOD SPACES AT THE VILLA" SPAZI E TEMPI DELLA VILLA: LETTERATURA, CULTURA E DIRITTO GIORNATA DI STUDI IN ORGIANO, ITALIA 20 MAY 2022
 REYNOLDS VISITING WRITERS SERIES: NOVELIST CHARLES FRAZIER READS FROM THE TRACKERS, IN CONVERSATION ABOUT BOY AND GIRL TRAMPS OF AMERICA. NOV., 2, 2023.

SERVICE, 2016-present

FIELD:

ELECTED MEMBER OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE FOR EDITED BOOK AWARD (2016-2020); ELECTED MEMBER OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE FOR ARTICLE AWARD (2012-2016) REVIEWER: LIVERPOOL LAW REVIEW (2023-2024); POLEMOS: JOURNAL OF LAW AND LITERATURE (2020-PRESENT), JOURNAL OF AMERICAN STUDIES (2016-2017) CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, AN ANNUAL PUBLICATION OF THE MLA (2011-2017); THE HENRY JAMES REVIEW (2011-PRESENT), CHILDREN'S LITERATURE ASSOCIATION QUARTERLY (2010-PRESENT)

COMMUNITY/STATE:

NEBRASKA LEGAL DEFENSE FUND, STEERING COMMITTEE (2023-PRESENT); COURT APPOINTED SPECIAL ADVOCATE (CASA), LEGAL ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN IN. FOSTER CARE, 2014-17

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES:

CAS PROMOTION AND TENURE (2024-2027); DEAN'S ADVISORY (2021-2023); ASSOCIATE DEAN, (2018-2019); ARTS AND SCIENCES BOOK FESTIVAL (2017-2020) COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS AND HUMANITIES: DEAN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE (2009-2018)

ENGLISH DEPT:

GRADUATE COMMITTEE (2023-PRESENT), COMPOSITION SEARCH (2023); WRITING COMMITTEE (2014-2023)

JAY (JAERYONG) LEE

Academic Employment

University of Nebraska at Kearney (Kearney, NE) 2021 to Current
Full-time Lecturer, Department of English

Colorado Community College System (Bennett, Burlington, Fort Morgan, Limon & Wray, CO) 2018 to 2021

English Faculty & Lead Faculty of Developmental Writing Program

Bethany College (Lindsborg, KS) 2017 to 2018

Core & Academic Assistant Professor, Academic Center for Excellence

ELL Specialist, Writing Center

Academic Coach for Men's Soccer Team, Department of Athletics

Fort Hays State University (Hays, KS) 2015 to 2017

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of English

Courses Taught & Assisted:

Composition I, II, Linguistics, Advanced Composition, English Grammar, British

Literature, Professional Editing

Supervised the Writing Center & Workshop Series

Education

M.A. in English (TESOL Concentration) 2017

Fort Hays State University (Hays, KS)

Areas of Emphasis: TESOL, Rhetoric & Composition, and Linguistics

B.A. in English: Language, Rhetoric & Writing 2015

The University of Kansas (Lawrence, KS)

Courses Taught at the University of Nebraska at Kearney (2021-Current)

Introduction to Academic Writing (ENG 101—3 credits)

A college composition course with special emphasis on the writing process and essay form.

Academic Writing & Research (ENG 102—3 credits)

A college composition course with a special emphasis on intertextuality & research.

English for Academic Purposes (ENG 100—3 credits)

An introduction to the challenge of reading and writing academic prose.

Courses Taught at Colorado Community College System (2018-2021)

College Composition & Reading (CCR091 & 092—6 credits)

A developmental writing course for students who are struggling with academic writing

College Composition I (ENG121—Guaranteed Transfer, 3 credits)

A guaranteed transfer college composition course I: Basic Rhetorical Strategies

Studio 121 (CCR094—3 credits)

A supplemental writing course designed for students who are struggling with academic writing (paired with ENG 121)

College Composition II (ENG121—Guaranteed Transfer, 3 credits)

A guaranteed transfer college composition course II: Research-Based & Outreach Writing

Technical Writing (ENG131—Guaranteed Transfer, 3 credits)

A Guaranteed Transfer composition course for non-humanity majors

Academic Achievement & Strategies (AAA090—3 credits)

An introductory course for college freshman students

Covering study skills, study styles, using college resources

English Language Learners' Academic Composition (ESL175—3 credits)

A writing course for ELL students who are struggling with academic writing

Courses Taught at Bethany College (2017-2018)

Academic Writing (AS004)

A developmental writing course designed for students who are struggling with academic writing

English Language Learner's Writing (AS007)

Course Creator and Developer

A basic writing course specifically designed for ELL students regarding the rhetorical setting of American colleges, grammatical rules, and socio-cultural introduction

Bethany Quest III—Job Search: Technical Writing (BQ310)

An interdisciplinary course is required for every student (reflection essays as part of the graduation portfolio) and professional career preparation: Resume, Cover Letter, and mock interview.

Study Skills (AS013)

A study skills course that introduces different approaches to study skills and activities to figure out students' diverse strengths and their successful journey in academia.

Academic Assistance (AS005)

An academic assistance course specifically designed for students who are struggling academically (under academic probation)

Bethany Quest II—Core Value of ELCA Lutheran School (BQ210)

An interdisciplinary course that is required for every student regarding students' duty of being educated and servant leadership for a culturally diverse society

Campus-Work Experiences at UNK since 2021

Full-time Lecturer of English

Organize the annual National Day on Writing event, endorsed by the National Council of Teachers of English, with regular attendance of approximately 300 participants.

Coordinated a student-led cultural showcase, "'90s Hype Sensation," a group project involving 100 students researching and presenting on global cultures of the '90s.

Provided lectures at the International Students' Orientation, focusing on academic writing standards and plagiarism concerns within the U.S. academic context.

Faculty Advisor of the Korean Students Association at Kearney (KSAK)

Assist about 20 exchange students from South Korea, guiding cultural adaptation, language proficiency, and legal matters.

Lead the planning and execution of the annual Korean festival (300+ attendance), which included program organization, on-campus surveys and interviews, budget management, and cross-departmental collaboration.

Supervise student leadership initiatives to foster a student-centric and educational community.

SETH LONG

Education

2015, PhD, Composition and Rhetoric, *Syracuse University*.
 2015, MA, Linguistics, *Syracuse University*
 2010, MA, English, *California State Polytechnic University, Pomona*.
 2007, BA, Screenwriting (minor in Comparative Literature), *Chapman University*.

Appointments

2020 – Present: Associate Professor, Department of English. *University of Nebraska, Kearney*
2015 – 2020: Assistant Professor, Department of English. *University of Nebraska, Kearney*

Publications

“Review of *Architects of Memory*, by Nathan R. Johnson.” *Rhetoric Review* 40.1 (January 2021). *Excavating the Memory Palace: Arts of Visualization from the Agora to the Computer*. University of Chicago Press, 2020.
 with Detective Ken Fitch. “Digital Surveillance of Gang Communication: Graffiti’s Rhetorical Velocity between Street Gangs and Urban Law Enforcement.” *RhetOps: Rhetoric and Information Warfare*, eds. Jim Ridolfo and William Hart-Davidson. University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019: 170-183.
 with James Baker. “The Elusive Digital/Critical Synthesis.” *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2019*, eds. Matthew Gold and Lauren Klein. University of Minnesota Press, 2019: 195-200.
 “Changing Words into Numbers: Rhetoric, the Digital Humanities, and Methodological Transparency.” *Rhetorics Change/Rhetoric’s Change*, eds. Jenny Rice, Chelsea Graham, and Eric Detweiler. Parlor Press, 2018: e-text.
 “Excavating the Memory Palace: An Account of the Disappearance of Mnemonic Imagery from English Rhetoric, 1550 – 1650.” *Rhetoric Review* 36.2 (2017): 122 – 138.
 “Visualizing Words and Knowledge: Arts of Memory for the Digital Age.” *Computers and Composition* 41 (2016): 28 – 46.
 with Krista Kennedy. “The Trees Within the Forest: Capturing, Coding, and Visualizing Data in Authorship Studies.” *Rhetoric and the Digital Humanities*, eds. Jim Ridolfo and William Hart-Davidson. University of Chicago Press, 2015: 140 – 152

Invited Conference Presentations

“A history of mnemonics from ancient Greece to Victorian England.” *Ars Memoriae Symposium*. Die Junge Akademie and the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy of Sciences and Humanities. Berlin, Germany. Dec. 2018.
 “Data-Driven Rhetoric: Visualizing Agency.” Super Session on Rhetoric and the Digital Humanities. *Biennial Conference of the Rhetoric Society of America*. Atlanta, GA. May 2016.

Grants

I see it. Don’t you? Examining individual differences in visual imagery - NU Collaboration Initiative Team Formation Grant 2022-2023 (\$7,500)
 Do you see what I see? Predicting visual imagery ability with eye tracking - UNK Research Service Council Collaborative Funding Grant 2022-2023 (\$11,940)

Service

Faculty Co-Advisor, UNK Film Club (2021 – present)
 Member, Academic Information Technology Committee, UNK College of Arts and Sciences (2018 –2021)
 Member, Job Search Committee, UNK Department of English (Fall 2015; Fall 2020; Spring 2022)
 Member, Assessment Committee, UNK Department of English (2015 – present)
 Digital Humanities Grant panel, National Endowment of the Humanities (April 2018)
 Composition Coordinator, UNK English Department (2016 – 2018)
 Member, Writing Committee (2016 – 2018)
 Member, Education Policy Committee, UNK College of Fine Arts and Humanities (2016 – 2018)
 Member, Open Access Textbook Committee, UNK Department of English (Fall, Spring 2015)
 Co-President, Rhetoric Society of America SU Chapter, Syracuse University (2012 – 14)

BOBBY J. MEYER

Graduate Education:

University of Nebraska Lincoln, 1997-1998.

University of Nebraska at Kearney, 2001-2003.

Master's Degree in English earned: 2003.

Undergraduate Education:

University of Nebraska at Kearney, 1991-1997.

Bachelor's Degree in English (Philosophy Minor) earned: 1997.

Teaching Experience:

2014-Present: English Lecturer, University of Nebraska at Kearney.

2012-2014: ESL Instructor, Central Community College, Adult Basic Education, Grand Island, NE

2003-2011: Adjunct Instructor, English, CCC, Grand Island, NE.

2008-2011: Adjunct Instructor, English, CCC, Hastings, NE.

2006: Adjunct Instructor, English, University of Nebraska at Kearney.

2001-2003: Graduate Assistant English Instructor, UNK.

2002-2003: Research Assistant, UNK.

BRAD AARON MODLIN

REYNOLDS CHAIR, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Collections

Poetry Book: *Everyone at This Party Has Two Names*, Southeast Missouri State University Press. Winner of the Cowles Prize.

Short Collection of Short Stories: *Surviving in Drought*, Winner, The Cupboard Press's annual contest.

COMPLETED MANUSCRIPTS IN CIRCULATION

Poetry: *No Earth But This*

Novel-in-Stories: *The Language of the Locusts*

Selected Publications

Selected Poems

2023 "This Story Ends with Nothing Quite Landing On Us" semi-finalist for the CBC Poetry Prize (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation). Excerpted on CBC's website

"Before You Can Comprehend Particle Physics, You Must Look at the Styrofoam Cup and Know It Is You." *Beloit Poetry Journal*. Print

"Self-Portrait as Someone Not Supposed to Be Here." & "Fortune Cookie." *New Ohio Review*

2022 "To the Astronaut Who Hopes Life on Another Planet Will Be More Bearable," finalist for the CBC Poetry Prize (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation). Published in full on CBC's website

"Pink Fairy Armadillo" semi-finalist for the CBC Poetry Prize. Excerpted on CBC's website

"What You Missed That Day You Were Absent from Fourth Grade." *The Slowdown* hosted by the U.S. Poet Laureate, Ada Limón. Public radio program/podcast; **Internationally viral poem has also appeared in many podcasts, books, interviews, YouTube videos, teachings, speeches, social media posts, etc.**

The *On Being with Krista Tippett* podcast series *Poetry Unbound*, hosted by Pádraig Ó Tuama

Recording by L. Helgesen (whose voice tells 25% of America to *leave messages after the tone*)

The 2024 book *Bright Shining* by Australian Broadcasting Journalist Julia Baird

2021 "No Artist Paints Only One Portrait." & "Summit." *Poetry International Online*.

"It's Blue." & "Pepsi." *The Laurel Review*. Northwest Missouri State University, Print

"Scrawny." & "I Fear the TV Because I Fear Seeing People in Crisis I Can't Help, & I Fear in General, which May Be the Definition of *Coward*, at Least Occasionally." Nebraska Public Radio

Selected Prose

2024 "Find Bartholomew" Fiction. *Rivers Styx Magazine*, Web, forthcoming

2023 "Hungry Because This World Is So Very Full." Creative nonfiction. *Brevity*. Online

2021 "Imagine This, Thaddeus" Fiction. *The Masters Review*, Web.

Collaborations with Other Artists

2022 "Modlin Songs" a vocal/instrumental piece by composer Robert Gross, three of my poems set to music. Performance debut: October 11. Kearney Symphony Orchestra

2021 Composer James Primosch (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) to set my poem to choir & instrument

The Buxton Art Gallery at Univ of Melbourne (Australia) commissioned an original poem.

My poem "What You Missed That Day You Were Absent from Fourth Grade" was the catalyst for the NYC art gallery show titled *What You Missed*. As part of the show, I wrote a four-word poem which was posted large in a busy Brooklyn intersection.

Book Introductions & Blurbs I Have Written

2022 Jacket blurb, *That Woman Could Be You*, creative nonfiction by Vi Khi Nao & Jessica Alexander

Jacket blurb, *Building Brownville*, poems by UNK alum Tyler Michael Jacobs

Interviews of Me & Reviews of My Writing

2023 "Changing Up Your Creative Practice with Brad Aaron Modlin" *Emerging Form* podcast

“Thinking of Submitting to the CBC Poetry Prize? Here Are 10 Tips from Writers Who Know What It Takes.”
 Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. CBC.ca
 A six-minute reflection on my poem. “What Is a Short Podcast If Not Poetry” *Wonderful!* Podcast
 2022 “Interview with Poetry Prize Finalist Brad Aaron Modlin.” *The Morning Edition* with Craig Martin, CBC

Courses Taught

Introduction to Creative Writing: Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry (200-level)
 Beginning Poetry Workshop (200-level)
 Creativity & Creative Thought (200-level, interdisciplinary)
 Advanced Poetry Workshop (400-level)
 (Under)graduate Poetic Strategies (Craft & Technique) (400- & 800-levels)
 Graduate Poetry Workshop, online (800-level)
 Graduate Creative Nonfiction Workshop, online (800-level)
 Graduate Colloquium: Justice, Inclusion, Fascination, Entertainment, Well-being, Kindness, and Other Reasons We Write (800-level)
 Grad Colloquium: Writing the/Our Environment(s): Nature, Culture, Identity, & Climate Change(s)
 Graduate Flash Fiction Workshop (800-level)
 Advisor of Undergraduate Student Summer Research Programs and thesis-writing graduates

Service

2018- **Visiting Writers Series Coordinator**, The Reynolds Visiting Writer Series.
Faculty Advisor, *The Carillon*, UNK’s student literary magazine.
Community Engager, within role as The Reynolds Endowed Chair of Creative Writing. Participant or leader of various projects and events.

Presentations & Readings

2024 “Workshop Feedback: An Unmanageable Labor of Love?” AWP: The Association of Writers & Writing Programs conference. Kansas City, MO
 Featured Reader, The Mercantile historic library, Cincinnati
 Featured Reader Literary Rule Breakers. Off-site reading, AWP conference, Kansas City
 2023 “Two Kinds of Pilgrimage: Walking to Write,” guest lesson. University of Toronto, Scarborough
 2022 Workshop leader. “We’re All Poets.” hosted by Storyboxing
 Workshop leader. “Add Just One More Thing: Revising & Bridges.” Sustenance Writers

Editing, Service to the Profession

The Final Judge, *The Cowles Poetry Prize* book contest. Southeast Missouri State University Press.
Preliminary Judge, *Sunken Garden Poetry Chapbook Prize*. Tupelo Press. **Reader**, *Tupelo Quarterly* Literary Magazine

ANNAROSE F. STEINKE

steinkea2@unk.edu

EMPLOYMENT

Assistant Professor of English, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Fall 2018-Present

Senior Lecturer of English, University of Nebraska at Kearney, Spring 2016–Spring 2018

EDUCATION

Ph. D., English, University of New Mexico, May 2015

TEACHING / RESEARCH AREAS

Modernist poetry; British literature 1700-present; British and American modernism; religion and literature; women in literature; non-Western literature

AWARDS

International Seed Grant, Research Services Council, University of Nebraska at Kearney, 2019

Fathman Scholar Award, The International T. S. Eliot Society, 2017

PUBLICATIONS

“A ‘Peculiarly American’ Sense in T. S. Eliot’s ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent.’” *ANQ: A Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Queries* (September 2022), online.

“‘Parsimonious / Presentations’: Mina Loy’s Crisis of (Christian) Representation.” *Christianity & Literature* 69.4 (December 2020), 493-510.

“T. S. Eliot,” for “Pound and Eliot.” *American Literary Scholarship: An Annual*. Essays in Vols. 2017, 2018, and 2019. Duke University Press, 2019.

“‘Following the Fashion’: Women, Work and Class Construction in East Lynne.” *Women and Work: The Labors of Self-Fashioning*. Ed. Christine Leiran Mower and Susanne Weil. Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011. 302-318.

Book Reviews

Jewel Spears Brooker, *T. S. Eliot’s Dialectical Imagination*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2018. *Christianity & Literature* 69.3 (September 2020), 471-475.

Matt Foley, *Haunting Modernisms: Ghostly Aesthetics, Mourning, and Spectral Resistance Fantasies in Modernist Literature*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. *Time Present: The Newsletter of the International T. S. Eliot Society*. Summer 2018.

Additional Solicited Publications

“Eliot in 1918”: A three-part series featured in *Time Present: The Newsletter of the International T. S. Eliot Society*. Fall, Spring, and Summer 2018.

RECENT PRESENTATIONS

“Preserving it from Closure’: From Memorializing to Iconic Re-membrance in Thom Gunn’s “Sacred Heart” and *The Man with Night Sweats*,” Southwest Popular / American Culture Association Conference, Albuquerque, NM, 2022.

“‘Not Now / And Now’: Gertrude Stein, T. S. Eliot, and the Litany as Imaginative Ritual.” American Literature Association, Boston, MA, 2021.

“Our Lady of Modernism?: Modernist Mariology in the Poetry of T. S. Eliot and Mina Loy.” Conference on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition in the 21st Century, Virtual Conference, 2020.

“‘I Like the Gin-Sodden Holy Reprobate’: T. S. Eliot, Basil Bunting, and Questions of Influence,” Annual Meeting of the International T. S. Eliot Society, Virtual Conference, 2020.

“The ‘Distraction Fit[s]’ of Eliot’s Prose,” Annual Meeting of the International T. S. Eliot Society, St. Louis, MO, 2019.

“‘Voices Singing Out of Empty Cisterns’: Modernist Writers and the Influenza Epidemic of 1918,” Frank Conversations: Influenza on the Plains, 1918-2018, Frank Museum, Kearney, NE, 2018.

“Trading Icons for Offal: Mina Loy and Religious Visual Culture,” Modernist Studies Association, Columbus, OH, 2018.

SERVICE

Professional

Peer reviewer for the *Journal of Undergraduate Research* (Colorado State University); *Academic Labor: Research and Artistry*; *Christianity & Literature*; *ANQ*, *Notes and Reviews*

University

Internal Review Committee for NEH Summer Fellowship Application, Summer 2021

Women’s, Gender, and Ethnic Studies Advisory Council, Fall 2020-Present

CAS Education Policy Committee, Spring 2020-Present

American Democracy Project Advisory Council, Fall 2019-Present

Departmental

Curriculum and Teacher Education Committee, Fall 2021-Spring 2022; Spring 2016–Spring 2017

Sigma Tau Delta, Faculty Advisor, Fall 2019-Present

Graduate Committee, Fall 2019-Spring 2021

Assessment Committee, Fall 2016-Spring 2019

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

D. H. Lawrence Society of North America; International T. S. Eliot Society; Modernist Studies Association

MARGUERITE A. TASSI

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in English, The Claremont Graduate School	1993
M.A. in English, The University of Virginia	1989
B.A. in English, Columbia University	1987

UNIVERSITY POSITIONS

Full Professor of English, UNK	2007-
Martin Distinguished Professor in English, UNK	2011-2017
Associate Professor of English, UNK	2002-2007
Director of Graduate Studies, English Master's Degree Program, UNK	2003-2005

PUBLICATIONS

Books

- Creatively Expanding the Premodern: Historical and Literary Afterlives*. Co-author with Carole Levin, Christine Steward, and Julia Griffin, Routledge Press, forthcoming 2025.
- Poetry for Kids: William Shakespeare*. Editor, with Mercé Lopez (illustrator). Lake Forest, CA: Moon Dance Press, 2018. 48 pp.
- Women and Revenge in Shakespeare: Gender, Genre, and Ethics*. Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press and Associated University Presses, 2011. 344 pp. Reprinted, Rowman & Littlefield, 2012.
- The Scandal of Images: Iconoclasm, Eroticism, and Painting in Early Modern English Drama*. Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press and Associated University Presses, 2005. 257 pp.

Book Series Co-Editor

- New Interdisciplinary Approaches to Early Modern Culture: Confluences and Contexts*, co-edited with Carole Levin, published by Routledge, 2020-. Five books are published in this series.
- Early Modern Cultural Studies*, co-edited with Carole Levin, published by University of Nebraska Press, 2015-22. Seventeen books are published in this series.

Recent Book Chapters and Articles

- "Prajñāpāramitā and the Path of Wisdom in *King Lear*." *Shakespeare and Wisdom: Ethical, Ecumenical, and Ecological Horizons*. Ed. Julia Reinhard Lupton and Unhae Park Langis. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming.
- "Teaching *Romeo and Juliet* with Cue Scripts," in *Approaches to Teaching "Romeo and Juliet"*. Ed. Joseph M. Ortiz. Modern Languages Association, pp. 104-112, forthcoming.
- "Pursuing Contentment and Liberation in the Forest of Arden: Hindu and Buddhist Resonances in *As You Like It*." *SEDERI Yearbook of the Spanish and Portuguese Society for English Renaissance Studies* 33 (2023): 57-80.
- "The Way of the *Bodhisattva*: A Buddhist Understanding of *King Lear*," *Critical Survey* 35.2, (Summer 2023): 80-91. [OAJ]
- "Who Hath Martyred Thee?": Responding to the Broken Image of the Body in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*," in *L'Image Brisée XVIe et XVIIe siècles/Breaking the Image in the Renaissance*. Ed. Agnès Lafont, Christian Belin, Nicholas Myers. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2019, 119-37.
- "Rapture and Horror: A Phenomenology of Theatrical Invisibility in *Macbeth*," *Explorations in Renaissance Culture* 44 (2018): 1-26.
- "The Avenging Daughter in *King Lear*," in *Revenge and Gender in Classical, Medieval and Renaissance Literature*. Ed. Lesel Dawson and Fiona McHardy. Edinburgh: Edinburgh

University Press, 2018, 111-21.

“Tears for Hecuba: Empathy and Maternal Bereavement in Golding’s Translation of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*,” in *Scholars and Poets Talk About Queens*. Ed. Carole Levin. New York: Palgrave Macmillan Press, 2015, 7-23.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH TEAM

Member, Associate Team, “Shakespeare’s Religious Afterlives: Text, Reception and Performance.” <https://blogs.uned.es/shakrel/> Funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation; principal investigator, Marta Cerezo Moreno, UNED (Universidad Nacional de Educacion a Distancia), Madrid, 1/09/2022 - 1/09/2026. Invited to give the plenary lecture in May, 2023 online at UNED research conference.

RECENT UNK AWARDS

Professional Development Leave (sabbatical)	Fall 2023
Mortar Board Faculty Appreciation	2022
The Honors Program Faculty Member of the Year, co-recipient	2019
Leland Holdt/Security Mutual Life Distinguished Faculty Award	2017

GRANTS

Nebraska Arts Council Grant	2017
Humanities Nebraska Grant	2017
UNK Artists and Lecturers Grant	2017

RECENT SERVICE TO UNK

University and College

Member, CAS Oversight Committee	2021-
Reviewer, <i>Graduate Review</i>	2022
Co-Chair, CAS Rank and Tenure Committee	2019, 2020
Recruitment, College Fair, 17 th Annual Nebraska Cultural Unity Conference	Spring 2019
Member, Women’s and Ethnic Studies 30 th Anniversary Committee	2019
Co-Chair, CAS Dean Search	2018-19
Co-organizer, CAS Book Festival	2018

Department and Programs

Director, master’s thesis, Mara Andersen, defended March 24	2022
Member, Graduate Committee, English Dept.	2021-2023
Member, Promotion and Tenure Committees	2020-2023
Chair, Search Committee for English Education faculty position	Spring 2020
Member, Curriculum and Teacher Education (CTE), English Dept.	2020-2021
Chair, CTE, English Dept.	2019-2020
Member, APR for the Music Program	Fall 2018
Chair, Search Committee for the Reynolds Chair in Creative Writing	Spring 2018
Faculty Co-advisor, Sigma Tau Delta, English Honors Society	2016-present

JANETTE L. THOMPSON

EDUCATION

University of Nebraska

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2007 | Master of Fine Arts degree in Creative Writing
University of Nebraska at Kearney |
| 2003 | Master of Arts degree in English.
University of Nebraska-Lincoln |
| 1996 | Bachelor of Journalism degree. |

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| 2012-Present | Senior Lecturer, University of Nebraska at Kearney. |
| 2005-2012 | English Lecturer, University of Nebraska at Kearney. |

Courses taught:

- ENG101, Introduction to Academic Writing, including online sections
- ENG101H, Honors Introduction to Academic Writing
- ENG102, Academic Writing and Research
- ENG102H, Honors Academic Writing and Research
- ENG126, First-Year Seminar: Live Long, Live Well
- ENG211, Introduction to Creative Writing
- ENG251, Introduction to Literature: American Literature
- ENG250, Introduction to Literature: British Literature
- ENG254, Introduction to Literature: Special Topics
- ENG211, Introduction to Creative Writing, with an honors option.
- ENG214, Beginning Fiction, with an honors option.
- ENG490, Introduction to Creative Non-Fiction
- ENG499, Independent Study in Advanced Fiction Writing
- ENG499, Independent Study in Feature Writing
- ENG499, Independent Study in Creative Non-Fiction
- ENG895, graduate fiction writing/master's thesis

PUBLICATION AND PRESENTATION

Level 4 Meal Prep Guide (writing and editing services, upcoming).

Adrenaline. Russell Hilliard, 2018.

"Writing Biographies." Panel presentation at Nebraska Press Women convention. Minden, Neb. October, 2016.

FREELANCE JOURNALISM

Writing and photography for *Kearney Hub* special sections, *Focus* and *Salute to Agriculture* (2019).

"Another Chapter Written in the Baby Doe Story" *Kearney Hub* guest column (Nov. 18, 2018)

"Teaching, Research, Service," *New Frontiers* (2022).

"High-Tech Health," *New Frontiers* (2021).

SERVICE TO DEPARTMENT

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2021 | Developed interdepartmental courses in English Composition (ENG102) and |
|------|---|

	Loper 1 (ENG126)
2017	Member, thesis committee for Kay Fahlbusch
2016	Member, thesis committee for Arielle Roberts
2015-Present	Member, creative writing selection committee, Student Conference in Language and Literature
2015-2021	Session chair, Student Conference in Language and Literature
	Faculty sponsor, creative writing submissions:
	“Out of the Blue,” personal essay by Jeremy Andersen
	“Gary Burchett,” short story by Kylie Gee
	“Cardboard Televisions,” short story by Tyler Jacobs
	“Years, Bittersweet and Twice Loved,” novel excerpt by Elizabeth Sorgenfrei

JENARA TURMAN

Educational Background:

University of Nebraska – Kearney

- Master of Arts – English, 2001
- Bachelor of Arts – English, Spanish minor, 1999

Honors:

- Received Reichenbach Graduate Student Scholarship, UNK, 1999-2001
- Appeared on Dean's List for the College of Fine Arts and Humanities , 6 semesters, 1997-1999
- Awarded membership to the Xi Beta Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta English Honor Society in 1998

Teaching Experience:

2005 – 2024 Full-Time Lecturer, English Department UNK

- Assigned to teach and oversee special projects for students enrolled in the Thompson Scholar Learning Community
- Developed and taught curriculum for English 101 and 102 composition and 251 literature courses
- Developed and taught curriculum for 255 Children's Literature
- Developed and taught curriculum for 100A English for Academic Purposes
- Maintained a Canvas Learning Management System for student academic correspondence
- Invited students for individual conferencing to enhance student writing skills
- Tutored students individually on research, writing, and rhetoric skills
- Permitted elevated student enrollments in courses with justifiable additions to closed roster
- Provided engaging classroom environment, generating future enrollments among students
- Advised students regarding student resources on the University campus

Service to the English Department:

- Presented curriculum demonstrations at various Brown Bag Luncheons for English Department Writing Committee in 2019

REBECCA A. UMLAND

Education: B.A., M.A., Ph.D. University of Iowa

Publications--Books:

- Outlaw Heroes as Liminal Figures of Film and Television*, McFarland & Company Publishers, Inc., Spring 2016, 285 pp.
- Donald Cammell: A Life on the Wild Side*, Godalming, Surrey: FAB Press, 2006. 304 pp. Co-author, with Samuel J. Umland.
- The Use of Arthurian Legend in Hollywood Film: From Connecticut Yankees to Fisher Kings*, Greenwood Press, 1996, 218 pp. Co-Author, with Samuel J. Umland.
- Selected Papers on Medievalism*, Indiana University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988, 183 pp. Edited, with Introduction and contributing essay. Co-Editor, with Janet Goebel

Recent Selected Articles and Book Chapters (since 2016):

- “Mythopoesis in Tennyson’s Idylls of the King.” *Mythlore: A Journal of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams and the Genres of Myth and Fantasy*. Vol. 41 (2022) Issue 2 (2022) Article 7
- “Presumed Dead: The Impact of Tennyson’s Enoch Arden on the Cinema.” *Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery: Proceedings—2018 Conference*, Ed. Thomas Endres, University of Northern Colorado, <https://digscholarship.unco.edu/> August 2020.
- “Dante and His Epigones: Breaking the Barrier of Death,” *European Studies 2019 Conference Proceedings*, University of Nebraska Omaha, Ed. Juliette Parnell, Summer 2020.
- “Swept Away . . . By an Unusual Destiny in the Blue Sea of August: Castaways in Love.” *Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery: Proceedings—2018 Conference*, University of Northern Colorado, <https://digscholarship.unco.edu/sassi/3/> 2019.
- “The Face of Robin Williams and the Enigma of Stardom,” in *The Films of Robin Williams, Critical Essays*, Ed. Johnson Cheu, McFarland & Company, Inc. Publishers. Coauthored with Samuel J. Umland. Invited contributors. 2019. 131-144.
- “‘Coming Full Circle’: Redemption for John Rambo?” *Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery: Proceedings—2018 Conference*, Ed. Thomas Endres, U. of Northern Colorado.

Conference Presentations (since 2016):

- “Only the Good Die Young: Shelley’s Adonais and the Making of a Romantic Star,” to be presented the European Studies Conference, University of Nebraska, Omaha, October 2023.
- “Our Lady of the Camellias: A Foundational Story of the Cinema,” 2022 European Studies Conference, October 7, 2022, University of Nebraska, Omaha.
- “‘Among Strange Faces, Other Minds’: Tennyson’s Idylls of the King and the Alien Other,” July 2022 Mythcon 52 July 2022 (Virtual Presentation).
- ‘Old Tune, so Full of Sadness’—Dante’s Deathless Song in Popular Music” presented in a session I proposed and organized, “Across the Universe: Dante Alighieri in Contemporary Culture” at the October 2021 European Studies Conference, University of “Nebraska, Omaha, in commemoration of the 700th Anniversary of Dante’s death (virtual conference).
- “‘Presumed Dead: Tennyson’s Impact on the Cinema.” *Society for the Academic Study of Social Imagery Conference (SASSI)*, University of Northern Colorado, March 2020 (virtual conference).
- “Dante and His Epigones: Breaking the Barrier of Death.” *European Studies Conference*, University of Nebraska, Omaha, October 2019.
- Swept Away . . . By an Unusual Destiny in the Blue Sea of August: Castaways in Love.” *Society for the Interdisciplinary Study of Social Imagery: Proceedings—2018 Conference*, University of Northern Colorado, March 2019.

- “‘Coming Full Circle’: Redemption for John Rambo?” presented at the Society for the Academic Study of Social Imagery Conference (SASSI), University of Northern Colorado, March 2018.
- “Re-envisioning Marriage in European Cinema after 1970.” presented at the European Studies Conference, University of Nebraska, Omaha, October 2017.

Invited Lectures and Presentations:

- Interview (with co-author Samuel Umland) by Mike White: Episode 257: Demon Seed. For The Projection Booth: Podcast posted February 9, 2016.

Selected Awards:

- Faculty Research Mentor Award, FAH, University of Nebraska at Kearney (Spring 2018).
- Martin Distinguished Professor of English (Fall 2017).
- Featured Faculty in UNK New Frontiers Magazine, 2016-2017.
- Awarded Professional Development Leave (Sabbatical), Spring 2015.

Recent Selected Service:

- ORCA Awards Committee: (2015-2018) Chair 2018 (NU System)
- General Studies Council 2017-2023 (UNK)
- Late Withdrawal Committee 1997–2021(UNK)
- Research Advisory Council 2018-2020 (UNK)
- Member, Honors Academic Program Review 2015 (UNK)
- Mentor, URF Program--9 students to date (UNK)
- Ad Hoc Tenure/Promotion Committee Member: Art/Art History (2016, two files). (College)
- CTE Committee, Chair and Member 2020-Present (Department)
- Search Committee, Composition, 2022-2023. (Department)
- Graduate Committee, 2010-2019 (and 1997-2002) (Department)
- Awards Committee, “Myth and Fantasy Studies” Mythopoeic Society November 2022-Present
- Manuscript Reviewer NCUR 2018
- Manuscript Reviewer, Mediaevalia, 2015-16
- Taught or co-taught three six-week classes for the Senior College of Central Nebraska (2019-23)

DENYS VAN RENEN

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in English, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, 2012

M.A. in English, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

M.S. in Aerospace Engineering, Stanford University

B.A., B.S., University of Colorado

UNIVERSITY AFFILIATION

Professor of English, University of Nebraska at Kearney, 2022-present

Associate Professor of English, University of Nebraska at Kearney, 2017-2022

Assistant Professor of English, University of Nebraska at Kearney, 2012-2017

EDITORIAL AND ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Co-editor, *Digital Defoe: Studies in Defoe and His Contemporaries*, 2021-2023

Associate Editor, *Digital Defoe: Studies in Defoe and His Contemporaries*, 2020-2021

Managing Editor, *American Literary History*, 2008-2010

BOOKS

"Environmental Justice and the Scottish Picaresque in the Atlantic World," under contract
Nature and the New Science in England, 1665-1726, Oxford University Studies in the
Enlightenment, Voltaire Foundation, 2018.

Beyond 1776: Globalizing the Literatures, Cultures and Community of the American Revolution,
coeditor, University of Virginia Press, 2018.

The Other Exchange: Women, Servants, and the Urban Underclass in Early Modern English Literature,
University of Nebraska Press, 2017.

PUBLICATIONS – ESSAYS

"'Eternal Sunshine': Intertextuality as Environmental History in Oliver Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*, *Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture*, vol. 52, forthcoming.

"'Art against art': Sentimentality, Mid-Century Drama, and the North American Crises,"
Comparative Drama, vol. 54 no. 1, 2020, p.51-72.

"'The Streams of My Native Land': The Environmental Geographies of Colonized Peoples
in Mungo Park's *Travels in the Interior Districts of Africa*," *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*
32.1(2019): 145-68.

"'Sick Nature Blasting': The Ecological Limits of British Imperialism in Thomson's *The Seasons*," *Journal of Scottish Historical Society* 38.1 (2018): 121-42.

"'Fit entertainment': The Coronation Entry in Milton's *Paradise Lost*," *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700* 41.2 (2017): 69-88.

"'Walk upon water': Equiano and the Globalizing Subject," *Beyond 1776: Globalizing the Literatures, Cultures and Community of the American Revolution*, eds. O'Malley and Van Renen, University of Virginia Press, 2018. 230-252.

"Introduction" with M. O'Malley, *Beyond 1776: Globalizing the Literatures, Cultures and Community of the American Revolution*, eds. O'Malley and Van Renen, University of Virginia Press, 2018. 230-252.

"'A Hollow Moan': The Contours of the Nonhuman World in James Thomson's *The*

Seasons," *Animals and humans: sensibility and representation, 1650–1820*, ed. Katherine Quinsey, Oxford University Press, 2017. 75-98.

"'The Temple of Folly': Transatlantic 'Nature,' Nabobs, and Environmental Degradation in *The Woman of Colour*," *Romantic Sustainability: Endurance and the Natural World, 1780-1830*, ed. Ben Robertson, Lexington Books, 2015 (Paperback, 2017). 147-168.

"'The Air We Breathe': Warfare in Farquhar's *The Recruiting Officer*," *College Literature* 43.2 (2016): 397-426.

PUBLICATIONS - SHORT ESSAYS AND REVIEWS

Comm. essay. *Woman of Colour, The* (Anon). edited by Natasha Duquette. *The Palgrave Encyclopedia of Romantic-Era Women's Writing*. Palgrave Macmillan, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-11945-4_120-1

Comm. review of *The Eighteenth Centuries: Global Networks of Enlightenment*, edited by David T. Gies and Cynthia Wall (University of Virginia Press), forthcoming.

Comm. essay. "Dorothy Wordsworth's Literary Journals," *Gale Researcher* (2017).

Comm. review of *The Miscellaneous Writings of Tobias Smollett*, ed. O M Brack et al. (Pickering & Chatto, 2015; now Routledge), *Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Spring 2017).

Review of *Britain, France and the Gothic, 1764–1820: The Import of Terror* (Cambridge University Press), by Angela Wright, *Studies in Gothic Fiction* 5.2 (2016): 36-8.

Comm. review of Tobias Smollett's *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (W.W. Norton), ed. Evan Gottlieb, *Studies in the Novel* 48.1 (2016): 133-135.

Comm. review of James Thomson's *The Seasons, Print Culture, and Visual Interpretation, 1730–1842* (Lehigh U Press), by Sandro Jung, *Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Spring 2016).

Review of *Lyric Apocalypse: Milton, Marvell, and the Nature of Events* (Fordham UP), by Ryan Netzley, *Andrew Marvell Newsletter* (Winter 2015).

Comm. review of Alexandra Walsham's *The Reformation of the Landscape and Larrie D. Ferreiro's Measure of the Earth, "Topography as History," Eighteenth Century Theory and Interpretation* 55.2-3 (Summer/Fall 2014): 319-23

THEODORA ZIOLKOWSKI

EDUCATION:

PhD, Creative Writing and Literature: 2017-2022

University of Houston / Houston,

TX Dissertation Manuscripts: THE TELLING, A Novel, and GHOSTLIT, Poems

ACADEMIC POSITION:

University of Nebraska at Kearney

Assistant Professor, August 2022—present

Courses taught: ENG 102: Writing & Research in College, ENG 211: Introduction to Creative Writing, ENG

214: Beginning Fiction, ENG 415: Advanced Fiction Writing, ENG 435: Creative Writing Professionalism, ENG

485/885: Narrative Strategies, ENG 823: Fiction Writing

PUBLICATIONS: BOOKS

Ghostlit, Poetry. Texas Review Press. College Station, TX: Forthcoming Spring 2025.

On the Rocks, Novella. Texas Review Press. College Station, TX: 2020 (Second Edition), 2018 (First Edition).

Mother Tongues, Short Stories. The Cupboard. Tallahassee, FL: 2018 (Second Edition), 2015 (First Edition).

RECENT SCHOLARSHIP August 2022 —present

5 Poems: “Picture this: you wear girl-sized clothes the summer,” “Leaving Vatican City, I was packed shoulder to shoulder,” “It’s late, your car is clawing the backseat, & you’re afraid your husband will nod off,” “There is a fact of memory & there is a fact of feeling,” and “At the memory care center, the waters are calm before they are choppy” (Poems), *COMP: An Interdisciplinary Journal*. Solicited by Managing Editor Jaydn DeWald. Forthcoming May 2024.

“Portrait of My Body in the Land of X” (Essay), *Seventh Wave*. Forthcoming Spring 2024

“The Leash” (Fiction), *no tokens*. Forthcoming Spring 2024.

“At the memory care center, the parlor resembles” (Poem), *Sweet: A Literary Confection*. Forthcoming Spring 2024.

“When we were making our descent, some rock rolled into my path” (Poetry), *Oxford Poetry* (UK).

Issue 96. Spring 2024. <https://www.oxfordpoetry.com/News.html#96>

“The morning, the boy kept his distance” (Poetry), *Rogue Agent*. Issue 106. 1 January 2024

<https://www.rogueagentjournal.com/tziolkowski>

“The Bind” and “Suitable Prey” (Fiction), *Glacier Magazine*. Issue: 2. December 2023.

<https://theglacierjournal.com/issue-two/theodora-ziolkowski/>

“Lily Exits” (Fiction), *Gargoyle Magazine*. Issue: 6. September 2023.

<https://gargoylemagazine.com/theodora-ziolkowski/>

“For days, the sunflowers watch me” (Poem), *Plant-Human Quarterly*. Issue: 10. 23 September

2023. <https://otherwisecollective.com/ziolkowski>

“On the phone, Mom says the deer population” and “The air still aromatic with the trout lily” (Poetry), *2River View*. Issue 23.1, Fall 2023. https://2river.org/2RView/28_1/poems/ziolkowski.html

“I love watching Irish step dancers, their feet tapping” (Poem), *Apple Valley Review*. Volume 18.2. Fall 2023.

<https://www.applevalleyreview.org/fall-2023/theodora-ziolkowski>

“The wife could not open her mouth to justify herself” (Poem), *Slipstream*. Issue 33: Summer 2023.

“Lying on the patient table—gel on the wand” (Poem), *Radar Poetry*. Issue 36: June 2023.

“Every summer, you read *Middlemarch* but never make it past the middle” (Poem), *Bending Genres*. Issue 33: 13 June 2023.

“Pastoral” (Poem), *Salt Hill Journal*. Issue: 49. Spring 2023. p. 24-25.

- Solicited by Editor J.P. Dancing Bear for reprinting in *Verse Daily*

<https://www.versedaily.org/2023/pastoral.shtml>

- “In the dream in which I refuse to repair us” (Poem). *Bayou Magazine*. Issue: 77. 2023. p. 47.

STUDENT MENTORSHIP

- Keesha Albrecht, Creative Thesis Committee Chair. Fall 2023-Present.
- Alex Brazle, Creative Thesis Committee Chair. Fall 2023-Present.
- Undergraduate Research Fellowship (URF): Faculty Advisor for Kenny Mitchell (Project Title TBD). Fall 2023-Present.
- Undergraduate Research Fellowship (URF): Faculty Advisor for Kenny Mitchell (Project: 'Everything Here is Reasonably Playful' / Novella). Fall 2023-Spring 2024

SERVICE

- Phi Eta Sigma (Cross-Disciplinary Student Honor Society), Co-Advisor: Fall 2023-present
- Assisted with organizing and attending meetings and initiatives, planning the induction ceremony
- Recruitment and Outreach Committee (Departmental): Fall 2023-present
- Assisted with pre-semester and academic calendar (Fall/Spring) recruitment events (including co-leading a nature walk with poetry writing for incoming students); hiring an undergraduate worker to assist with committee initiatives
- Faculty Senate, Transitional Faculty Representative. February 2023-April 2023.
- Ad hoc Committee on Committees: Spring 2023
- Researched committee organization in other UNK and a range of U.S. English Departments and shared findings with committee
- Student Language and Literature Conference (SLLC) Awards, Judge. April 2023
- Helped judge the student creative writing submissions for annual departmental conference
- Graduate Committee (Departmental): Fall 2022-Spring 2023
- Assisted with reviewing the Fall 2023 graduate student applications, grading graduate examinations, and consulted with the committee and Communications Department about advertising materials
- Led (Cross-Campus) Presentation, 'The Art of Storytelling'
- Invited by Dr. Jody Herchenbach, UNK Assistant Professor of Agribusiness, to share narrative strategies for her Econ 271/Principles of Microeconomics and Econ 270/ Principles of Macroeconomics classes. 30 September 2022.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Principles of Effective Online Instruction. UNK Online Course. Fall 2022.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE:

Served as Judge for Omnidawn Fabulous Fiction Chapbook Contest, Omnidawn Press. November 2022.

SELECTED AWARDS

Winner of the Marion Barthelme Prize in Creative Writing (2020)

Glenn C. Cambor Fellow, University of Houston (2017—2021)

Winner of a 2018 Next Generation Indie Book Award for novella *On the Rocks* (2018)

Short Story Chapbook, *Mother Tongues*, Winner of The Cupboard's Chapbook Contest (2015)

SELECTED HONORS

Poetry Manuscript, "Ghostlit:" named finalist for The Louise Bogan Award for Artistic Merit and Excellence. Trio House Press and Top 10% manuscripts. Perugia Press Prize, 2022; longlisted for the C&R Press Poetry Prize and named semifinalist for the Brittingham & Felix Pollak Prizes in Poetry, Wisconsin Poetry Series, 2020.

APPENDIX II: ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Assessment Report: 2022-2023

English Undergraduate Program

Academic Terms included in this assessment cycle: Fall 2022 and Spring 2023

Benchmark for each category: 2.5 (out of 4.0)

400 Level English Courses

Course & Term	# of papers evaluated	Rhetorical Effectiveness	Close Reading	Context	Argument	Research	Overall Mean
ENG 404 – History of the English Language (Fall 2022)	17	3.56	2.31	2.69	2.63	2.31	2.7
ENG 411 – Advanced Writing II (Fall 2022)	9	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55
ENG 426 – Literature for Adolescents (Spring 2023)	18	3.61	4	3.88	3.61	3.67	3.756
ENG 427 – Electronic Literacy (Spring 2023)	18	3.61	3.61	3.61	3.61	3.61	3.61
ENG 463 – Seminar in Shakespeare * (Spring 2023)	3	3	3.33	3.5	3.33	3.67	3.36
ENG 467 – Seminar in Romanticism (Spring 2023)	12	3.41	3.33	3.5	3.08	3.83	3.43
Total Mean	out of 77	3.45	3.35	3.35	3.3	3.44	3.405
Creative Writing	# of papers evaluated	Literary Strategies for Unification		Originality and Depth of Theme	Mechanics, Register, and Style Appropriate to Theme		Overall Mean
ENG 419 – Advanced Poetry Writing (Fall 2022)	5	3.8		3.6	3.8		3.73
ENG 485 – Narrative Strategies (Spring 2023)	7	3.71		3.71	3.71		3.71
Total Mean	out of 12	3.755		3.655	3.755		3.72

Not Assessed	See below for an explanation				
ENG 424 - Teaching Secondary School English (Fall 2022)	This class does not have a final paper. Also, the assessment for students earning a BA with a subject endorsement in Secondary English or a field endorsement in English Language Arts is external because it occurs in the field. Results are available from the WEAVE report if requested.				
ENG 484 – Classic Literature of Childhood (Fall 2022)	This was a very small class, so anonymity could not be ensured. The instructor opted not to assess the final papers.				

*There were 15 students in the class, but only 3 papers were assessed because the rest of the students pursued the option of performing a scene from a Shakespeare play in an ensemble for the final project. They each wrote a reflection about their experience, but the writing for that task does not fit the rubric.

Assessment Method

Faculty submitted final papers from applicable 400-level English undergraduate papers for Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 to the Graduate and Assessment Standing Committee. This committee replaced the Student Success Committee based on a reorganization of our committee structure. In the past, the Student Success Committee assessed all the papers they collected. For courses completed in Fall 2022 and Spring 2023, faculty had the option of either assessing the final papers for their own classes or only submitting the final papers to the committee. The majority of faculty assessed their own papers.

All but the creative writing papers were assessed using the same rubric that the Student Success Committee had been using. The creative writing courses, Advanced Poetry Writing and Narrative Strategies, were assessed with the graduate poetry and narrative rubrics respectively. These rubrics were modified by the GPC and the creative writing faculty in the fall of 2023. The original rubrics counted the use of discrete narrative or poetic devices. The update addresses the effect of selected devices. This is a shift to a more qualitative measure. All rubrics are included in the documents uploaded on the WEAVE report.

Since 2016, the Student Success Committee has been collecting and recording “evidence of experiential learning and student achievement recognized by other institutions.” They included the SLLC program, UNK Student Research Day program, off-campus conference presentations by undergraduate majors, the names of the *Carillon* student editors, the names of student teachers, and the names of students inducted into Sigma Tau Delta. This year the Graduate and Assessment Committee only included the 2023 SLLC and Student Research Day programs in the WEAVE report.

Assessment Results

The mean score for all criteria for literature and language courses exceeds the benchmark score of 2.5. The average is 3.405. The average score across criteria for each paper ranges from 2.7 to 3.756. Looking at each criterion for all the papers, the lowest area is argument. However, the range in scores for each criterion average is within 1/10 of a point. An outlier in the scores comes from ENG 404 where two of the criteria (close reading and research) do not meet the benchmark of 2.5. Both are 0.19 below the benchmark at 2.31.

The mean score for all criteria for creative writing courses also exceeds the benchmark score of 2.5. The average is 3.72 with the ratings for Advanced Poetry Writing 2/10 of a point higher than Narrative Strategies. The average score is the same for each criterion for Narrative Strategies. The criterion with the lowest score for Advanced Poetry Writing is “Originality and Depth of Theme” but it is only 2/10 of a point lower than the other criteria.

Though we only included UNK student conference programs, extracurricular activities related to English have maintained previous levels of engagement. Of note, a few students presented their work outside of UNK in

venues such as No Limits and the national Sigma Tau Delta conference. Some creative writing students published their work.

Discussion of Results

This is the first year that faculty have assessed the papers for their own classes, so it is expected that the scores will have a greater range. The range is not as great as anticipated. This means that the lower scores on close reading and research in ENG 404 are not a concern. First of all, it will be necessary to collect data from 2023-2024 to compare scores. Also, there is only one rubric for both literature and language classes, and the rubric seems more appropriate for literature classes. ENG 404 is a language course. Another consideration is the varying difficulty or student's familiarity with course content as an explanation for relatively lower or higher scores in certain classes.

The creative writing scores are high, especially considering the rubric is the same one used for graduate assessment, with strong internal consistency across both classes.

Action Plan with Commentary

Regarding assessment rubrics going forward, the graduate and assessment committee will work on making them more flexible so they can apply to literature and language courses equally well. Also, we need to compare the results for 2022-2023 with assessment scores for 2023-2024.

Now that we have two experiential learning courses at the 400 level, perhaps we should evaluate the outcomes for these courses based on a final project or portfolio according to the experiential learning outcomes. We will continue to save and attach SLLC and SRD programs to our Weave report.

The faculty agreed to administer a brief exit survey to our graduating seniors. The department chair has the names of graduating seniors. The graduate and assessment committee will look at the survey that the student success committee used before and will either use it or make a few modifications before administering it.

Assessment Report: 2021-2022

English Graduate Program

Academic Terms included in this assessment cycle: Fall 2021, Spring 2022, Summer 2022

Benchmark for each category: 3.0 (out of 4.0)

Core Courses: Literature Colloquiums, Theory

Course & Term	# of papers evaluated	Cultural, Historical Foundations Mean	Lit Theory/ Criticism Mean	Research Conventions Mean	Overall Mean
ENG 859: Colloquium: US Literature 1855-Present (Fall 2021)	13	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.4
ENG 859: Colloquium: US Literature 1855-Present (Spring 2022)	14	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.7
ENG 884: Colloquium: British Literature: 1700-Present (Spring 2022)	15	4	3.5	3.8	3.8

ENG 887: Theory and Practice of Digital Rhetoric (Spring 2022)	5	3.8	3.4	3.8	3.7
Total Mean		3.7	3.5	3.7	3.7
		Literary Strategies for Unification	Originality and Depth of Theme	Mechanics, Register, Style	
ENG 886: Poetic Strategies (Fall 2021)	14	3.8	2.9	3.5	3.4

Focus area: Childhood and Youth Studies

Course & Term	# of papers evaluated	Principles of Effective Rhetoric	Integrate Literary Analysis/ Address Prompt	Research Conventions Mean	Overall Mean
ENG 899: Special Topics (Children's & YA Fantasy & Diversity) (Fall 2021)	14	2.8	3	2.8	2.9
<i>ENG 899 English degree students</i>	6	3.7	4	3.5	3.7
<i>English 899 non-degree and students in other programs</i>	8	2.1	2.3	2.3	2.2
ENG 863: The Graphic Novel (Spring 2022)	16	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.3
<i>ENG 863 English degree students</i>	13	3.6	3.5	3.7	3.6
<i>ENG 863 non-degree students and students in other programs</i>	3	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3
ENG 848-01 & 02 (combined): Literature for Adolescents (Summer 2022)	29	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6
<i>ENG 848 English degree students</i>	15	3.7	3.8	3.9	3.8
<i>ENG 848 non-degree and students in other programs</i>	14	3.4	3.1	3.1	3.2
ENG 849: Children's & Adolescent Literature (Summer 2022)	15	2.9	3	2.5	2.8
<i>ENG 849 English degree students</i>	4	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.8
<i>ENG 849 non-degree and students in other programs</i>	11	2.5	2.7	2	2.4
Total Mean (excludes subcategories)		3.1	3.2	3.1	3.1

Strengths of the Program

Our benchmark for rubric scores has been 3.0. With the exception of the research convention score for ENG 849, students consistently meet, or are very close to meeting, this threshold in every category this assessment cycle. There are a few more 2.8 and 2.9 averages this assessment cycle. This largely has to do with the student

composition of the childhood and youth studies graduate classes. Not only can English M.A. students take them, these classes are at times required for programs in the College of Education, such as the PK-12 Reading program. A handful of students in ENG 863 (The Graphic Novel) were not English M.A.-seeking students, while about half of ENG 848 (Literature for Adolescents) and ENG 899 (Children's & YA fantasy and diversity) students were not English M.A.-seeking and the vast majority in ENG 849 (Children's & Adolescent Literature) were not English M.A.-seeking students (73%). That students outside of our English M.A. program, who included, for example, current kindergarten and first-grade teachers, were less familiar with English discipline conventions is not surprising. When rubric scores for students in our English M.A. program alone are considered, all scores in the childhood and youth studies focus meet, and actually exceed, the 3.0 benchmark expectation.

We continue to have our students honored with awards and graduate assistantships that offer our students valuable experience teaching first-year writing courses. We have three graduate assistantships and one of our graduate assistants won UNK's first-ever "3 Minute Thesis" competition and presented her 3 minute thesis at the Midwest Association of Graduate Schools' annual meeting in March 2022 in Chicago. We continue to encourage and have our students present at regional, national, and international conferences, including Sigma Tau Delta (the English Honor Society) conferences and the regional No Limits! Conference, as well as at UNK's Research Week and the English Department's own Student Language & Literature conference. Two English graduate students published essays in the 2022 issue of UNK's *The Graduate Review*.

Our numbers continue to hold generally steady, although a drop in applicants and increases in graduation numbers will likely lead to a slight dip soon. Our most recent figures (calculated on August 12, 2022) indicated we had 104 English graduate students, of whom 56 were enrolled. Of these, 20 were non-degree English students (4 of whom were enrolled). Between Fall 2021-Summer 2022, we had 21 students graduate.

What We've Learned

As part of our assessment last fall, we indicated that we had seven students currently working on theses. This fall we have nearly triple that number of students who have expressed interest in working on a thesis. Given the intense time commitment and high expectations we give to thesis work, we have neither the staff nor resources to support that many thesis students. As such, we are working to develop a gatekeeping mechanism to identify those students who would most benefit from undertaking a thesis and to continue to encourage high-quality thesis development from those students, while also clarifying how our final comprehensive exam may be a more suitable choice for many of our students who are frequently busy working professionals (generally, in-service teachers). The department is currently considering requiring a thesis proposal from all students who wish to pursue writing a thesis and working to create a Canvas course "checklist" to ensure thesis students understand thesis expectations, requirements, and timelines.

We agreed at our fall retreat to try to offer our comprehensive exam to students earlier in the semester, with the goal of being able to allow students to revise should their examiners suggest revision is needed. We will likely consider our exam – which we revised in 2020 to enhance its rigor – further as more students are now taking it (students in our Writing M.A. still take the previous exam; only students in our "new" M.A. program take the revised exam, so we are only now beginning to see that exam taken by larger numbers of students).

We are continuing to evaluate core courses and one of our four focus areas. Last year we assessed the Composition, Rhetoric, and Language focus area; this year we assessed the Childhood and Youth Studies focus area. Every substantive final paper/project for our core courses and the Childhood and Youth Studies focus area courses was assessed by the teaching faculty member. Last year's assessment indicated a potential need to consider consistency and rigor across the program, particularly in assignment expectations. The department has begun that process.

This assessment cycle has continued to make it clear that we need to adjust our rubrics, in particular to simplify them. We have begun that process this fall as well, with the graduate committee beginning to consider our rubrics with the aim of bringing potential revisions for departmental approval this coming spring.

Action Plan

We will continue our work on revising/simplifying our rubrics, considering and maintaining consistency and rigor across our program, and addressing our students' needs and departmental resources with regards to theses and the comprehensive exam. A longer-term goal we continue to have is working with our online program coordinator to develop and administer an exit survey to our students. Given departmental workload this year – we have an Annual Program Review (APR) in the Spring – we will likely not be able to devote time to a survey until the next academic year. However, the APR, which is asking us to consider our current graduate policies and handbooks, and our programs more generally, will also be fruitful in offering us fresh ideas and perspectives on our program and our assessment results and practices. We will also likely need to bolster our departmental recruiting efforts over the next few years.

We are this spring piloting two eight-week courses. We will likely need to assess the success of these courses in the summer and fall.

Assessment Report: 2022-2023

English Graduate Program

Academic Terms included in this assessment cycle: Fall 2022, Spring 2023, Summer 2023

Benchmark for each category: 3.0 (out of 4.0)

Core Courses: Literature Colloquiums, Theory

Course & Term	# of papers evaluated	Cultural, Historical Foundations Mean	Lit Theory/ Criticism Mean	Research Conventions Mean	Overall Mean
ENG 806 – Principles of Literary Criticism (Fall 2022)	14	3.85	3.64	3.5	3.66
ENG 857 – Colloquium: US Literature through 1855 (Fall 2022) *	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
ENG 883 – Colloquium: British Literature through 1700 (Fall 2022) **	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
ENG 884 – Colloquium: British Literature: 1700-Present (Spring 2023)	16	3.68	3.43	3.37	3.49
Total Mean	out of 30	3.765	3.535	3.435	3.575
	# of papers evaluated	Literary Strategies for Unification	Originality and Depth of Theme	Mechanics, Register, Style	
ENG 885 – Narrative Strategies (Spring 2023)	15	3.26	3.26	3.26	3.26

*The professor who taught this course was on leave (Fall 2023) when the papers were called for, so could not be contacted to get the assessment of these papers.

** The professor who taught this course was on sabbatical (Fall 2023) when the papers were called for.

Focus area: Creative Writing, 2022-2024

From 2022-2023, there were only 2 Creative Writing classes offered in addition to ENG 885. This is not sufficient data to assess this focus area. We will continue to collect data for the next academic year (2023-2024). Though we can use the graduate rubrics, we should consider using the portfolio checklists they use for the assessment instrument. This would be a more valid measure of outcomes and still meet the HLC's request for concrete measurements of what students can expect to get out of a course.

Assessment Method

The Graduate and Assessment committee requests that faculty provide anonymized assessment scores for the final papers for the required courses for the MA every year and picks an additional focus area. This year faculty also submitted the final papers. The papers are self-assessed by the faculty who teach those courses using specific rubrics for 4 areas: literary analysis and theory; language, rhetoric and composition; fiction; and poetry. The area of focus for this year was creative writing. Due to insufficient data, we will continue to collect assessment data for the 2023-2024 academic year before reporting scores.

The GPC and Creative Writing faculty made some small changes to the Creative Writing Rubrics. The original rubrics counted the use of discrete narrative or poetic devices. The update addresses the effect of the use of selected devices. This is a shift to a more qualitative measure.

Assessment Results

The scores for the 3 courses for which assessment data was provided were all well above the benchmark in every area. The achievement on cultural context was highest followed by analysis and academic conventions. The scores for the creative writing course were the same across criteria. See below for a brief discussion of the limited data received.

What We've Learned

The strengths of the program and insights gleaned from consideration of the data and other discussions of the program in the 2021-2022 assessment report remain applicable in 2022-2023.

The rather dramatic loss of data resulting from a few people being on leave, which is not unusual, reinforces the need for stability in our faculty to ensure our forward progress as a program. The issue with missing data could be addressed by requesting assessment scores for final papers at the beginning of each term for the classes that ended in the previous term.

Action Plan with Commentary

As a faculty, we discussed the plan to collect data more frequently in 2023-2024. We decided that the chair of the graduate and assessment committee will remind people that they have a class that needs to be assessed near the end of each term and provide the rubric to them. Then the chair of the graduate and assessment committee will request the scores at the beginning of the next term. For now, we will focus on making the undergraduate rubric more flexible and then see if we can apply anything we learn to the graduate rubrics. Regarding the missing data for the early American and British colloquia, we will look especially carefully at the assessments for these courses offered in 2023-2024 and beyond.

We will continue looking at the creative writing focus as the additional area of assessment in addition to the core classes for 2023-2024.

We are in the process of getting a Language, Rhetoric, and Composition Colloquium approved for the next graduate catalog. We are also planning to create a 5-year BA-MA, which is poised to begin in Fall 2024. We will have ongoing discussions about this program as we move toward launching it.

We will consider how to grow our program while maintaining high standards. The enrollment numbers in the program are holding steady, but we believe we can grow in the near future. The increase in nondegree seeking students has helped with credit hour production but many of these students are not as prepared as the students in our MA program. Some students in the transitional certificate program, in particular, seem to have the impression that they can do the work whenever they want to because it is an asynchronous class. However, discussions, for example, need to be completed within a specified time so as to create a conversation among students about the readings. The GPC will strengthen relationships with the transitional certificate faculty to help students understand the expectations for our online graduate classes. We also seek to bolster our numbers through better coordination with the marketing department through targeted emails, social media and print ads. The online program coordinator and selected faculty will have booths at 3 national conferences in 2023 and 2024 to attract new students for our online MA program: NCTE, AWP, and NCUR. We plan to contact students at the end of their program for feedback about their experience and possibly to obtain contact information. The online coordinator will assist the committee in creating and administering such a survey. We know who is graduating, so it is not difficult to contact them.

APPENDIX III: LIBRARY SUPPORT AND RESOURCES FOR ENGLISH

Library Support for the English Program

1. Information for the Academic Program Review of the English Department

Compiled by: Rachel Hammer, MLIS, MA

Assistant Professor and Library Liaison to the English Department

2. Library Mission Statement

The Calvin T. Ryan Library supports the mission of the University of Nebraska Kearney by acquiring and organizing resources, providing collaborative assistance and instruction in support of scholarly teaching, learning and research, meeting client information needs, and adhering to recognized standards of library practice.

3. Staff Information

In addition to the Dean, eight full-time faculty librarians currently serve the Calvin T. Ryan Library. Three of the full-time librarians are tenured, with five at different stages of the tenure track as assistant professors. There are currently eight filled Office/Service positions in the Library and six Managerial/Professional Staff positions filled.

Librarians are assigned to serve as liaisons to a number of departments. Generally, this assignment will be made on the basis of knowledge, training, and professional experience that will enable the librarian to serve his or her assigned departments efficiently, effectively and personally. The liaison assigned to the English Department is Rachel Hammer.

Rachel Hammer holds both a Bachelor's of Arts and a Master's of Arts in English. She also earned a Master's of Library and Information Science. She has served as the English Department liaison since January 2022. In addition to her experience as a Research and Instruction Librarian, Hammer worked as a professor of both English language and literature, teaching both traditional in-person 16-week classes and online 5-week courses for a total of five years.

4. Budget

Library budget allocations for the English Department

FY2021 Subscription Spend

Print Journals	\$301.31
Print/Online Journals	\$447.49
Online Journals	\$3,386.54
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$4,135.34</i>

FY2022 Subscription Spend

Print Journals	\$867.59
Online Journals	\$3,491.44

<i>Total</i>	\$5,096.60
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Note – both of these subscription spend tables only represent standalone subscriptions, not titles that are included as part of any packages

MLA International Bibliography with Full-Text

FY2022 Spend	\$13,024
FY2023 Spend	\$13,415

Book (physical and online) Order Expenditures

FY2021 (incomplete data due to system migration)	\$823.03
FY2022	\$1,650
FY2023 (through January 2023)	\$2,306

5. Overall Library Collections (Books, Journals, Databases, Non-print, etc.)

Databases

At least 42 of the Library's 287 databases have been identified as useful for research on English literature, language, and related subjects. These include the Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO) database that was added at the request of faculty members in the English department in January of 2014.

Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery

The English Department delivers courses in both the traditional face-to-face and the online environment (through Canvas). Due to changes in scholarly publishing and in the preferences of students and some faculty, materials in the Calvin T. Ryan collections are acquired in both printed and digital formats. In the event that the Library does not have materials needed by English faculty members and/ or students, items may be requested through Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery services. There is no charge for this service, since fees are covered by a grant that the Interlibrary Loan librarian has been able to acquire annually. Contrary to the practice at many universities, there is no charge for Interlibrary Loan items delivered electronically to UNK students, even if a charge is assessed by the cooperating Library. This is because the Interlibrary Loan librarian has been successful in obtaining grant funding each year to defray these expenses. Most printed materials are delivered by Interlibrary Loan and Document Delivery services to the Library's circulation desk for pickup by the person making the request. Faculty members have the option of asking to have printed materials delivered directly to their offices. The majority of requested articles are delivered electronically, and rapid service is the norm. Electronic articles are delivered to the ILL mailbox of the individual student or faculty member, and the requestor is notified by e-mail when either printed or electronic are available for pickup.

Distance students receive special assistance from the staff of the Interlibrary Loan work group, including scanning of book chapters and articles from the Library's print collection, in addition to standard Interlibrary Loan services. These services are further detailed on the Web page at this address: <http://www.unk.edu/academics/library.aspx?id=2865>.

Book Collection Specific to Department (Printed Books)

Find below a chart detailing the number of books in the Library's collection specific to the English Department's areas of study. In the Appendices, find a chart detailing all of the Library's physical holdings related to linguistics and literature.

Library of Congress Classification Subclass	Description	Item Count in Library Stacks
PE	English	2,174
PN	Literature (General)	9,605
PR	English Literature	11,751
PS	American Literature	15,110
PZ	Fiction and juvenile belles lettres	25,341

Electronic Books and Other Electronic Materials

Find below a chart detailing the number of electronic books and journals in the Library's collection specific to the English Department's areas of study. In the Appendices, find a chart detailing all of the Library's electronic book holdings related to linguistics and literature.

Subject Area	Number of Online Resources	Material Type
American literature	8,905	Book
American literature	107	Journal
English	2,103	Book
English	73	Journal
English literature	9,253	Book
English literature	87	Journal
Fiction and juvenile belles lettres	274	Book
Fiction and juvenile belles lettres	5	Journal

6. Library Instruction

The Library is able to provide instruction for students in the use of Library resources for courses offered by the English Department. Instruction in the use of databases and other library resources is available upon faculty request.

7. Online Access

The main Web page for the Library is located at: <http://library.unk.edu/>. This page provides access to a quick-search interface providing access to Library Search, a discovery tool that searches the UNK catalog, databases, and other resources with a single click. There is also an advanced version of Library Search, an enhanced version of the Library catalog that also provides a "multi-search" capability over four of the largest full-text databases in the Library collection, and a "Classic Catalog" that allows more traditional searching by keywords, subject indexing terms, call number, standard number, title, author, or government document call number.

An easy-to-use method of finding any journal in the Library collection is linked from the Find Resources tab on the main webpage, in addition to finding aids for the Government and Archives and Special Collections. Other tabs include links to Research Assistance, Services, and general information About the Library. The Services tab links to the Library's Interlibrary Loan services, (linked from the Borrowing From Other Libraries link), and to the UNK Writing Center and Peer Tutoring services from the Learning Commons text link. The Research Assistance Research Guides

link provides access to a program-specific guide to facilitate locating e-books, e-journals, and databases for students and faculty members in the English Department.

One important feature of the Library's Web resources that is available for both on-campus and distance students, including those in the English program, is the Ask a Librarian reference service. This link from the main Library page provides assistance to students by phone, by email, and through a "chat" tool.

Library Appendices

Databases Especially Useful for English Language and Literature and American Literature

Academic OneFile contains articles from a variety of newspapers, magazines and peer reviewed journals - many in full-text.

Academic Search Premier This multi-disciplinary database provides full text for more than 4,500 journals, including full text for more than 3,700 peer-reviewed titles. PDF backfiles to 1975 or further are available for well over one hundred journals, and searchable cited references are provided for more than 1,000 titles.

America: History & Life is the definitive index of literature covering the history and culture of the United States and Canada, from prehistory to the present. Provides indexing for 1,700 journals from 1964 to present.

American Antiquarian Society (AAS) Historical Periodicals Collection Series 1-5 This is a series of 5 collections of historical periodicals. Series 1 includes over 500 titles from 1691-1820; Series 2 over 1,000 titles from 1821-1837, Series 3 over 1,800 titles from 1838-1852, Series 4 over 1,100 titles from 1853-1865, and Series 5 over 2,500 titles from 1866-1877.

American Periodicals Series Features keyword searching and full-page images from 1,500 American journals, magazines and newspapers published from colonial days through the early 20th century.

ArticleFirst Table of contents indexing of periodicals in humanities, social sciences, science and technology. Part of the OCLC FirstSearch database collection.

Books in print offers bibliographic information on over 7.5 million in-print, out-of-print, and forthcoming book, e-book, audio, and video titles. Also features over 887,000 tables of contents, 3.1 million annotations, and over 1.2 million reviews of titles by more than 425,000 publishers, as well as extensive cover images and author biographies.

Children's Literature Comprehensive Database Contains more than 300,000 critical reviews of thousands of children's books, ranging from the earliest baby board books to novels and nonfiction for young adults, and an average of more than 1500 new reviews are added to the database monthly. Information about awards, honors, prizes given to specific books is also provided along with information about reading measurement program information as well as best book lists and state reading lists.

Choice Reviews Online Provides web access to the entire database of CHOICE reviews published since September 1988. Includes access to recent Outstanding Academic Titles lists.

Credo Reference Search or browse from nearly 600 encyclopedias, dictionaries, and reference titles in a broad array of subject areas.

Dictionary.com A free resource with over 90,000 entries, 70,000 audio word pronunciations, 900 full-page color illustrations, language notes and word-root appendixes.

Dissertations and Theses at UNK Includes abstracts and full-text of master's theses produced by UNK students since 2008. For a more comprehensive listing of UNK theses, please search the Library Catalog on Kearney theses.

Drama for Students Each volume of Drama for Students contains easily accessible and content-rich discussions of the literary and historical background of 12 works from various cultures and time periods.

eBooks on EBSCOhost Formerly known as NetLibrary, this ebook collection includes over 130,000 titles from a wide variety of subjects and publishers. These e-books are also findable in the library's Enhanced and Classic Catalogs. These e-books may be viewed online using a web browser, or downloaded for 1-week of offline reading using the free Adobe Digital Editions on a PC or Mac, or using compatible e-book reader devices or apps (see Digital Editions Supported Devices).

eBooks on ProQuest Ebook Central, formerly known as ebrary, is a growing collection of e-books in a variety of subject areas. These e-books are also findable in the library's Enhanced and Classic Catalogs. These e-books may be viewed online using a web browser or downloaded for 1-week of offline reading using the free Adobe Digital Editions on a PC or Mac or using compatible e-book reader devices or apps (see Digital Editions Supported Devices).

Eighteenth Century Collections Online includes 32 million pages from every significant English-language and foreign-language title printed in the United Kingdom during the 18th century, along with thousands of important works from the Americas.

Electronic Collections Online Contains the full text and images of a broad selection of academic journals from all major subject areas. As of February 1, 2012, no new content will be added to ECO.

ERIC via FirstSearch Covers all areas of education and education-related aspects of other disciplines. "ED" documents (1994-present) may be available online.

Gale Literature Criticism Explore the most extensive compilation of literary commentary available. Includes analysis from book excerpts, periodicals, and more.

Gale Virtual Reference Library (GVRL) is a database of encyclopedias, almanacs, and specialized reference sources for multidisciplinary research. Click [here](#) to view a list of GVRL e book titles.

Google Scholar provides a way to broadly search for scholarly literature across many disciplines. Using this link will indicate which Google Scholar results are available in full-text through UNK databases, or free/open-access sources.

JSTOR is a digital archive containing the full-text and full-page views of hundreds of journals. Access to JSTOR's Arts & Sciences Archive Collections (1-10), Life Sciences Archive Collection, and 40+ current titles are available through UNK. Individuals not affiliated with UNK may access content through a paid, personal JPASS account. Limited, free access is also available by registering for JSTOR's Register and Read program.

Library & Information Science Source Includes full text articles from over 400 journals related to library and information science, with indexing for thousands more journals, books, and conference papers back to 1905.

Library of Congress Digital Collections Provides free online access to digitized historical documents, photographs, sound recordings, moving pictures, books, pamphlets, maps, and other resources from the Library of Congress's vast holdings.

Linguistics Collection (includes Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts) provides abstracts and indexes to the international literature in linguistics and related disciplines in the language sciences.

Middle and Junior High Core Collection Provides a selective annotated list of fiction and nonfiction books for young people in grades five through nine, along with review sources and other professional aids for children's librarians and school media specialists.

MLA International Bibliography with Full Text Produced by the Modern Language Association, the electronic version of the bibliography dates back to the 1920s and contains over 2.4 million citations from more than 4,400 journals & series and 1,000 book publishers.

Music Indexes A combination of two data sources: RILM is a comprehensive music bibliography featuring citations and abstracts of materials related to traditional music, popular music, and classical music. Music Index Online cites book reviews, obituaries, news and articles about music, musicians, and the music industry from over 850 music periodicals published since 1973.

Nineteenth Century Collections Online Consists of monographs, newspapers, pamphlets, manuscripts, ephemera, maps, photographs, statistics, and other kinds of documents in both Western and non-Western languages from the 19th century.

NoveList K-8 Plus Provides reading recommendations for fiction and non-fiction titles, for children in grades K-8.

NoveList Plus Provides reading recommendations for fiction and non-fiction titles, for all ages. Includes book summaries, reviews, and series information.

Oxford English Dictionary Online The OED Online can be used to perform simple searches for word definitions, or for full-text searching of definitions, etymologies and quotations through the Search function. Updated quarterly; contains the history and development of the English language since 1150.

Oxford Journals Online provides online access to over 230 full-text journals in economics, humanities, law, life sciences, medicine, mathematics and physical sciences, and the social sciences - all published by Oxford University Press.

Oxford Reference searches approximately 200 reference e-books.

PapersFirst An index of papers presented at conferences worldwide. Part of the OCLC FirstSearch database collection.

ProceedingsFirst An index of conference proceedings worldwide. Part of the OCLC FirstSearch database collection.

Project MUSE - Premium Collection Project MUSE offers 300 journals from 60 scholarly publishers in the fields of literature and criticism, history, the visual and performing arts, cultural studies, education, political science, gender studies, economics, and many others.

Scribner Encyclopedia of American Lives Presents original scholarly biographies of notable Americans.

Senior High Core Collection Provides a selective annotated list of fiction and nonfiction books for young adults in grades nine through twelve, along with review sources and other professional aids for librarians and school media specialists.

Social Science Research Network is an open repository of papers, book chapters, and other published items, including abstracts and 500,000 full-text papers in business, the social sciences, literature, and music.

WorldCat Dissertations & Theses All dissertations, theses and published material based on theses cataloged by OCLC members, including all subjects. Over 8 million records in the database. Part of the OCLC FirstSearch database collection.

WorldCat.org An open-access catalog for books and materials available at libraries throughout the world.

Library's Holdings for Linguistics and Literature

Library of Congress Subclass	Description	Physical Book Count	Electronic Book Count
P	Philology. Linguistics	1,659	8,510
PA	Greek and Latin language and literature	873	2,106
PB	Modern languages. Celtic languages	89	187
PC	Romance languages	467	920
PD	Germanic languages	8	155
PE	English language	2,174	2,103
PF	West Germanic languages	135	287
PG	Slavic, Baltic, and Albanian languages	497	938
PH	Uralic and Basque languages	29	60
PJ	Oriental languages and literatures	139	1,053

PK	Indo-Iranian languages and literatures	55	364
PL	Languages and literatures of Eastern Asia, Africa, Oceania	363	1,682
PM	Hyperborean, Indian, and artificial languages	77	339
PN	Literature (General)	9,605	12,810
PQ	French, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish literatures	4,331	3,841
PR	English literature	11,751	9,253
PS	American and Canadian literatures	15,110	8,905
PT	German, Dutch, Flemish, Afrikaans, Scandinavian, Modern Icelandic, Faroese, Danish, Norwegian, and Swedish literatures	1,492	1,200
PZ	Fiction and juvenile belles lettres	25,341	274

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA AT KEARNEY

ACADEMIC PROGRAM REVIEW

APRIL 2024

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APPENDIX I. BUILDING SUPPORT FOR MARGINALIZED DEPARTMENTS

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1. Abstract

The University of Nebraska Kearney (UNK) English Department and faculty are dedicated to providing outstanding educational programs at the graduate, undergraduate, and transitional levels. The curricula are designed to balance strong foundations with opportunities to develop depth, and the extensive expertise and experience of the faculty ensure that they can deliver educational programs that prepare their students for careers and further study in an array of avenues. The department faculty have a long practice of making innovative and responsive decisions, such as developing a flourishing online MA degree, which has positioned them favorably to face the current trends in higher education.

Faculty have excellent qualifications and maintain active agendas of scholarship and creative work, which are very impressive in a department of this size with full teaching loads. Faculty are inspiring mentors who model to their students the ways such research and creativity strengthen their teaching and service, and students themselves are active and successful in presenting and publishing their work. The English department collaborates with multiple other departments and programs across the university, and thus has partnerships on which to draw in planning for the next decade.

The university's decision to reduce the size of the General Studies Program is a direct cause of the current concerns about undergraduate course enrollment; combined with instability in the aftermath of the creation of the College of Arts and Sciences and budget cuts that eliminated two tenure-line positions and an award-winning full-time lecturer, English has been unable to respond to crises before the next one falls. They have developed many ideas for curricular cooperation in the immediate future that will 1) strengthen enrollment in English courses and remedy subpar writing and critical thinking skills for partner departments; 2) create innovative experiential courses and professionalizing opportunities for students; 3) support the Nebraska Department of Education in repairing the statewide teacher deficit through comprehensive and rigorous degree programs; 4) and continue to provide vital educational and cultural services to Nebraska and the region.

The English Department is talented, competent, energetic, and dedicated to creative and productive collaborations in service to the university and its students; but its effective recovery from and resilience against the consequences of externally imposed decisions will require mutual cooperation and respect from the university, college, and other departments.

2. Evaluation of Self-Study Report

The English Department's self-study report provides a comprehensive picture of the department from every angle. The report describes the current state of the department clearly with plenty of detail to allow an unfamiliar reader to understand the mission and impact of the department, its faculty, and its graduates on the state and region. The department is a major producer of successful secondary teachers in the state, and the report makes the reasons clear by describing the shapes of the curricula and the abundant opportunities available on campus and off that allow students to conduct research, write, present, and develop a well-rounded foundation for a successful future in teaching. The complexities of the different undergraduate and graduate programs, and the explanations of the way the Transitional Certification Program (TCP) students' needs interact with those of the traditional programs reveal the strengths of the curricula in accommodating the various student populations. Students with other career plans are equally well represented in the report's detailed account of their successes.

The report provides frank information about the department's journey through the sharp decline in arts and humanities enrollments nationwide, with enumerations of enrollment losses and staff reductions, alongside comparisons to peer institutions that illustrate the relatively low impact of the decline on the UNK department to date. Descriptions of cuts in General Studies and their effects on course enrollment are similarly detailed, as are the report's descriptions of initial efforts to consolidate the programs' strength and seek solutions to new weaknesses based on known assets and talent.

The report makes the department's commitment to outreach and service explicit in the many examples of collaborations resulting in public humanities outreach; development of new, interdisciplinary programs; sustained support of established interdisciplinary programs; student research achievements; and community partnerships. Individual accomplishments are selectively itemized in the report and abbreviated *curriculum vitae* in an appendix.

Despite the report's unflinching descriptions of threats to the department's stability and the uncertainty clouding attempts to respond to the situations at hand, the overall tone of the report leans positive, as the faculty energize themselves to meet the future with confidence that the strong reputations of the degree programs and of the faculty as researchers, teachers, and mentors will continue to draw enthusiastic students to department courses and majors.

3. Evaluation of Department and Program Mission

A. Department Mission and Goals: Transferrable Skills and Teacher Preparation

The English Department's mission and its faculty's dedication to that mission play a vital role at UNK and in the region by guiding students to develop strong skills in written communication, analytical reading, creativity, and critical thinking, which are all crucial needs in a wide range of professions.

Atrophying Skills Nationwide. Sources ranging from *Inside Higher Ed* to *Forbes*, as well as surveys conducted by organizations like the National Association of Colleges and Employers, indicate that "soft" skills like these rank highly among those employers seek in applicants.¹ For example, the 2022 NACE Job Outlook Survey indicated that 85% of employers value problem-solving skills; 75% seek analytical skills; 73.3% demand written communication skills.² The American Association of Colleges and University's 2021 report on "How College Contributes to Workforce Success" gained similar results from the employers surveyed, but also noted that more than half of employers place importance on creativity. In the same report, 83% of employers indicated that they are more likely to hire candidates who took multiple college courses requiring significant writing assignments.³

English departments in general make powerful contributions toward – and often are solely responsible for – developing written communication and critical thinking skills through first-year composition programs and writing-intensive courses taken by students of all majors. The UNK English Department's former two-semester composition sequence and first-year seminars have provided an excellent basis for developing such valuable skills. Yet skills such as written communication and critical thinking also rank highly among those that employers most often find lacking in many college graduates, particularly those with degrees in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields.⁴ This lack of foundational skills may be an outcome of universities' increasing emphasis

¹See, for example, Billing, Fabian, Aaron De Smet, Angelia Reich, Bill Schaninger. "Building Workforce Skills at Scale to Thrive." 2021, McKinsey Global Survey: <https://www.mckinsey.com/capabilities/people-and-organizational-performance/our-insights/building-workforce-skills-at-scale-to-thrive-during-and-after-the-covid-19-crisis>; Rose, Tara A., and Terri L. Flateby. "From College Success to Career Success," *Inside Higher Ed*, July 14, 2022.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2022/07/15/employers-recent-grads-rate-their-skills-opinion>; Van Derziel, Shawn. "Future Forward: Key Issues and Recommendations for Success," *NACE Journal*, Feb. 1, 2022, <https://www.nacweb.org/talent-acquisition/trends-and-predictions/future-forward-key-issues-and-recommendations-for-success-in-2022/>; Finley, Ashley. "How College Contributes to Workforce Success," American Association of Colleges Universities, 2021. <https://www.aacu.org/research/how-college-contributes-to-workforce-success>; Tambe, Nikita. "Top 20 Skills That Employers Look for in Candidates," *Forbes Advisor*, Jul, 14, 2023. <https://www.forbes.com/advisor/in/business/top-skills-to-get-a-job/>

² VanDerziel, <https://www.nacweb.org/talent-acquisition/trends-and-predictions/future-forward-key-issues-and-recommendations-for-success-in-2022/>

³ Finley, <https://www.aacu.org/research/how-college-contributes-to-workforce-success>

⁴ Wilkie, Dana. "Employers Say Students Aren't Learning Soft Skills in College, Part 2," Society for Human Resource Management, Oct. 21, 2019. <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/employee-relations/employers-say-students-arent-learning-soft-skills-college>; Rainie, Lee and Janna Anderson. "The Future of Jobs and Jobs Training," Pew Research Center,

on vocational specialization and speedy time to degree over broad development of knowledge and transferrable skills, emphases which can combine dangerously with learning deficits linked to COVID-19.⁵

English courses emphasize these missing skills, while also fostering in students the ability to understand a range of human perspectives and attitudes necessary to developing empathy, ethical thinking, and a well-rounded worldview. The sources cited above frequently report that many employers value empathy, ethics, and an ability to understand multiple perspectives as skills that are useful for interacting with both clients and colleagues in the workplace. The number of ENG courses that satisfy the LOPER 10 requirement and are included in interdisciplinary majors and minors attests to the relevance of literary studies in understanding the diverse human experience. Studying the ways literary texts represent characters' minds and behaviors helps to build interpersonal intelligence, as do the practices of creative writing that require exploring the thoughts and feelings of human characters; scientific findings on the value of literary fiction for building social awareness, developing theory of mind, and stimulating cognitive function are by no means new.⁶ Like all humanities fields, English studies train students to be open-minded and flexible thinkers who learn how to learn for themselves rather than memorize, another transferable skill employers are not seeing in recent college graduates, yet they believe to be *more* essential than quantitative and memory-based skills that can easily be automated.⁷ The English department's dedication to instilling this wide range of skills and habits of mind directly support many of UNK's stated mission imperatives for undergraduate and graduate education, as well as the two expected outcomes described in the university's strategic plan.

Teacher Preparation for Nebraska and the Region: In addition to training English majors and UNK students at large in these widely applicable skills, the English Department further excels in its disciplinary mission to prepare future Language Arts and English teachers for their careers. The majority of the department's large undergraduate and graduate student populations intend a career in teaching at the middle and high school level, and they go on to teach throughout the state of Nebraska and the region. Thus, the impact of the English programs exponentially increases as BAEd and MA graduates take the knowledge and skills gained from study in their UNK English courses into their own classrooms year after year. Meanwhile, at least 40 students are currently pursuing English and Language Arts teaching endorsements through the TCP; UNK is the only university in the state delivering such a program. Because changes are happening rapidly at NDE and in the other colleges and universities across the state to respond to the persistent teacher shortage problem, updating endorsement area programs and building a stronger partnership with the Teacher Education Department and, specifically, the TCP faculty, is essential to staying relevant in the field of education and providing resources for post-baccalaureate "career changers" to become teachers as quickly as possible. To support TCP students, the department has designated a faculty member with a background in secondary school pedagogy to assist them as that transition to and progress through the program. These teacher-training programs continue to produce well-prepared teachers.

B. Department Mission and Curricular Innovations: Online MA Program and Experiential Learning

May 3, 2017, <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2017/05/03/theme-2-learners-must-cultivate-21st-century-skills-capabilities-and-attributes/>

⁵ "Education in a Pandemic: Impact of COVID-19." Office of Civil Rights, US Department of Education, June 2021; Camera, Lauren. "Pandemic Prompts Historic Decline in Student Achievement," *US News & World Report*, Oct. 24, 2022, <https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2022-10-24/pandemic-prompts-historic-decline-in-student-achievement-on-nations-report-card>

Polkoff, Morgan, Isabel Clay, and Daniel Silver. "Beyond Test Scores: Broader Academic Consequences of the Covid-19 Pandemic on American Students." Center for Reinventing Higher Education. September, 2023.

⁶ For example, Mar, R.A. "The Neural Basis of Social Cognition and Story Comprehension," *Annual Review of Psychology* 62, 2011, p. 103-34; Speer, N.K., J.R. Reynolds, and J.M. Zacks. "Reading Stories Activates Visual and Motor Experiences," *Psychological Science* 20, 2009, 989-99; Kidd, D.C., and E. Castano. "Reading Literary Fiction improves Theory of Mind," *Science* 342, 2013, p. 377-80; Johnson, D.R. "Transportation into a Story Increases Empathy, Prosocial Behavior, and Perceptual Bias toward Fearful Expressions," *Personality and Individual Difference* 52, 2012, p. 150-55.

⁷ Rose & Flateby, <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2022/07/15/employers-recent-grads-rate-their-skills-opinion>; Wilkie, <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/employee-relations/employers-say-students-arent-learning-soft-skills-college>

Attentive to the shifting needs of pre-service teachers and to changes at the campus, university and societal levels, the UNK English department continues to undertake innovative course development and curriculum design.

Fully Online MA: In response to the 2014 Academic Program Review (APR), the department has focused on developing a strong online graduate program which offers students a variety of focus areas and capstone options, allowing students to pursue interests in Literature, Creative Writing, Composition and Rhetoric, and Childhood and Youth Studies, all areas which support practicing and pre-service Nebraska teachers as well as preparing students for MFA and doctoral programs. The UNK English MA program ranks number three nationwide in Online Master's Degrees' list of "Best Online Master's Programs in English" and fourth on the list of online programs at BestColleges.com.

Course Innovation and Experiential Learning: At the course-level, the English department has created new offerings aimed at critical literacy and professionalization. These include courses in digital literacy (ENG 427) and digital rhetoric (ENG 887) which will benefit educators in many areas as well as students interested in writing for digital publications. New experiential learning courses also address professionalization in the areas of creative and critical writing (ENG 361B, 435, and 436). These writing courses emphasize archival and field research as well as the kind of research necessary in seeking publication and presentation outlets; students in these classes have subsequently presented their work at local, regional, and national conferences and published their works in peer-reviewed academic journals and literary magazines. Accessible because it lacks upper-division prerequisite courses, ENG 361B: Nebraska Life Writing draws students from other disciplines who investigate and write about the history and peoples of Nebraska, learning ways to tell the stories of their own, perhaps marginalized, Nebraska communities: students' work in this class makes important contributions to public history and social justice while empowering young writers to make their voices heard. The English department has also described nascent ideas for future development of experiential courses in the self-study report and during review committee interviews.

English Department students have opportunities for experiential learning and professionalization outside the classroom – such as student teaching experiences – and outside the curriculum, and they take advantage of them. Since 1986, the *Carillon* has published UNK students' creative and scholarly writing, but recently the journal has developed into a way for students to learn skills needed in the publishing industry: under the guidance of the current Reynolds Endowed Chair of Creative Writing, the journal has established a hard-working editorial board comprising selected members of the university's chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the International English Honor Society. The student editors devote themselves to every step of the process, and the product is a polished and high-quality publication that displays the professional quality they have aimed to achieve. The chapter should consider submitting an issue for the Sigma Tau Delta national award for Outstanding Literary Arts Journal.⁸ Among the work published in the *Carillon* are students recognized for outstanding scholarship and creative achievement at the English Department's annual Student Conference in Language and Literature. English students are consistently active in UNK Research Day celebrations, and they frequently take home awards for their writing and scholarly presentations. English students have regularly published their work in the UNK *Graduate Review* and *Undergraduate Research Journal* as well as national publications.

Co-curricular Professionalization: The English Department additionally supports students in pursuing professionalizing experiences off campus. Students have acquired internships with university and independent presses, non-profit organizations, and newspapers and other periodicals; that many interning English students have also been successful in leveraging their internships into employment at these organizations testifies to the excellent preparation and mentorship provided by English faculty. English students have also learned the value of community service and outreach from faculty mentors, serving as tutors and paraprofessional teachers with Kearney Public Schools, Kearney Literacy Council, Kearney Community Learning Center, and similar organizations.

C. National Trends in Post-Secondary English Departments

⁸ Application deadline is in November: <https://www.english.org/schol-award-grant/awards/literary-arts.shtml>

Amid the nationwide decline in humanities major populations, the UNK English department has fared considerably better than the English departments at peer institutions and larger regional public universities. While the undergraduate student numbers declined a bit over the past decade, the department has remained relatively strong, thanks, in part, to the celerity of the faculty when they converted a traditional MA program into one delivered fully online. Section VI of the self-study report provides enrollment numbers for other institutions that should amply demonstrate how atypically mild the nationwide decline's impact was on the UNK department.

At peer institutions, the decade following 2014 witnessed overall undergraduate enrollment drop by approximately 25.5%; at UNK, undergraduate enrollment dropped by 20%. The number of English majors at peer institutions dropped during those years by 47% on average. Northern Michigan lost only 8.7% of its English students, but in the same period, the English department cut 29% of its faculty; Western Illinois cut 67% of English faculty. In comparison, UNK English lost two tenured or tenure-track faculty and one lecturer between 2019 and 2024, respective reductions of 14% and 20%; the undergraduate English major population shrank by 17%, a considerably smaller decline than at similar universities.

These numbers may seem grim, but they are not devastating. The headcount of English majors at UNK between 2019 and 2023 averaged 82.2; most peer institutions' major populations fell below 40 by 2023. Meanwhile, the self-study report indicates that the MA program has grown by 122.7% since 2014 with an average of 45.6 students enrolled yearly 2019-23. From 2019 through 2023, UNK granted an average 20 English BAs per year and an average 12 MAs. Given that a majority of MA students are in-service teachers taking classes part-time across three or four years, the MA graduation rate is quite good, and the BA rate compares very favorably against peer institutions. All English degree programs exceed the graduation rates expected by the state coordinating commission.

D. Concerns and Recommendations: Writing Instruction

Concerns: The concerns of the review team relate less to any failures or neglect by the English Department than to external developments that undermine the department's effectiveness in continuing its exceptional work in service of students and the department and university missions. Given national statistics about college graduates' lack of workplace preparation in important skills that are standard components in English courses and curricula, it is extremely unfortunate that UNK has chosen to eliminate the intensive writing requirement and cut the General Studies program by one-third. These changes contravene guidance from the Association of Writing Program Administrators and the Conference on College Composition and Communication, and leave a mere three credits of writing instruction among the university's graduation requirements; ENG 101 and 102 are both listed as options for meeting LOPER 2, but students are unlikely to take a non-required course merely to expand their skills. The general outcomes for LOPER 126, the first-year seminar, allow the discipline offering the seminar to determine whether writing is required; this course is also waived for transfer students with 18 GS credits.⁹ The reduction of GS credits in other areas limits students' understanding of the world outside their major studies rather than supporting the program's stated goal of building "broad knowledge." Similarly, the GS program's elimination from its philosophy of the expectations that students should "become aware of the relationships which exist among the disciplines"¹⁰ discourages students from recognizing the value of academic disciplines, career paths, and worldviews that do not align with their own, institutionally normalizing the isolation and echo-chamber effects that contribute to the factionalism and polarization we see in so many areas of current American culture. Meanwhile, it is not clear exactly why the university believes students should pursue additional major and minor programs using the credit hours reclaimed for them by the smaller GS program, nor what use students are indeed making of those credits.

Anecdotally, some UNK faculty are finding that undergraduates' writing skills are poor, substantiating employer surveys mentioned above: the review committee's interview with the college dean corroborated these remarks, attributing the skill deficit in part to large numbers of students' transferring dual credit versions of ENG 101 or two-year college courses. But despite recognizing poor writing skills among their students, few departments are

⁹ "LOPERS General Studies Program," 2023-24 UNK Undergraduate Catalog.

¹⁰ "General Studies Philosophy," 2018-19 UNK Undergraduate Catalog.

developing their own writing instruction courses or directing students to ENG 102 using the option to require additional GS credits in the major, as the new GS program allows. When the former Chair and other English faculty approached other departments in recent years with offers to develop field-specific sections of ENG 102 and additionally pitched the creation of a professional writing minor to supplement business and physical science fields, external departments expressed enthusiasm about the proposals, but ultimately took no action toward revising their curricula to incorporate ENG 102, and efforts toward a professional writing minor were fatally stalled by the pandemic, college restructuring, and other disruptive developments beyond the English Department's control.

Recommendations on Discipline-Specific and Professional Writing: We recommend that the English Department revive these efforts toward specialized sections of ENG 102 and a professional writing minor or certificate, but it is crucial that the college leadership, if not also other university administrators, actively encourage departments within the college to collaborate with English on such initiatives. While many programs are already undertaking the apparently arduous process of curriculum revisions in response to changes at the university, it may now be less inconvenient to add a requirement for their majors to complete a discipline-focused ENG 102. Plus, with college and university leaders explicitly acknowledging and promoting the importance of writing instruction for student success and career readiness, hesitant departments will be more proactive than if leaders' silence were to imply that such courses have little value. Administrators have repeatedly instructed humanities departments that interdisciplinarity will be a key factor in protecting themselves from further depredations, but they have neglected to announce expectations of interdisciplinary cooperation to non-Humanities departments.

Development of professional or technical writing minors or 12-15-credit certificates housed in English can also be successful with vocal support from college and upper administration. It is not uncommon for business, science, and health professions programs at other universities to require that students complete courses in business or technical writing, and that the resulting increase in competency may lead to those programs recommending a professional writing minor to their majors. Should that occur, the department may need to recruit additional faculty with appropriate expertise, but there are currently several English faculty with background and experience suited to designing writing courses aimed toward science, health, and business fields in addition to those already in the English catalog. Courses like these, with regular demand, could ameliorate the English Department's staffing rotation problems somewhat by restoring the balance of courses to be taught each semester; designing some courses in professional writing with experiential components will assist students in completing university requirements.

Gathering Data on Student Success: We additionally suggest that the university gather data about students' academic achievement since the launch of the new GS program, including tracking students who transfer ENG 101; most university can electronically flag students on academic probation or otherwise at risk to require their professors to make additional progress reports, so it should not be terribly difficult to do so in relation to foundational GS courses once university faculty are convinced to buy in. Do faculty consider that the smaller GS program prepares students to succeed in upper-level courses and to understand the world in which they will be living and working? Similarly, are dual-credit students being prepared well to pursue upper-division coursework? Do UNK students complete more majors and minors with an additional 15 credits restored by the truncated GS program, or are their choices less focused than that? Do transfer students indeed make more efficient transitions to UNK now, or have they found themselves completing courses at two-year colleges that are no longer transferable under the new GS program? According to reports cited above, many employers find recent college graduates' written communication and critical thinking skills substandard; can UNK survey employers of its own recent graduates to determine whether UNK students are part of that pattern with no requirement to take more than a single writing-focused course and fewer courses in which they consider perspectives and methods that may not be explicitly valued in their major disciplines? Information gain will be helpful across the university in helping departments understand how to respond to the needs of an undergraduate population suffering from COVID debt but not usually self-motivated enough to explore coursework that is not explicitly required (especially if the relevance of non-required courses is not made clear to them).

Dual-Credit Oversight: It was surprising to learn that the UNK English department has no oversight over dual-credit ENG 101 courses even though the high school courses appear among UNK ENG classes in the university's registration system and the department receives some compensation for them. We recommend that the Composition

Program Coordinator be given financial support to observe and assess dual-credit ENG 101 courses to ensure that they are indeed equivalent to UNK's courses in content and academic integrity. Some in-service teachers are pursuing the English MA do so in part to gain training to teach dual-credit courses, and they are learning up-to-date composition theory and pedagogy, as well as the rigor expected at the college level. However, it appears that at least some dual-credit teachers were grandfathered into the dual-credit program simply because they had already been teaching the courses. The English Department should also consider developing workshops and webinars designed to bring and keep dual-credit teachers current in composition pedagogy and refresh skills; these could take the form of an annual workshop in August for dual-credit teachers affiliated with UNK or perhaps shorter, more frequent workshops on new developments in writing instruction for secondary English teachers at large.

E. Concerns and Recommendations: Transitional Certification Program and Online Courses

Concerns: Interviews with English faculty revealed an area of concern related to the large population of TCP students seeking English certification, many of whom are already placed in 5-12 English classrooms and need support and preparation sooner rather than later. Appointing an English faculty member with appropriate qualifications into a new TCP English content advisor position has been a sound decision, but the population is too large for the advisor to be effective while teaching a standard load. Meanwhile, the mainstream English certification students' demand for courses in English pedagogy and children's literature does not allow the advisor to take that course release without either hindering the degree progress of other undergraduate and graduate English students or forcing a colleague to teach an overload.

Furthermore, nearly all TCP students are place-bound and must complete their coursework online. Many TCP students pursuing English certification did not earn their undergraduate degrees in the field and must now complete undergraduate literature, language, and writing courses necessary for licensure, in addition to the 24 graduate credits for the professional education sequence of the TCP. UNK's undergraduate courses for English teacher certification are not regularly offered in online format, but the TCP students often do not have sufficient content background or familiarity with field-specific practices and expectations to succeed in the online MA courses. Here, the simple solution of offering more undergraduate courses online may actually cause harm to the current undergraduate programs, which are better served by in-person courses. The undergraduates in the department have demonstrated a strong desire to take advantage of co-curricular opportunities and build community with their classmates in ways that would not be possible if students interacted only online. The department has found that it is not feasible to run two simultaneous sections of a course, one in-person and one online: the mainstream undergraduates do not enroll in the online section, and the TCP students' needs vary too widely to guarantee that a section just for them would be viable.

Recommendations: The ideal solution to the problem of overloaded English certification faculty is for the university to fund an additional line in middle level and secondary English teacher pedagogy along with children's literature to support the burgeoning English certification programs at the undergraduate, graduate, and TCP levels. This new faculty member could develop a secondary methods course that students will take in their second or third year to serve as a pre-requisite to the 400-level course that is currently required. This could serve all humanities secondary education endorsements and benefit multiple departments. With secondary expertise in a combination of fields that include rhetoric, composition, American literature, or World literature, this new addition would support several existing emphasis areas and equip the department to explore innovative responses to other challenges they face. Moreover, an additional faculty member's contributions could help the English faculty to maintain their established level of activity in teaching courses for LOPER 126, the Thompson Scholars Learning Community (TSLC), the Honors Program, and interdisciplinary programs: the self-study expresses concern that projected loss of English faculty lines will preclude remaining faculty from teaching beyond the most immediate department needs, and strains on the faculty will continue to increase (and opportunities for students will decrease) if funding tied to participation in TSLC is no longer available.

Regarding the conflicting undergraduate needs of BA and TCP students, the English Department will need to consider strategic compromises to ensure that all programs can thrive, which may, indeed, mean delivering regular online sections of some courses *without* eliminating more frequent offerings of face-to-face sections. The Dean of

Arts and Sciences and the Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation (GSAI) have both promised that development funding and a robust training and mentoring program can support UNK faculty in developing engaging and pedagogically sound online courses for synchronous delivery. While online undergraduate classes should certainly not become the norm, it may be possible to meet undergraduate and TCP students halfway with hybrid or “low-residency” courses: an office guiding academic innovation and online course development surely has practical insights into avoiding the awkward split that can develop in a class section when a portion of the students attend via video conference while the others meet in person. A low-residency course design might be structured so that the distance learners in the group attend mainly online but are required to appear and participate in person at specified times during the semester. Ideally GSAI also has proven strategies to prevent the teacher of such a class from doubling their own preparation time to accommodate groups meeting via two modes in the same time block. Offering occasional online sections of undergraduate courses rather than face-to-face sections will require advising TCP students well in advance about planned availability of online sections ensuring they do not miss the opportunity; it may also require the department to plan teaching schedules further into the future than is usual, which itself may necessitate cooperation from other university offices.

4. Evaluation of Department and Program Resources

A. Department Structures and Policies

Department Administrators and Coordinators: English Department administrative roles are carried out primarily by the Chair of the Department, Assistant Chair, Graduate Program Coordinator, and Composition Coordinator. These faculty, along with the TCP English content advisor, receive reassigned time to allow them to accomplish their duties. Non-administrative faculty may request course releases for research, professional development, and student support.

The Chair of the Department is responsible for the majority of department administration, with advisement from an advisory committee comprising the Assistant Chair and the heads of the three department standing committees. The Assistant Chair position was created in 2024 as a result of the increased burdens placed on the Chair by top-down changes to department staffing, including the removal of many departmental office staff having led to a redistribution of those former employees’ duties among fewer among fewer staff members; a significant portion of that redistributed work has fallen upon department chairs with inadequate time to train in using organizational systems previously used almost exclusively by office staff.

The department standing committees were recently reorganized and repurposed in response to changing needs and reductions in faculty lines. The revised names of the committees reflect the department’s mission priorities and goals for the future: the Curriculum and Writing committee maintains the traditional emphasis on the skills at the core of English studies, while also pointing to the goal of agile curricular innovation over the coming years; the Graduate and Assessment committee recognizing the key role of the thriving online graduate program in the department now and in the future, while concretizing the former “student success” nomenclature in acknowledgment of the universities focus on data-driven decision-making; Recruitment and PR responds to increasing expectations that departments take the initiative to attract students and to publicize program opportunities and successes without support from nonacademic university offices. Two of these committees also correspond to the administrative positions of Composition Coordinator and Graduate Director, further underscoring the consequence of those programs within the department and its plans and those coordinators’ need for support and counsel from other faculty teaching composition and graduate courses.

In response to the growth in online programs, the English department has additionally found it necessary to create positions to interface with students: the new TCP advisor is already busy working for those students’ success and timely completion through transcript evaluation, advising, and other support necessary for students in the untraditional program. English and Modern Languages now also share an online program coordinator who assists with admission inquiries, recruitment outreach, applications, general advising, and keeping students abreast of paperwork and deadlines. This very organized individual can assist both the Graduate coordinator and the TCP

advisor and help to communicate with and advocate for the needs of online students. As the English MA and TCP programs continue to flourish, an online coordinator devoted wholly to English programs may become a viable possibility.

Department Support Staff: The abrupt and short-sighted dismissal of college support staff – while the college office retained its full complement of support staff to assist the dean -- has, as noted above, precipitated a stressful scramble to facilitate departmental operations and has led to the neglect of seemingly minor routines and duties that previously were completed by the office staff. Evidence of such neglect appeared during the program review meetings when a mail carrier delivered the building's mail by simply setting it on the floor in the middle of the hallway near a vending machine. It remained there for some hours, as the busy review committee could neither complete the mail delivery nor knew whom to notify, as the few still-employed support staff in the college had all been reassigned and relocated to focus on narrower sets of tasks than a departmental office manager would perform; someone's broader job description had presumably included collecting the mail so that potentially sensitive envelopes and packages were not left unsecured. The dean does not seem to have fully considered the impact of the decision beyond anticipating that specialization of these remaining staff members could complete certain specific tasks more quickly. Choosing not to reassign his own office staff, however, gives the impression that he did realize department workloads would increase; it could be inferred that he protected himself against needing to take on another person's entire job himself, but did not see a problem with department chairs doubling their workloads.

The mail's abandonment in the hall presages a similar experience for students in the college's programs: department office staff are essential for student support as a first point of contact on entering a department's space, but without them students will be abandoned in the hall while department faculty are busy teaching in classrooms or via videoconference behind closed office doors. Even if a student's need is minor, the sense of being left with no resources and no clue what to do next should not be part of the student experience. The busy periods of class registration often see students visiting department offices with questions about course permissions or registration error messages; office managers usually can resolve these concerns in seconds, while faculty who chanced to notice the student would likely have to look up the procedures and quite possibly not have access to systems or passcodes necessary to help the student. Similarly, at the beginning of a semester, students stream in and out of department offices needing to ask questions related to time-sensitive schedule adjustments or to locate a professor. Students are often in a crunch time during the first week of the term, needing to file forms or make decisions on a deadline; without accessible support staff in classroom buildings, students have lost a resource and could waste time and tuition money by, for example, missing the deadline to drop a course while it costs nothing to do so. As a way to trim the college budget, the elimination of support staff positions in fact saves little money: office staff are usually the lowest paid employees in the college, but good ones who are treated as valuable members of the organization are necessary to keep departments functioning smoothly, keep students in class and in the college, and keep making a difference in people's everyday experiences at UNK.

B. Faculty Qualifications

All tenured and tenure-track English faculty have earned the degree of Ph.D. in the fields of English, Creative Writing, and Composition and Rhetoric from well-regarded research institutions such as George Washington University, Indiana University – Bloomington, Wayne State University, Syracuse University, and the Claremont Graduate School. Among them, three faculty members are untenured Assistant Professor, three have been promoted to Associate Professor, and six have achieved the rank of Full Professor. Two faculty members hold endowed chairs: the Reynolds Chair of Poetry and the Martin Distinguished Professorship.

The disciplinary specializations of English Department faculty spread across the areas of literature, creative writing, linguistics, rhetoric and composition, and secondary English pedagogy; the twelve tenured and tenure-track faculty all teach content from at least one other time period, geographic area, genre, or English discipline not their own research specialties, allowing them to offer a wide variety of ENG-designated courses at the graduate and undergraduate levels and ensure that required courses for the four undergraduate majors, six minors, and the four focus areas of the MA degree maintain a regulation rotation to ensure students' timely completion. All faculty and

full-time lecturers teach ENG 101 and 102 regularly, along with ENG 126, while advanced composition courses fall mainly to the specialist. Literature faculty teach literary works from around the globe, written across the centuries from Ancient Greece to the 21st century; creative writers teach across the genres of poetry, fiction, and creative nonfiction. Most English departments of this size include only one professor qualified to teach children's literature and pedagogy courses for pre-service teachers, but the UNK department's additional expert has enabled the creation of innovative curricula in childhood studies as well as simply accommodate the demands of pre-service teachers learning to teach a range of age groups.

Further evidence of faculty qualifications, as demonstrated via achievements, is discussed at length in section 5.

C. Quality of Students

Undergraduate: Students in the English programs arrive in (or telecommute to) Kearney from across the state and throughout the region. A substantial proportion of the undergraduate students pursue certification to teach English in middle and secondary schools, often having been inspired by high school teachers or their ENG 101 and 102 instructors at UNK. Other undergraduates decide early to pursue a teaching career in higher education and work through the BA program with a goal of developing a sound base for graduate programs in English and other fields leading to careers as writers, editors, publishers, lawyers, and librarians. Regardless of career goals, they appreciate the English Department's broad range of available courses in literature, creative writing, linguistics, and rhetoric and composition. Students appreciate being able to develop fluency in modes and styles of writing aimed toward different audiences and purposes, and to make connections between course content to recognize developments in literary history, understand the social and cultural impact of a text, or transfer literary and rhetorical study into their creative writing. They enter with varying qualities of high school preparation but are generally open to the challenges and opportunities available through the English Department.

Graduate: The MA students pursue a graduate degree for a variety of reasons. Many are in-service teachers seeking advanced study (often part-time) in order to teach dual credit courses, make a lane change or earn a higher salary, but they genuinely want to enhance their knowledge base and abilities. Like the undergraduates, they enjoy the breadth of UNK's English MA program and the ability to specialize in a content area, along with the depth of inquiry they gain in classes led by the department's teacher-scholars. They appreciate being able to practice writing skills with faculty who can model ways to teach literature and expository and creative writing in their own classrooms. Some of the current graduate students earned their undergraduate degrees through UNK English and have confidence that the MA program will amplify their undergraduate coursework, and that they will succeed in the program guided by faculty they trust. MA students who are not alumni usually learn about the program through word of mouth and publicity at professional conventions such as at the National Association of Teachers of English; some of these students have said they choose UNK English because the program is known among Nebraska secondary teachers for its supportive faculty, while others want to work with a specific faculty member whose research interests them.

Transitional Certification Program: Part of an initiative created in partnership with the Nebraska Department of Education to address the state's dire teacher shortage, the UNK Teacher Education Department created the Transitional Certification Program over 20 years ago. This program now has nearly 300 students across all NDE-approved endorsement areas, most of whom are teaching full-time in K-12 schools as the teacher of record while they are completing the NDE requirements for their initial certificate in a specific endorsement area. Just like the other endorsement areas, English TCP students are distance students with widely dissimilar backgrounds in terms of professional and life experience and their preparedness to succeed in an English teacher certification program. Some are English BAs with no teacher training, or they may have completed a creative writing program with few literature requirements; both of these groups need to take 24 graduate TE credits, but they may also need to fill in some missing undergraduate English courses. Some TCP students may have undergraduate degrees in other humanities fields, or in business or social sciences. Similarly, their proximity to and availability for a live English class varies, with some working as paraprofessionals or as full-time Middle Level English Language Arts 5-9, Secondary English 7-12, or English Language Arts 7-12 teachers at a K-12 school as the teacher of record.

D. Library Resources, Equipment, and Facilities

Library Resources: The UNK Library provides reliable resources to support English Department faculty and students. The Library holds over 60,000 physical volumes catalogued as literature and as literary, linguistic, and rhetorical studies with additional print resources in arts and humanities pedagogy. More than 20,000 relevant digital titles supplement the physical collection. About 25% of the library's research databases are useful to English Studies, including the vital Modern Language Association International Bibliography. These resources, along with a number of other subscriptions, appear to be adequate to the department's needs, and it seems unlikely that budget constraints would allow the Library to provide expensive new resources without eliminating any existing ones. Most academic journals make .pdf files available in some way, so the lack of many print periodicals on site does not create notable difficulties for faculty and local students; if the UNK Library or a subscription database does not contain a digital version of a needed text, Interlibrary Loan services perform bibliographic miracles daily. UNK is also fortunate in its relative proximity to the research collections at University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL), which enables physical books to reach on-campus users very quickly.

Librarians themselves support faculty and students in terms of both research instruction and collection development. The UNK English department's assigned subject-area librarian, who holds a BA and MA in English, also brings her experience as a student and researcher in the field to her work with the UNK department. Her prior career as a college English professor also gives her insight into the faculty perspective on student research projects, and she may be able to aid English faculty in designing exploratory exercises to increase students' facility with and discernment among the available resources.

Interlibrary Loan and Electronic Publications: Calvin T. Ryan's Interlibrary Loan (ILL) service augments students and faculty with delivery of materials beyond the scope of the library's digital databases. The biennial University budget allotted to CTR Library is portioned by the library to \$25 via the Interlibrary Loan Fee Management System limit for each ILL borrowing request. Recent budget cuts have left the library to pursue less costly ILL electronic management systems to integrate a variety of third-party systems. For physical items and article citations beyond CTR library's holdings, researchers must rely on the library's electronic management systems to initiate and deliver them. This allows the biennial library budget to continue to pursue the borrowing cost per item of ILL at a consistent level as in the previous years. Searching for appropriate secondary sources to complete a comprehensive review of scholarship often requires reading significantly more items than the researcher will ultimately cite directly; plus, non-specialist data entry technicians employed by research databases and catalogs frequently use very unspecific (and sometimes inaccurate) terms to index publications and do not always provide abstracts, so reviewing secondary sources often involves acquiring a source without knowing that it will be useful. We can only hope that the university will provide funding to support more efficient electronic management systems for ILL that can be utilized free of charge for faculty, staff, and students.

Distance learners in online humanities programs are at a disadvantage in degree programs that require research because university libraries and the Interlibrary Loan system cannot accommodate both that student population and the increasing digitization of the publishing industry. The quick and inevitable digitization of periodical publications should be an asset to distant students, assuming that acquisition of the item is not obstructed in some other way (as by hidden fees). But those researching in fields that values single-author monographs as much as, or more than, they value article-length publications will run into obstacles: distance learners are unlikely to have access to a university library to which they might request a book be delivered, so they cannot attain a physical copy of, perhaps, the seminal book in their research area even if it is part of the UNK collections. But neither can a digital copy owned by another library be borrowed through Interlibrary Loan. (This problem lies at the feet of e-book publishers, but it restricts the success of researchers in humanities fields who are based at smaller institutions or are students in an online graduate program.) The English department's self-assessment indicates that ILL staff provide laborious special support for fully online students by creating scans of requested print materials in the collection. Unfortunately, the library webpage entitled "Library Services for Distance Students" appears to provide no more than a link to a tutorial on informational literacy and instructions for logging into TrueYou. It seems unlikely that the explanation of a service would be sensitive data that must be hidden from anyone without a UNK account, so this page should be revised unless the library has eliminated support for distance students. Meanwhile,

if the library staff are indeed making scans of local print materials, distance students still lack materials not owned by UNK, and the University of Nebraska system does not share between campuses.

Thomas Hall: Each classroom in Thomas Hall is equipped with video-conferencing technology, projectors, and other equipment that has become standard for a 21st-century college classroom – with the exception of whiteboards not having replaced chalkboards. But despite modernizations in most equipment, the building no longer provides classroom space adequate to the needs of the departments housed therein. The relocation of the college office into Thomas Hall eliminated classroom space and has obligated some of those programs' classes to meet elsewhere on campus. While such displacements could make the building feel a bit less like home turf to students, the English department has taken advantage of the reorganization of building space in order to create community spaces. English converted a small conference room into an additional space for English faculty and students to study, socialize, and hold small-group meetings. Unallocated department funds were able to cover refurbishments and updated furniture in the new lounge, and students are beginning to use the space in addition to the soft seating areas elsewhere in the building. The department also uses some small, extraneous funds to keep snacks in stock, as many college students in Nebraska experience food insecurity.

Nonetheless, updated furniture cannot repair Thomas Hall's inadequate HVAC, leaky roof, and slow deterioration. The building's restrooms are not insulated and become dangerously hot and cold in the extremes of seasonal temperatures on the high plains. The restrooms used by the visiting reviewer featured some broken floor and wall tiles emphasized by years of grime accumulating in the cracks; stall doors with empty space where locks once resided and hinges too tired to help hold the door closed; a leaky faucet and cracked sinks; and a generous adornment of rust stains on various surfaces. The second-floor ceilings have been repeatedly damaged by leaks, resulting in an accumulation of large, brown water stains on ceilings and walls, and broken acoustic tiles badly deteriorated by absorbing water. The first-floor conference room has similar decorations in one corner of the ceiling where a pipe burst, or a great deal of water made its way down from the leaky roof. Some structural elements of the building are attractive and inviting, but the general atmosphere is marked by age and grime. Whether painted beige by choice or made dingy by years, the walls make the building seem dirty and neglected. The building does not make a good impression on fresh eyes, and the state of the space could be interpreted as a visual cue of the university's level of regard and respect for the programs housed there. Regardless of truth, students and visitors will draw this conclusion and it will influence their attitudes toward the value of these programs and the people who teach and learn in them.

E. Department Funding

Budget Allocations: Financially, the English Department is certainly under strain as far as the university-allocated department budget for faculty salaries and operating funds goes. Budget cuts have compelled the elimination of all adjunct positions and the nonrenewal of at least one full-time lecturer; the most junior among the lecturers is an effective and well-liked teacher of composition who just won a campus-wide teaching award, but the seniority structure all but guarantees he will be a casualty of budget constraints. Facing the loss of such a talented teacher has demoralized the faculty and those students who are aware of the situation. This cutback, along with the loss of other faculty lines in recent years, is additionally stretching the remainder of the faculty thin at a time when program growth both demands more course sections and additional labor expectations reduce the time faculty can give to teaching, research, and student support. Such developments may lead to the loss of both reputation and revenue for the department.

Foundation Funding: The operating budget allocated by the university is supplemented by other funding from a variety of sources; however, the purposes for which these funds can be used are limited, so the department cannot use them for initiatives and innovations that university and college administrators have advised them to pursue. Through the University Foundation, donors have provided and sponsored an array of generous scholarships for BA and MA students and endowments that finance the Reynolds Chair of Creative Writing and the Martin Distinguished Professorate. The Friends of English account and other donations are to be used at the department's discretion but are not sufficient to restore eliminated faculty lines.

Compensation for Service: Among the use-restricted support drawn from the department's pedagogical work and mentorship are funds gained by providing courses for the Thompson Scholars Program and for offering dual credit English courses in area high schools. Thompson funding is intended to support effective pedagogy in these courses, but the remainder of the Thompson and dual enrollment revenue may be used for the department and has, for example, aided in refurbishing the lounge space. Online Program Funds in support of the MA program have often paid for graduate courses to be taught in summer and for graduate recruitment materials. Undergraduate Research Fellowships support faculty and student research and professional development.

Dormant Resources: Among immediate department goals are the more effective use of additional Foundation funds earmarked to support faculty grants for scholarship and professional development in designated areas in the field, but which have been infrequently used in the past. Faculty aim to develop award criteria to begin using the funds more effectively, possibly through annual faculty awards, but the department may wish to consider whether the stipulations attached to the accounts permit uses that would also strengthen the department and its programs.

The existence of Foundation accounts reserved for English and large enough to accrue a level of interest that can, for example, maintain endowed faculty chairs for the foreseeable future points to the strength and longevity of the English Department's positive impact on the state and region. This kind of support from community members and alumni does not simply fall into the laps of English departments at regional public universities in the Midwest. The availability of such funds, although insufficient to restore recently lost faculty positions, can be deployed effectively to recruit students, provide book grants, and otherwise alleviate student financial burdens, invest in community outreach, and perhaps support faculty professional development to prepare for curricular innovation.

F. Recommendations

UNK's English Department has a strong record of success and makes positive impacts in the many ways itemized above. The department uses its material and human resources well to support students, faculty, programs, outreach, and sound responses to changing circumstances. English once again is hindered only by conditions not of their own making.

Recovering from the Loss of Support Staff: At the college-level, the most ethical response to having fired the lowest-paid people working in the college is to rehire them all or replace those who choose to cut ties with the college; since money is involved, it is unlikely that demonstrated need for assistance in departments and for income in the former employees' accounts will outweigh the merest appearance of cost-cutting. The reassignment of office staff to work on specified tasks within closed offices somewhere remains to be proven efficient or cost-effective, and the impacts on faculty and student will continue to develop. The English department has already taken steps designed to lighten the burden of operational tasks within the department, and the Chair and Assistant Chair may each grow accustomed to the daily workload of 1.5 people within a year or two. Nonetheless, the problems described in section 4-A above cannot entirely be solved by acclimation.

The effects on student support caused by the elimination of office staff positions could potentially be addressed by employing a student to serve as a contact person and address a portion of daily operational tasks that involve no sensitive or confidential material. Perhaps the department could direct some discretionary funds toward a work-study student's hourly wage if there are no policies against it. Reassigning part of a graduate assistant's contract may also be an option; it is somewhat exploitative to deny a GA the opportunity for teaching experience promised by the position, but the desk job could be developed into a relevant professionalizing experience by assigning the GA to write copy for publicity material or other tasks relevant to their focus in the program.

Thomas Hall: The condition of Thomas Hall will be quite expensive to repair on a large scale, but the university must be responsible for providing functional spaces conducive to teaching, learning, and community building; the maintenance of university infrastructure seems to lie far beyond reasonable expectations for any academic department. However, if the English department's having additional sources of funding is not unusual for college departments, perhaps the college and the other departments in Thomas Hall can pool resources toward cosmetic

refurbishments such as repainting, if the university takes responsibility for repairing the roof, HVAC issues, and other deterioration.

Library Support for Distance Students: To provide better support for online students in the English MA and TCP, the department's TCP advisor and Graduate Coordinator should consider working with Teacher Education, Online Programs, and the Library to investigate ways for distance students to have access to books necessary to their coursework and research. While the electronic publishing industry may be out of reach, it seems worth learning what solutions other universities with online programs may have found. The Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation ought also to be a resource in this dilemma: if that office provides training and mentorship for online course and program development, they surely must have considered the logistics of distance students need to conducting research projects in pursuit of a university degree. The Library at the main campus in the UN system would appear to be another logical partner in furnishing research materials to distance learning students. Perhaps the Nebraska Department of Education could have some influence in gaining cooperation to support the TCP programs. GSAI and the UNL Library may even have a resolution for the threat that additional fees will be forced on distance students should the grant-seeking UNK librarian be unable to attain funding and or one day retire.

Additional Uses of Funding. As noted in section 4-E, budget cutbacks may lead to additional loss of department revenue from other sources, as increasing demands prevent department faculty from teaching in external programs that return financial compensation, or from participating in mentoring and outreach activities that build the department's reputation and publicize its programs, thus drawing students and their tuition fees. The English department has become accustomed, for example, to using residual compensation from Thompson courses to benefit students and programs in the department, and will find it difficult to continue such activities if the funding sources are lost; some undesignated Foundation funds may be suitable to make up the loss; but ideally the university values such programs highly enough to protect programs that consistently deliver those program's courses. It appears that relatively few departments are involved with Thompson or Honors in any given semester, so the university should ensure that the smaller departments supporting those programs have the ability to do so without neglecting necessary teaching and other work for their own departments.

English faculty should investigate ways the unallocated funds available to the department might be used to support curricular developments aimed toward drawing students into department courses without the General Studies requirements. The dormant funds may also be used for additional forms of student support and community outreach. Some suggestions on these lines:

- Underwrite professional development and certifications that may be necessary to develop field-specific ENG 102 sections (ideally, departments requesting such courses will subsidize the training as well); courses to train students for careers in editing and publishing; upper-level professional writing courses (health and medicine; agribusiness; grant-writing)
- Host visiting professionals in fields such as traditional and digital publishing; copywriting of various kinds; grant writing
- Fund craft talks and workshops by visiting creative writers (if Reynolds program does not already do so)
- Compensate rhetoric and composition faculty for observation and assessment of dual-credit ENG 101 courses; fund annual workshops for dual credit teachers to keep current with developments in composition pedagogy
- Offer other workshops and webinars to supplement secondary English teachers' training, especially in areas that may have been uncommon or nonexistent ten years ago: exercises about Artificial Intelligence (AI) and writing; teaching creative and professional writing; authoring book justifications; international or American multiethnic writers; etc. Consider a small registration fee for unaffiliated participants.
- Provide book or technology grants for students.
- Subsidize student attendance (participation or observation) at national or regional conferences such as the National Council of Teachers of English; Association of Writers and Writing programs; Nebraska English Language Arts Council; national and regional conventions for Sigma Tau Delta; etc.
- Hire a student assistant for the department.

5. Evaluation of Department and Program Effectiveness

A. Student Achievement

The English department annually assesses student achievement in 400- and 800-level courses that align with undergraduate and graduate program learning outcomes. Reports from 2021-22 and 2022-23 show that students at each course level consistently achieved those outcomes at or above the benchmark score. In the graduate assessment from 2021-22, the total mean score across core courses in fact rose .7 points above the benchmark of 3.0/4.0; the total mean score for English MA students in Childhood and Youth Studies focus area course rose .725 points above the benchmark. In 2022-23, the total mean score across graduate core courses rose .575 above the benchmark. The total mean score across the undergraduate courses assessed in 2022-23 rose .905 points about the benchmark of 2.5/4.0. These data for English coursework corroborate the non-numeric indicators of high student achievement listed above.

The many and varied achievements and projects of the English faculty inspire their students both through their excellent teaching, but also by embodying the inherent interdisciplinary of this discipline. While many English department graduates do pursue careers in teaching, it seems UNK's students are not railroaded into that path by simply not realizing that an English degree can prepare students for a career with a different name than the major – it would be ideal if more students and parents realized this. With front-row seats to English faculty engagement, collaboration, and cross-curricular partnerships, students learn to reach out to future colleagues and neighbors knowing what their studies in English have prepared them to contribute to their professions and their communities. UNK English students are high achievers and continue to excel after they complete their programs. A short list of recent student accomplishments follows:

- As mentioned above (3-B), English undergraduates and graduates have consistently participated in Research Day and often collect awards for research in areas ranging from literary analysis to linguistic and rhetorical study. In recent years, English students have taken prizes for oral and poster presentations and have been awarded the Wagner Family Writing Scholarship.
- Graduate students in English have been recognized for research achievements by the Office of Graduate Studies. In 2024, an English MA student won the college-wide Graduate Award for Oral Presentation. In 2023 English students won the university-wide Graduate Award for Writing and Outstanding Thesis Award. The 2022 Outstanding Thesis honoree completed graduate work in the English MA program, as well.
- BAEd graduates are successful in pursuing careers in education, with over 120 currently employed as teachers and administrators in Nebraska schools.
- Megan Helberg, a completer of UNK English TCP, was selected as the 2020 Nebraska Teacher of the Year by the Nebraska Department of Education.
- Graduates of the BA and BAEd programs have been accepted to competitive Master of Fine Arts programs for creative writing, such as UN Lincoln and Bowling Green State University; others have entered MA and PhD programs in English, Library and Information Science, History, and Theology at research universities throughout the US.
- UNK English graduates who pursue graduate education have developed careers as attorneys, university faculty and administrators, editors at academic presses, periodical blogs, and newspapers, and board members for humanities and educational organizations.
- Graduates and undergraduates have presented their work at academic conferences and public events. Graduate students have successfully published their theses and shorter works in peer-reviewed publications, as have students who held an Undergraduate Research Fellowship and excelled in the department's writing professionalization courses. Cassandra Montag is a nationally recognized author of fiction and poetry, and emerging poet Tyler Michael Jacobs was recently nominated for a Pushcart Prize.

B. Effective Teaching

Students' remarkable achievements, described above, evince the highly effective teaching and professional development provided by faculty in the English Department. Recent assessment reports indicate that students consistently exceed benchmarks set for program learning outcomes (5-A), and graduation rates similarly exceed the expectations of the state coordinating commission (1-D). Students have a good rate of job placement in Nebraska schools, but the department should seek cooperation from the Alumni Association and Career Development Center in order to gain more information about graduates.

English faculty have additionally received multiple university-wide awards for teaching and mentoring, including fourteen Pratt-Heins Awards and five Distinguished Faculty Awards. Each faculty member in the department teaches a wide variety of course numbers and topics, and all tenured and tenure-track faculty teach at both undergraduate and graduate levels, so all students taking department courses benefit from their inspiring instruction.

By nature of teaching courses focused on language, literary analysis, and writing studies, English faculty devote considerable time to preparing and facilitating classes in which students practice critical thinking; oral and written communication appropriate to audience and purpose; evaluating and selecting appropriate evidence; constructing and explaining evidence-based arguments; recognizing and extrapolating patterns; critiquing concepts and texts; and other higher-order learning skills. Because students produce primarily written work in English classes (whether identified as a writing class), and because literary and writing studies are concerned with language and rhetoric, faculty give substantial attention to wording and style, encouraging students to use language and syntax to achieve deliberate effects in their writing. All of this demands a great deal of faculty time that often goes unacknowledged, but which should be commended.

C. Effective Use of Information Technology

Although English programs could be quite successful with very little technology beyond that of the codex (in use for more than 1700 years), the UNK English Department makes very effective use of 21st-century educational technologies in its curricula, and faculty have received funding and awards for their efforts: In 2023 Assistant Professor Amanda Sladek won the Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation's Award for Outstanding Innovation in Online Teaching.

The most obvious examples of technology use for English programs are the fully online MA and TCP programs. As noted elsewhere, UNK English began shifting to online delivery of graduate courses beginning in 2014, when few other accredited universities were taking such steps. Ranked highly among online MA programs in English (currently #3 at [OnlineMastersDegrees.org](https://www.onlinemastersdegrees.org) and #4 at [BestColleges.com](https://www.bestcolleges.com)), UNK's program retention rate is higher than those of the topmost programs on those lists, as well as higher than most others in the top fifteen. The early adoption of online teaching by English faculty positioned them well for the nationwide shift to online classes during the COVID pandemic and contributed to undergraduate student success in that period, although most BA students now prefer face-to-face courses. As mentioned above, the TCP students' need for online coursework means that some undergraduate courses may need to be delivered online occasionally, nonetheless.

Further, the English department has incorporated technology into course content, as in ENG 427: Electronic Literacy, which considers the use of digital texts and technologies in educational contexts, and ENG 887: Theory and Practice of Digital Rhetoric, which additionally considers digital media theory, digital literacy, and multimedia communication. Information technology forms a content area in ENG 429: Theory and Pedagogy of Writing, and in the sections of ENG 102 with the topic of "Science and Technical Writing." Technology-related topics and practices will guide other ENG 102 topics if the English department gains the buy-in of science departments to create writing and research courses for those majors.

Research expectations in MA and upper-level BA courses additionally include instruction in digital research methods and digital information literacy. The many successes enjoyed by English BA, MA, and TCP students in presenting, publishing, and gaining fellowships and awards for their research projects provide further illustration of the department's success in incorporating technology into curricular and co-curricular programs.

D. Curriculum Quality and Structure

The English department's own curricula and contributions to the curricula of interdisciplinary programs reflect faculty expertise in a wide range of subjects, the inherent interdisciplinary of English as a 21st-century field, the department's commitments to providing students with options for completing university, program, and personal goals. The English faculty should be commended for their creation of courses and curricula that create project-based and experiential learning, which existed in courses and co-curricular activities before the university added the related graduation requirement. This report has already discussed certain elements of the English Department's curriculum in several sections (1-A, 1-B, 1-C, 1-D, and 5-C).

BA English (36 cr.) and BA English with Writing Emphasis (36 cr.): The core of the base BA consists of a 15-hour core comprising one 200-level foundational course; two upper-level literature courses from a list of twelve; one course in creative writing or composition; and one upper-level language course. Students then select 21 elective credits in literature from a very long list of options. The 36-credit BA with Writing Emphasis adds 12 more writing credits to the base BA core for a total of 27 credits – plus an additional 9 credits of literature from the longer list. The appearance in both versions of literature, language, and writing in the core shows an appropriate attention to the traditional facets of English studies.

Secondary English Endorsement and ELA Field Endorsement: Students pursuing an English teaching certification may choose between two BAEd programs: the 64-credit Secondary English 7-12 Subject Endorsement or the 79-credit English Language Arts 7-12 Field Endorsement, which prepares graduates to teach courses in a related field. Both programs require ENG 102 in addition to the standard GS requirements, plus 25 credits in TE that include a full semester of student-teaching. The English Subject Endorsement requires an 18-credit content core of language, literature, and writing courses; 15 restricted elective credits with one course in each of American, British, and world literature, creative writing, and advanced composition; plus, one more course from ENG 300-499. The 79-credit ELA Field Endorsement requires a nearly identical core and set of English restricted electives, with 6 unrestricted upper-level English credits. This certification additionally requires 12 credits from adjacent fields: one course each from media tech, speech performance, and theatre, plus a fourth course from media tech, theatre, or speech theory/application. These majors make a commendable distinction between creative writing and composition, requiring students to learn about and practice each; this is a valuable choice, as many English licensure programs do not allow room for upper-level writing course except inasmuch as writing is an expectation of advanced literature courses.

English offers three minors of 21 English credits each in English (Literature) English for Elementary Education, and Creative Writing, plus three interdisciplinary 21-credit minors in Childhood and Youth Studies, Film Studies, and Popular Culture. These minor programs are innovative and certainly of interest and value to students; however, those students may not be enrolled at UNK. The population of several minors has consistently been quite low, and the self-study considers cutting the English for Elementary Education minor as the least populous. This minor, oddly, is not mentioned on the English department's webpage, and is listed under English in the academic catalog but under Elementary Education in the alphabetical list of majors online; this last inconsistency, however, ought to have helped Elementary Education majors to find the minor.

English MA: The 36-credit MA program centers on a 9-credit core with one course each in British and American literature and theory course, plus a composition pedagogy course required for teaching assistants. Students then may select 12 credits from a focus area (Literature, Creative Writing, Childhood Studies, or Rhet/Comp and Language), 6-15 credits from any graduate English courses, and 0-6 thesis or capstone credits. Students choose the shape of their program from three plans and may complete 30 credits of coursework and a 6-credit thesis written across two semesters; take 33 credits of coursework followed by a one-semester thesis; or devote all 36 credits to coursework and then pass a comprehensive examination (the 0-credit thesis option), although neither the overview in the academic catalog nor the program narrative in the department webpages indicates whether the examination is written, oral, or a combination of the two.

The TCP program, as explained elsewhere, requires different English courses depending on an individual student's prior undergraduate coursework and degree.

Concerns and Recommendations – BA: The department plans to combine these two degrees into one BA with a 12-credit core and two focus areas, for a stronger showing of major and graduation numbers. This project seems a good opportunity for some simplification of the choices among core courses in the subfields represented in the core. The degree of freedom in a lengthy elective list is appealing, but the lengths of the *core* literature and writing course lists in each current BA are somewhat overwhelming (even the shorter writing list in the standard BA). The set-up of the basic English minor reads very simply and might be used as a model for presenting a merged BA, but the department presumably had a reason for using long and shorter lists for the two BAs' literature core and elective lists. Nonetheless, if the course options on either core list do not rotate with relatively equal frequency, the department should consider trimming to those only courses most reliably available. Many BA programs confine the list of core courses to "survey" courses and beginning-level workshops, while seminar-style and advanced workshop courses are electives. Tiered course lists separating advanced course list (as in the writing portion of the CW minor) may be another useful model for a shorter core list. A third option might imitate the structure of the BAEd cores, requiring an advanced course in composition distinct from creative writing. It may also be desirable to require a capstone course in the combined BA: a choice between ENG 435 and 436, perhaps also with the option to use an internship (documented regular reporting), as a capstone option.

Concerns and Recommendations – BAEd: The catalog listings for both BAEd degrees organizes the subject-specific course requirements into one or more subdivided lists of categorized content-area courses, rather than foregrounding requirements for specific ENG courses as a separate core with restricted electives listed elsewhere; but this presentation inexplicably delays presenting the categories in which students must complete all or nearly all courses (Pedagogy and Language), and the ENG 234 and 426 requirements risk being overlooked as single-item categories in the middle of the long English course list. Both degrees' four-year plans identify courses more specifically than the BA plans do, but they include misleading and incorrect information. The English Subject Endorsement plan, for example, neglects to identify ENG 426 as a requirement. The ELA Field Endorsement plan lists specific some course numbers in semester three, but the 200-level courses ENG courses and some of the JMC courses there are not included in the catalog requirements; the ELA plan also makes no reference to SPCH and Theatre courses in the catalog's list of restricted electives.

Teacher Education faculty have observed that secondary certification students are more successful with the lesson plan templates required by the state Department of Education when their content area coursework introduces the template early, in a lower-division course. With English's pedagogy courses at the 400-level, the BAEd students do not encounter the state template until the semester before beginning student teaching, allowing little time to develop facility with the expectations, and most other arts and humanities certification programs are structured similarly. The English BAEd programs should consider how the required template for lesson planning may be introduced earlier in the course sequence to allow the students more practice before needing to use it during student teaching. One suggested solution involves designing a cross-listed lower-level course in humanities teaching methodology that can assist other departments whose certification students also need to encounter the template earlier.

Recommendations -- Minors: Depending on the university's attitude toward low-enrolling minors, all but the Creative Writing minor may be candidates for suspension or restructuring. The Pop Culture and Film minors could be combined; the latter will require revision regardless, due to the elimination of the Theatre program. Similarly, the English (Elem. Ed.) minor might fold into Childhood Studies. It is not entirely clear why the English (Elem. Ed.) minor requires a geographic distribution of literature courses rather the literature courses listed for the Childhood Studies minor; it is possible that students are not motivated to look at the full catalog list of English courses to find those most relevant (especially given the cumbersome navigation between programs and courses in the online catalog).¹¹

¹¹ The online catalog page for the English (Elem. Ed.) minor does not provide the full list of literature courses. The online catalog navigation bar gives links to Programs A-Z and Courses A-Z, but a user cannot move from one of those lists to the other with a single click. Further, the webpage header on catalog pages is misleading: the university logo in the page header does not link to the university homepage as one might assume, and scrolling all the way to the bottom of a lengthy catalog

Recommendations – Advising: It may be wise, especially as curricula are updated and course rotations revised in response to faculty cuts, to provide more and different information to students via the website or posters displayed in the department than is provided in the catalog and on degree program pages. The four-year plans listed on the program webpages are rather vague in many areas, which is understandable given the wide variety of English courses from which students can select or fulfill major requirements. The department could offer students somewhat more specific information by, for example, providing a list of the semesters in which major courses are regularly offered, or a tentative upcoming course schedule projecting two years ahead. Such documents, updated frequently, would be very valuable in TCP advising and allow these students to plan ahead knowing when online sections of required courses will be offered. The department might also see value in developing advising documents that outline general pathways through English to certain types of career or further study: just as teacher certification students are made aware that they must complete TE courses in conjunction with English courses, a student considering a career in publishing, for example, will appreciate guidance in choosing the most useful courses, and a

webpage is inefficient. The close visual similarity between the headers of catalog and non-catalog webpages also causes confusion in that the catalog search bar: placing the search bar for each type of webpage in the same position and using very small typeface to specify its catalog-only utility prompt the user to assume that the search will apply to the superior site. Navigating from the UNK News and UNK Blog sites to the general UNK pages can be similarly frustrating: although the search bar visible on the Blog pages does search the entire UNK site, the News pages' search boxes do not, even in miniscule type, indicate that they interface only with the News pages. The Blog, News, and pages of university offices do not seem to be updated with any regularity, and search results cannot be filtered usefully.

The university website is difficult to navigate as a whole, again with no obvious links between pages that logically ought to be connected. For example, selecting List of Majors (<https://www.unk.edu/academics/list-of-majors.php>) under the Academics hover-menu in the website header leads, after fiddling with a drop-down menu, to a degree program narrative with a four-year plan lower on the page; but the actual list of major requirements more useful to someone browsing degree programs is hidden beyond another link. That link resides in a misleading yellow box labeled “[degree name] at a glance,” but which provides very little information about the degree without further clicking. Rather, this uninformative infographic offers quite generic information, most of which seems to apply to all degrees at the same level (e.g., undergraduate or graduate), such as the university-wide 120-credit graduation requirement and the \$216 cost per undergraduate credit hour. The 120-credit graphic item at the left contains the “view full curriculum” link, implying either that the degree program named on the page (e.g., English BA) requires 40 courses, or that the link will take the user to a list of *university* graduation requirements rather than a list of course requirements for the specific degree identified on the page. Selecting a minor from the alphabetical List of Majors leads directly to the academic catalog. Some, but not all, BA/BS program pages reached from the List of Majors include an infographic in the yellow box to indicate the existence of related minors, and/or link minors and other department information in a sidebar for which the apparent base setting is to list other department degrees at the same level (e.g. other BAs). The inconsistency among the degree program pages suggests that not all departments have been informed that they can choose to include different links in the sidebar or make other small modifications within the standard template.

On graduate program pages reached via the same route from the website header, tuition cost is not specified in the infographic, but “\$” graphic links to a list of tuition and fees that appear to apply to all graduate programs, so the costs might as well have been provided on the degree program page. The browser “back” button does not return the user from a degree page to the alphabetical program list (which is visible only briefly before disappearing); then, the initially selected program level remains selected, but shows no results, obligating the user to select a different level and then reselect the desired one – rather annoying if one wanted simply wanted to compare Art Minor: 2D and Art Minor: 3D, for example). It appears that the designers of the website and the shiny-but-not-very-informative program pages did not perform any kind of usability testing.

In addition to considering linking to other English department information from the degree program pages, English should note that the page at <https://www.unk.edu/academics/english/index.php> does not list the English (Elem. Ed) minor, and that the alphabetical list of minors at <https://www.unk.edu/academics/list-of-majors.php> lists it under “Elementary Education – English Minor” – and does not list the Childhood and Youth Studies minor at all. This errors may affect student selection of those minors. The related programs itemized under the student testimonial on degree program pages also appear to contain inconsistencies: for one, the English 7-12 subject endorsement page does not link to the ELA 7-12 field endorsement degree, but does link to the sadly eliminated Theatre degree (while the ELA field endorsement page does not include the Theatre link). The English BA page also links to Theatre beneath the testimonial, but not to the ELA field endorsement. The graduate program page (<https://www.unk.edu/academics/english/english-master-of-arts.php>) does not list teaching as a career path and indicates (top of this page and at List of Majors) that it is both an online and on-campus program.

student aiming toward a future Ph.D. may find themselves at a disadvantage without certain undergraduate preparation. Advising pathways toward particular careers might also include suggestions about compatible minors or recommendations for fulfilling GS requirements.

At the graduate level, too, advising can be clarified and supplemented. Certainly, most advising of graduate students occurs in meetings with the adviser, but guidance may be necessary before the student joins the program. As stated above in this section, the available online descriptions at the department's webpage and the overview in the graduate catalog indicate the nature of the comprehensive exam, although the catalog mentions there being one: the webpage description states, "This program features an optional thesis," without mentioning that there is an alternative capstone of any kind. This webpage must be revised, as it could mislead prospective students that the degree requires only coursework. The faculty should also decide whether students would be helped by documents comparing paths through the program, outlining exam expectations and format, providing qualitative and quantitative descriptions of "baseline" thesis projects, and suggesting a timeline for the different capstone projects (if resources like these do not already exist).

E. Faculty Research, Service, and Development

The UNK English faculty impress on all counts. Tenured and tenure-track faculty earned their graduate degrees at well-regarded research institutions, and their lists of publications and presentations significantly exceed the university and department recommendations for tenure and promotion both at UNK and at peer institutions. In the past ten years, English faculty have published more than 55 articles and creative works in refereed publications including *Comparative Drama*, *Critical Survey*, *Journal of The History of Childhood and Youth*, and *Rhetoric Review*, and selective literary magazines such as *Prairie Schooner*, *Beloit Poetry Review*, *New Ohio Review*, and *Salt Hill Journal*. Thirteen single-author books and edited collections of literary scholarship have been published by major research presses including Routledge, Ohio State University Press, and the University of Nebraska Press; English faculty have an additional five books under contract with publishers.

Despite prolific publications and presentations at significant conferences and professional meetings in their subfields, UNK English faculty nonetheless devote considerable amounts of time and energy to their teaching and uncompensated labor like course and curriculum development, community outreach, service to the department, university, and profession, and unflagging support for student success. English faculty teach first-year writing courses nearly every semester, in addition to upper-division courses with copious writing embedded within, commenting extensively on student exercises and paper drafts as well as the final versions of those papers. English faculty volunteer to sponsor student organizations and mentor graduate and undergraduate student research and creative projects, which stand independent from the faculty's own research and creative activities. Committing to supporting students in research and creative projects in the arts and humanities, it should be noted, can often require the faculty mentor to expand their own expertise into adjacent areas, as they encourage students in the autonomous development of scholarly work. These faculty do not gain lab assistants or number-crunchers who aid in the faculty member's existing research agenda.

The variety of faculty achievement and outreach beyond teaching, mentoring, and developing their own research/creative work demonstrates not only the wide range of faculty interest and involvement, but also the flexibility, resourcefulness and passionate commitment to student and community stakeholders that allow them to achieve so much with little material support from the university. To itemize only a few examples of the many in each area:

• Awards and Recognition

- Lecturer Jay Lee earned 2024's campus-wide Award for Excellence in Teaching General Studies.
- In 2023 Assistant Professor Amanda Sladek won the Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation's Award for Outstanding Innovation in Online Teaching.
- Assistant Prof. Janet Graham won the 2021 "Going Above and Beyond" award presented by Phi Eta Sigma, national honor society for first-year students.
- Tenured English professors received three of the last eight Distinguished Faculty Awards: Susan Honeyman (2019), Marguerite Tassi (2017), and Samuel Umland (2016).

- Faculty members have earned grants to support research and teaching from UNK and organizations like Humanities Nebraska, the Children's Literature Association, and the Nebraska Arts Council.
- **Additional Student Support and Mentoring**
 - Outside of prolific thesis advising and sponsorship of undergraduate research by nearly all faculty in the department, English faculty oversee co-curricular programs for students, such as the Student Conference on Literature and Language, Mortar Board, Phi Eta Sigma, and Sigma Tau Delta. Students' enthusiasm for the experiences such organizations provide is noteworthy among a generation that media generally represents as passive and apathetic.
 - Under the guidance of Dr. Annarose Steinke, UNK's Sigma Tau Delta chapter coordinates many events throughout the academic year in addition to producing the *Carillon* (with editorial board mentoring by Dr. Brad Modlin) activities ranging from informational displays and readings to commemorate Banned Books week, to creative writing open mics and Kearney coffee shops. The chapter has developed ways for online students to participate in activities via social media and video conferencing, and it has even opened a preliminary membership level for first-year students excited to get involved before they have acquired the 30 credits of English studies required by the national organization.
 - English faculty have brought students to present and learn at national and regional academic conferences for in interdisciplinary medieval studies, comics and sequential art, and medical humanities.
 - English faculty helped students to develop a film club that screens a movie each month in collaboration with academic departments, who are invited to discuss the films' themes and storytelling with the club members and other attendees.
- **Curricular Collaboration**
 - English courses have long been mainstays of the Thompson Scholars and Honors Programs. Similarly, English offers multiple courses for International Studies and for Women's, Gender, and Ethnic Studies; English is in the progress of developing new courses and re-envisioning some others to contribute more options to the programs for learning about diversity and inclusion, the legacy of colonialism, and Latin American writers. Two new minors in History, Medical Humanities and Nebraska Studies, similarly contain established and new English courses, including experiential learning courses.
 - Also, in collaboration with History, English also hopes to use the potential relocation of the Mari Sandoz archives to UNK in part by developing experiential courses related to archival research and the creation of critical editions of primary texts. Unfortunately, however, English's continued contributions to programs listed here, and intentions to develop further innovative, interdisciplinary, collaborative, and experiential courses may fall by the wayside without more institutional support.
- **Outreach and Extracurricular Service and Collaboration**
 - Among their service to the profession, English faculty perform peer-review for scholarly and creative publications, evaluate submissions for contests and awards, and take active roles in professional and disciplinary organizations including the Children's Literature Association and the National Endowment for the Humanities.
 - English Faculty worked with Sigma Tau Delta, Phi Eta Sigma, and the American Democracy Project to establish the Emerging Writers and Artists contest for high school students across the state; leading up to the award event, English faculty and students conduct writing workshops for areas schools. Now entering its fifth year, this contest has helped to foster reading and writing skills and encourage creativity, while also acting as a recruiting tool by increasing name recognition for UNK and its arts and humanities programs.
 - English faculty have been instrumental in planning interdisciplinary events at UNK, including academic conferences, performances, and celebrations of student and faculty achievement, such as the CAS Faculty Book festival recognizing scholarship by faculty across the disciplines.
 - Professor Susan Honeyman currently holds a seat on the steering committee for the Nebraska Legal Defense Fund and served for several years as a court-appointed special advocate for children in foster care.
 - The English Department is the home of the Reynolds Visiting Writers Series, coordinated by the Reynolds Chair, Associate Professor Brad Modlin. The series brings nationally recognized and up-and-coming creative writers to present their work in public readings at the Museum of Nebraska Art.

- Prof. Modlin is in demand: in 2023-24 he was invited to conduct creative writing workshops and judge a writing contest for University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) students as part of an interdisciplinary effort to foster empathy and communication skills in future health professionals. He also recently served on the selection committee for the Nebraska Youth Poet Laureate.
- Dr. Tassi has served as dramaturg for multiple Theatre department productions and has facilitated workshops and individual coaching in understanding and performing Shakespearean language.
- Faculty across the department regularly perform service to the profession and the university. At UNK, they have worked on college- and university-level committees including Faculty Senate, the Dean's Advisory Committee, program review teams, and faculty recruitment teams, and advisory committees for academic programs and initiatives.

Also worth commending, the English faculty demonstrate a level of collegiality and cooperation that can be quite rare in academic departments. Amid uncertainty about funding and a demoralized campus climate, English faculty experience somewhat higher morale than the faculty and staff at large, and they are pulling together against adversity. Mutual respect, shared values, and passion for their work as teacher-scholars enable this group to support one another in ways that are essential for facing the challenges ahead.

F. English Department Assessment of Learning Outcomes

As described in section 5-A, the English department annually assesses students' learning in the program by evaluating appropriate course assignments against stated learning outcomes. The undergraduate assessment report appended to the self-study illustrates that faculty gather all samples of one assignment from each 400-level course taught during the year. Faculty evaluate written work from their own courses against a rubric designed by the standing committee responsible for assessment. The two BA programs, with and without writing emphasis, logically measure different outcomes; creative writing courses assessment uses a qualitative rubric designed for graduate creative writing assessment at a lower benchmark, the department having discarded a rubric that expected reviewers to quantify creativity.

Graduate program assessment evaluates the 800-level core courses taught during the year, as well as electives from a single emphasis area in rotation; emphasis areas differentiate their outcomes from those of the literature core and thus use different rubrics to assess achievement in the areas most important to that area of English studies.

The reported assessment results indicate high achievement by students in department courses and enable the department to take action for teaching and future assessments. For example, the reports mention ways the process has been revised since the previous year as well as plans for future revisions based on the newest evidence; rubric design has been improved, thusly, and faculty decided as a result of the 2023 undergraduate assessment that graduating seniors should be surveyed in order to gather more and different data about program success.

Concerns and Recommendations: The assessment reports neglect to explain certain structural elements of the process; for example, the rationale for gathering data from 400-level courses has not been explained, nor whether courses assessed vary each year. The choice of using core courses in the graduate assessment seems very logical, for the design of a core curriculum represents knowledge and skills that are considered essential to the program and field of study; but then, why are core courses not used in undergraduate assessment? While the department has made a commendable choice to use a qualitative rubric for creative writing courses, the report acknowledges that the literature-oriented outcomes used for most undergraduate classes were not entirely relevant to the content of a historical linguistics course; faculty design a rubric for future assessments that would apply to more of the courses to be evaluated.

Assessment of experiential learning has been achieved in the past decade by way of evidence the assessment committee gathered from students' co-curricular experiences. Assigning one or more of the newer experiential learning courses to the core of the merged BA would create a contained repository for assessable evidence in the familiar form of work assigned in the course, which might be simpler to assess because of the finite set of guidelines created for the assignment. If, when designing that combined BA, the department decides to allow

students the option of completing the program requirement thorough co-curricular activities, the former method for gathering evidence can still be used.

6. Recommendations for the Future

The UNK English department faculty deserve commendation for developing and maintaining effective and innovative curricula, authentic experiences and explorations, and an engaged community of intellectual and creative inquiry that have attracted so many curious and enthusiastic students desirous of spending a few years reading, writing, critiquing, and creating in this small Nebraska city. Despite uncertainties about the future of the arts and humanities in educational institutions across the nation, this faculty's commitment to the values of the discipline, to preparing well-rounded and capable teachers, and to supporting the members of their community with care and respect strengthen the group's ability to move forward to each new opportunity.

This section of the program review report will present a number of recommendations for the English department and college administration to consider. During the review proves, the English faculty's most frequent concerns – elimination of faculty lines, low enrollment in English courses, insufficient support, and advocacy from administrators – were interwoven with enthusiasm about new courses, students' accomplishments, and colleagues' innovations. Recommendations here will attempt to weave the department's strengths and its people's talents into potential resolutions to the problems at hand.

These suggestions attempt to address concerns related to uncertainty about staffing and teaching assignments; directives toward curricular innovation and interdisciplinary collaboration; experiential course work and professionalization.

A. Writing Course Enrollments

Students need incentives like program requirements to push them into a course, so the creation of those requirements seems like the best course. When negotiating another department's cooperation, you should remind the dean to apply the pressure of expectation to create a similar sense of requirement for those faculty.

- The department should continue to pursue commitment from other departments to add ENG 102 as an additional GS requirement (see 3-D).
- The department should also resume waylaid efforts to gain department commitment to advising students into a professional writing minor. UNK minors generally seem to be 24 credits in length, but can the department yet commit to regularly supplying those eight courses regularly enough to enable completion of a minor? It might be wise to start with a 12- to 15-credit certificate for greater assurance that the courses could be staffed reliably.
- If the department determines that some sections of ENG 101 and 102 must be cut completely out of rotation after consistent low enrollment, faculty will need to be reassigned (more or less permanently, perhaps). A potential reassignment could place a faculty member into a course created as an advanced writing workshop to build accountability and peer-review into the thesis process and lift from the thesis adviser some of the obligation to read for writing style. Graduate students could enroll in the workshop along with thesis credits, and the professor would not particularly need subject expertise in the subject matter of all of the theses but would rather give feedback on writing elements. Workshop submissions should be relatively small so that all students are committed to sharing work for review at each meeting. Perhaps Undergraduate Research Fellows could join in some way in order to have the structure of regular deadlines.
- In section 5-D, it was suggested structuring the combined BA degree with 435 and 436 as options for a capstone requirement. If 101 and 102 sections are removed from rotation, then these courses might replace them in faculty rotations and would likely fill reliably, with a requirement attached.

B. Interdisciplinary activities

This report has described some of the myriad ways the members of the English Department already engage in frequent interdisciplinary collaboration. Nonetheless, the college dean and other administrators have indicated that interdisciplinary work is an innovation necessary for the department to remain viable, suggesting that the interdisciplinary and collaborative work of English faculty is perhaps not recognized as such. The English faculty and students should, of course, maintain their current collaborations and plans. Information gained through interviews for the departmental review suggested further possible ways to reach across disciplinary lines:

Create interdisciplinary elective courses:

- In secondary teacher certification programs that introduce the state-required lesson plan template at the 400 level, students have scant time to develop familiarity and facility with the expectations before needing the use the template daily when student teaching. English should consider collaborating with other arts and humanities departments to develop a lower-division course to introduce methods for teaching in arts and humanities early in the program. Such a course would bring students from a range of arts and humanities courses together in one class, allowing for students to collaborate with and learn from students in related fields. Ideally, the instruction of the course would rotate regularly among the pedagogy specialists in the relevant departments: with instructional labor thus distributed, pedagogy specialists in any given department would not be overcommitted by the addition of a course solely in their own rotation.
- Another possible course to consider for development is a lower-level course focused on the development and application of creativity. As above, such a course could be taught in rotation by the arts faculty but would be open to any students. It would be attractive to students in a wide range of programs such as marketing, public relations, interior design, game design, and students interested in creative problem-solving; various departments might be convinced to require or recommend such a class, but it does not seem like a smooth fit into the GS program, where the arts course appears to have outcomes related to appreciation more than creation. Prof. Modlin's existing course on "Creativity and Creative Practices" could serve as a model for collaborative design with other arts faculty.
- The department should continue with interdisciplinary curricular initiatives already begun. For Medical Humanities, the English department may be able to make additional contributions: in conversation with the review committee, Dr. Ziolkowski, who is a certified life care specialist, mused over a potential new experiential learning course: "Writing Medical Narrative," which would contain a service component in partnership with a memory care center. The Nebraska Studies minor, and particularly "Nebraska Life Writing," make valuable connections between students and community. The exciting potential acquisition of the Mari Sandoz collection and the English Department's suggestions about creating courses related to archival research and the process of editing an annotated, scholarly edition give students more opportunities to professionalize themselves.

C. TCP Courses and Staffing

As described in more detail in section 3-E, TCP students' need to take their courses online aligns them with the MA program population, while their need for undergraduate courses to fill gaps aligns them with the in-person BA students, who prefer not to take online courses. English may wish to develop online versions of the undergraduate courses that TCP students are most likely to need for the content area. The online version might be offered every third or fourth time, and projected schedules could advise students in either program when the online course would be offered.

The demands for children's literature come from the students in pre-K-12 education programs and point again to the need for consistent rotation of the children's courses. Even with two people cooperating to offer the courses, the faculty who teach children's literature and English teaching methods are also needed to teach in other areas (British, Caribbean, life-writing) and currently hold department positions that come with reassigned time. With an additional specialist in children's literature or pedagogy, plus another complementary area of study, the English department would be making a worthwhile investment by building strength in a content area consistently in demand.

D. Workshops

The English department has access to some Foundation funding that might be used for the department for outreach or curricular enhancements, depending on the donors' stipulations.

The department should consider the merits of offering pre-semester fall workshops for ENG 101 teachers, especially those in the local area. At those workshops, the composition coordinator would focus on keeping high school teachers current on developments in composition studies or changes in program policies that might cause an unprepared teacher to make mistakes. High school teachers, regardless of their affiliation with UNK or dual credit, attend to learn about or refresh themselves on the teaching of composition. Shorter workshops or webinars may also interest a wide array of secondary teachers who have not had previous coursework in topics like multiethnic lit, AI in writing classes, teaching creative or technical writing, etc.

Students' interest in publishing deserves support. It may be possible to bring visiting speakers who work in the field to campus to talk with students about preparing to work in editing and publishing. Several department alumni have gone into the field and could bring a variety of experiences to the students. A group of presentations or workshops can pilot a potential minor or certificate before investing much money by sending a faculty member to complete a short program or something similar.

Creative writing-based outreach has been popular, and UNK English students as well as locals may be interested in learning more from those visitors. It appears that the Reynolds Visiting Writers Series includes only public readings of the authors' works (unless the campus newspaper doesn't report on parts of the visits that are not open to the public), but asking the writers to present a craft talk or run a workshop for English students (or other groups) could enhance the impact of the existing events.

E. Covering Support Staff Duties

Some negative effects caused by the elimination of office staff positions could potentially be addressed by employing a student to serve as a contact person and address a portion of daily operational tasks that involve no sensitive or confidential material. Perhaps the department could direct some discretionary funds toward a work-study student's hourly wage (if there are no policies against it.) Reassigning part of a graduate assistant's contract may also be an option; it is somewhat exploitative to deny a GA the opportunity for teaching experience promised by the position, but the desk job could be developed into a relevant professionalizing experience by assigning the GA to write copy for publicity material or other tasks relevant to their focus in the program. The student staff position could also cost nothing: the department might consider setting up an undergraduate internship based in the English Department office, with part of the duties relating to operational tasks, and the other part a social media intern to create announcements, publicity, etc.

Appendices I-III address the importance of consistent guidance and low-cost cooperation at various levels of the university, with an aim of reducing low morale and isolationism. In many cases, more than one of these concerns will be addressed by a single suggestion. The majority of the recommendations below will not create many expenditures, but still will need institutional support from the college and various offices and administrators across the campus.

Appendix I. Building Support for Marginalized Departments

Difficulties facing the English Department have in many ways been exacerbated, perhaps without intent, by institutional neglect. This neglect manifests in forms such as poor dissemination of necessary information, undervaluation of achievements, ignorance about the needs and practices of different academic fields, and lack of cooperation and support from university offices.

Unsuccessful Communication: The review committee's efforts to understand the challenges facing the English department and university as a whole included meetings with the deans of CAS and Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation and with faculty and student members of the English department, in addition to examining various sources of information disseminated by the department and university, including academic catalogs, university policies and plans, and material provided by the webpages of university offices and programs. During this information gathering, the reviewers noticed repeated instances of misleading, incomplete, and incorrect information, as well as a concerning amount of mis- and non-communication from administration and university offices to departments and faculty across the college, if not also the university.

Faculty and other constituents need clearly communicated expectations from administrators.

- Administrators frequently advise or mandate that departments and faculty should achieve certain aims or take certain actions, but often use unspecific language and meaningless corporate-style buzzwords: "Innovate" is not a useful directive unless accompanied by some guidelines regarding what administrators will and will not consider innovative. It is also very important for faculty and departments to be provided with a clear understanding of the criteria by which an initiative will be judged a success or failure. Departments are expected to increase graduation rates or trim the budget, yet department leaders cannot even gauge the scope without being told the specific numbers that must be reached. Administrative offices should prepare documents that explicitly lay out measurable goals and recommended structures along with rationales for evaluation to alleviate the seemingly ever-moving targets.

Information must be complete and consistent.

- A policy or description of procedure presented by an individual administrator at a meeting must not differ from documents about that policy and procedure that are produced by their office without prominent and explicit indication of revisions and updates. Information which faculty is expected use as a guide for strategic planning, responding to an administrative mandate, or understanding administrative decisions and expectations should not be provided in disconnected pieces at different times and by different means. When this happens, faculty often must try to pool information with others in order to get a full understanding of an important situation of expectation, but the result may still not enable informed decisions or appropriate direction of efforts.
- Deadlines, forms, and regulations for filing paperwork and submitting applications must be readily available in order for faculty and departments to comply. University offices should not impose penalties for late or improperly submitted files without making available the reasons penalties might be incurred.
- Offices have shown a tendency to give different sets of guidelines for the same projects. The review committee was told that the GSAI Office recommends online courses be designed for synchronous

teaching, but had also recently told some reviewers' departments that all online courses must be delivered asynchronously.

- Administrators should designate and consistently use the same sources for data used as the basis for any decisions of a given type, and that data must be made available to those affected by the decisions. Data available via the UNK Factbook, for example, frequently does not align with data from Institutional Research or other offices

Faculty efforts to gain necessary information or solve problems deserve respect and support.

- Failure to return phone calls and respond to emails for weeks ahead of a deadline stalls - and sometimes causes the failure of - time-sensitive tasks.
- A department representative should not be treated as a nuisance if they ask more than once about progress toward a decision that is crucial to the department's mission.

Equitable Representation and Input in Decision-making: Decision-makers and university offices should make every effort to represent and support academic departments equitably. Faculty in arts and humanities fields have expressed concerns about the unbalanced representation of academic fields in the administration and other decision-making groups. Considerable trepidation surrounds the idea that a concentration of a very few academic backgrounds in high positions prevents administration impedes fair assessments related to dissimilar fields of study due to an incomplete understanding of the purposes and practices of unfamiliar academic disciplines.

Faculty apprehensions are amplified by an apparent pattern of administrative posts and leadership of influential committees abruptly filled by faculty with academic backgrounds closely related to those of the appointing administrator. To check the development of intradisciplinary nepotism in which an administrator gives power to an acquaintance with similar views and priorities, faculty in underrepresented disciplines must be able to gain access to or establish some form of oversight when vacancies appear in such positions. Such appointments must not be made without soliciting applications or involving faculty representatives in the selection process to inhibit the construction of a disciplinary monolith with power over the direction of the university and little incentive to monitor biases that may act against the interests of dissimilar constituents within the university. University Bylaws should be examined for language to support demands for procedural transparency and equitable representation within administration.

Combatting Ignorance and Bias: Administrators must make efforts to educate themselves about disciplines unlike their own and take caution against potentially setting some constituents up for failure by demanding compliance with expectations that are not viable in the unfamiliar field. In some fields, for example, the second or third author listed on a co-authored study is obviously, according to disciplinary conventions, a lowly assistant, but other fields conventionally list authors alphabetically rather than by merit. Reducing ignorance of disciplinary conventions and practices, goals, and values, must be among administrators' first tasks on taking a position of authority over other academics. Administrators must also vigilantly check their methods and decisions for unconscious biases that may lead them to overlook the merits of diverse types of academic work, as well as the kinds of support needed for successful research, teaching, and service in fields that value different. An office with the mission of helping faculty pursue funding for research, for example, needs to know about grants for the arts as well as the sciences.

Appendix II. Supporting Departments and Faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences

Modelling Support and Collegiality: Administrators must be aware that their demonstrable attitude toward constituents influences that of members of the university who feel a professional or personal affinity toward them. Perceived administrative backing of undervalued departments and faculty can similarly influence the success of proposals forwarded by the less prestigious parties that need cooperation from more secure departments. In the newly combined College of Arts and Sciences, the unity of the college relies largely on the dean's efforts to foster connections across the divide of the former colleges' boundaries. This could mean educating individuals from both former colleges about the goals and values of the "opposite" disciplines, perhaps making introductions or doing some legwork to find and exploit points of potential intersection. Fostering the discovery of common ground and an appreciation for one another's work could be an inexpensive way to make a huge difference in college morale.

On being questioned by the review team about support the college was offering for departments injured by the loss of GS enrollment, the dean mentioned having numerous uncomfortable conversations with department faculty and staff to soothe anxiety. Further prompting was necessary to elicit actionable ideas for going forward in the form of undefined programmatic changes; the college's suggested method of support was to refer departments and faculty to the Office of Academic Innovation for guidance in developing online courses and curricula, or to apply to the department chair for release time. A similar series of prompting questions about support for interdisciplinary initiatives led to a vague description of a lone professor's research presentation misremembered as a presentation about team-taught interdisciplinary courses overseen by diversity initiatives, another uninformative response that seemed aimed at passing the "support" role to other offices. Yet, there are many simple, low- to no-cost ways the dean himself should be taking an active role in guiding the expected interdisciplinary innovation in concrete directions while ensuring positive outcomes for many departments and students:

Visible Sponsorship of Efforts to Collaborate across Disciplines

- Section 1-E of this report described the English Department's previous efforts to convince other departments to supporting English by committing to include an ENG 102 requirement to their majors or to promise patronage of a professional writing minor to be established on the guarantee of regular enrollment. When the English Department makes renewed overtures about the stranded proposals, the CAS dean must give his seal of approval and apply pressure to hesitant departments by vouching for the value of cooperating toward a mutually beneficial resolution of skill and enrollment deficits related to the removal of writing courses from General Studies. With explicit expectations – or even incentives – to cooperate, buy-in for mutually beneficial initiatives will be much less difficult to obtain.

Interdisciplinary Events Organized by the College

- The college dean could formalize such cross-pollination by reestablishing something like the interdisciplinary event series once organized by Dr. Tassi with very little budget. The installments in that series included varied ways for faculty in different areas to present scholarship and other achievements that reach across field boundaries in some way. Or perhaps the existing projects do *not* cross boundaries yet, but have the potential to do so. Some events in Dr. Tassi's series took the form of moderated conversation between a small number of faculty in disparate fields invited to explore a single topic from different angles to consider and reconsider meanings and implications and ideally to discover complementary ideas. A new interdisciplinary series would be served well by the establishment of a planning committee with representation from administration, faculty from varied discipline, and some students. The planners may envision a range of different activities to facilitate interdisciplinary exchange with the goals of developing awareness of and respect for other disciplines and their equally meaningful achievements; fostering collaboration and rejecting isolation and competition; finding intersections to leverage for program and student benefit; broadening students' perspective by encouraging innovation and creative thinking about the applicability of "impractical" fields for solving "practical" problems.

Matchmaking Potential Collaborators

- The college could also stimulate cross-discipline collaboration by facilitating interdepartmental workshops and idea-exchanges to promote interdisciplinary curriculum development, community outreach, and other such projects directed toward allying departments and faculty through a common purpose. The college could advertise project ideas or faculty seeking collaborators, or keep a database of research inquiries, skill-

and knowledge sets, and project goals to unite teams. Accomplishments of such collaborations should be lauded explicitly throughout the college. Showing that administrators value this sort of work can encourage more participation from those motivated by the potential for public praise.

Education against Disciplinary Denigration

- The college dean's behavior should demonstrate expectations for collegial interactions by openly displaying respect for and value of faculty and departments, particularly those in fields dissimilar from his own, and where there may exist an imbalance in perceived merit. Neglecting overt recognition of value in a range of contributions to human knowledge and culture might imply permission for a scientist, for example, to sneer at the notion of humanities scholarship, and proclaim that a 300-page researched exploration of human ideas and cultural productions written entirely by a single author, without a single assistant, and published by a university press, is less "real" than research performed in a lab with a cadre of underlings to crunch numbers.

Overt and Personal Appreciation of Contributions to College Success

- Morale across the college may also be improved simply by recognizing the ways departments and faculty make an impact on the university and community beyond their scholarly activities. For example, it would cost nothing but a little time to acknowledge the huge sacrifices that English faculty members made in August 2023 to refresh and develop new content-knowledge necessary to design and lead courses when the enrolled students were abandoned by the assigned faculty only days before the semester began. The professors who took on those classes overburdened themselves to ensure that the enrolled students would not fall behind, and while a shrug is one easy response, so is a handshake and an acknowledgement that their actions meant something and is valued by college leadership. This example was a dramatic situation that came quickly to the dean's attention, but saluting other unsung contributions could require making conversation, sitting in on a class, or chatting with students.

Appendix III. University Offices Sharing Expertise

For the English Department to respond effectively to administrative expectations and to gather information necessary for making responsible decisions that are most likely to produce beneficial outcomes, support will be needed in the form of information, resources, and specialized skills outside the expertise of most university faculty. Rather than a professor trying to learn a new technology or maladroitly apply a barely acquired skill to a high-stakes project, faculty and departments will be more likely to succeed in their initiatives if professional support is available and willing to assist. Yet many university offices that could be incredibly helpful in carrying out necessary task refuse departments' requests or demand fees beyond the reach of a small department's budget. Academic departments should have free or discounted access to the expertise of university professionals on projects to advance the mission of the department. These are other areas that could benefit from the intervention of a dean or other administrator to ensure that assistance is given.

Recruitment: Academic departments are expected to use their own resources and abilities to launch recruitment campaigns to build their major populations. Ideally, department representatives would be able to rely the staff of the Admissions Office for consultation about effective approaches to the task: Admissions staff would certainly understand the logistics of arranging visits to area high schools with the intention of talking with students about paths between an English degree and a range of careers, so a collaboration with staff members to organize a school visit on the faculty member making the on-site presentation would seem like a logical way to proceed. Similarly, the Admissions office frequently organizes on-campus recruitment events for curious or admitted students. Admission should be able to schedule a little time for a faculty member to interact with visiting students and deliver a major pitch or facilitate a quick activity to demonstrate some of the things a college English student learns, but academic departments are not routinely invited to participate in.

Departments have also been directed to create advertising materials for their programs, and the Office of Communications and Marketing advertises appropriate services, but the departments apparently have not been successful in collaborating with the designers to steer the nature of an advertising campaign or materials. Departments, as the experts in the product and target audience, should have plenty of conceptual input, and even to be able to mockup a layout as a design model but the professional designers tend to discard suggestions like that to create something with superficial similarities but completely different aesthetic and tone. It is not clear why the university does not put systems in place by which academic departments who need to advertise or recruit have access to professional services. The university presumably shares the department's goals of convincing students to study at UNK and thus should encourage professionals with recruitment-relevant skills to collaborate with departments.

Data and Analysis: The office of Institutional Research gathers and analyzes data in support of the university's goals, but departments who also want the university to thrive often are not able to access the data that the university is using, much less request analysis of certain data. As mentioned above in section 3-E, analysis of data on student success in relation to department goals could provide important information to help departments make appropriate decisions about curriculum design, schedule rotations, or ways to ensure the success of an initiative. Data with value to the English department may include:

Tracking Student Achievement:

- To determine the success of the abridged GS program data could be gathered regarding students' disposition of the 15 credits that previously went into fulfilling requirements in the former GS program and similar course enrollment behavior. Do students add degree programs with those credits, or something else? How does the smaller GS program affect transfer students' efficient use of available credit hours? How do they use the credit hours?
- Monitoring the effects of reducing the writing requirements will provide data that can be used to determine how the English department approaches curricular developments and collaborations like creating field-specific ENG 102 courses. Data showing a negative correlation between the reduction in required writing courses and success in majors and upper-level courses may be effective in convincing some departments to require ENG 102 after all.

- Institutional Research can also assist in assessing the effectiveness of dual-credit courses. Anecdotally, some students earn A grades in a dual credit course that is part of a two-part sequence, then take the second course at UNK and fail. Do students' progress reports show a trend? If a similar thing occurs where students pass ENG 101 as high school students and then take no more writing courses? What is the effect on their success? English may also need such data as justification for auditing or intervening with dual-credit ENG 101 classes.

Tracking Graduate Careers: Alumni Offices and Career Development Centers traditionally track students after graduation and into their careers. The English Department currently does not have resources to track graduates unless those alumni reach out, but a fuller picture of graduates' career paths can help English to document the department's statewide and regional influence more systematically than by self-reporting. The information could also be useful for helping students to find internships and make helpful contacts with department alumni.

Career centers often conduct alumni surveys that ask students to report on their level of employment and the relevance of their college degree to their paid work. Self-reporting is not always reliable, and nor are such surveys always designed to elicit information helpful to academic departments in serving their current majors: alumni career surveys often include a problematic set of questions that first ask the alumni's degree field and then whether they are "employed in a related field." If alumni studied English, but do not earn a salary for writing poetry or reading novels, the question may get a negative response, regardless of whether written communication skills or the ability to analyze complex textual information are skills used on the job.

Revising that question to ask about skills developed in the major instead of the major's name would surely elicit much more useful information. Sadly, career centers notoriously neglect students in liberal arts fields when major titles do not match one-to-one with job titles: career center employees are sometimes rather simple thinkers who do not think about careers for the liberal arts beyond tacking the word "teacher" onto the major title. A skills-based career question would help the staff provide improved career advising for liberal arts majors and perhaps prompt the center to market liberal arts students to more employers or convince employers that liberal arts students are equipped to learn on the job while also bringing the kinds of writing and thinking skills that many others competing on the job market may not have.

Although the department self-study indicates that students who want internship experience are successful in making their own arrangements. But if the English Department decides to pursue increased professionalization as a future direction for department programs, with an internship requirement added to a future revision of a program, then the career center (after gaining a full understanding of the value of studying English) can be useful for helping to develop a catalog of employers interested in English-major interns, and who could also become future employers of English graduates. Establishing such contacts on behalf of English might further prompt the career center to set up career fairs particularly for arts and humanities to connect with employers who recognize the value in training up skills in communication, critical thinking, empathy, and ethics.