

# DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

## 2005-2010 STRATEGIC PLAN

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## **II. Executive Summary**

The English Department's Strategic Plan is organized to offer a comprehensive overview of the Vision, Mission, and General Structure of the English Department. It then goes on to detail the strategic goals we have set for ourselves over the next five years, in an effort to carry out our mission of offering comprehensive, dynamic, and pedagogically sound programs at all levels of the curriculum, and of maintaining a lively intellectual environment that includes fostering a culture for learning for the students, and the best possible conditions for creative and critical research, publishing, pedagogical development, service, and outreach for Faculty.

## **III. Department of English Vision:**

We envision a world in which written and spoken language is affirmed as one of the richest, most powerful, and most flexible signifying systems through which we live, create, and forge connections with each other in local, national, and global contexts. We consider that literature offers a singular constitution of language not found anywhere else, and that poetry, drama, fiction, non-fiction and other forms of literary production transform "everyday" language and consequently the world in ways that merit deep and subtle investigation. At the same time, we believe that the reading practices developed through the discipline of literary criticism and theory are valuable tools for creative and critical engagement with the language of other disciplines such as law, medicine, the sciences and business, and with other systems of expression such as film, visual art, music, digital media, etc. We advocate, therefore, a truly interdisciplinary practice that entails a rootedness in diverse and historical literary traditions and a readiness to engage with non-literary forms of expression and transformation. We believe that this kind of sustained, complex, and critical knowledge of language is essential to fully understanding and enhancing our inhabitation of the world in all its social, political, economic, and cultural diversity.

## **IV. Department of English Mission**

We endeavor to offer our students a set of life-long skills and practices linked to a knowledge base of literary and non-literary texts ranging from antiquity to the present day, and including English, North American, African, Caribbean and other works (both literary and filmic) in English as well as many influential works translated into English. The skills, practices and knowledges we offer our students include:

- \* Reading, asking productive questions of, and developing interpretive strategies for analyzing complex literary and non-literary texts;
- \* Writing in a lucid prose style with the ability to convey complex ideas about the cultural productions they engage with;

- \* Discovering one's own critical and creative "voice," and developing that voice in written and oral expression;
- \* Conducting extended research using both traditional and web-based research tools, and transforming the results of this research into original written compositions on literary and cultural topics;
- \* Understanding and articulating how literary and film texts are located in complex historical, cultural, ideological, and geopolitical contexts;
- \* Developing a general familiarity with the history of English, North American, African, Caribbean, post-colonial and other literary traditions, with an understanding of the range of genres, traditions, and innovations that have developed over time and across national boundaries;
- \* Discovering a tradition, genre, or period which is of special interest to the student and developing a deeper more complex knowledge of that sub-area of exploration;
- \* Developing a familiarity and a critical engagement with the range of theoretical and philosophical traditions that have come to inform literary and cultural studies;
- \* Refining their creative writing talents if they so desire with an eye towards publication opportunities.

In keeping with URI's mission as a research institution, we foster active research and other professional activity among our faculty with the understanding that research, writing, publishing and participation in conferences enhances rather than diminishes teaching. We also promote an intellectual community for students, full-time faculty, TAs, and part-time instructors through our ongoing Events and Readings series, which include regularly scheduled public appearances by visiting scholars, creative writers, and our own faculty, students and instructors. We offer opportunities for students to practice their skills and talents in extra-curricular experiential contexts such as our URI in England Program, our Internship Program, the Edmund S. and Nathalie Rumowicz Literature of the Sea Program, and our critical and creative writing contests. Overall, we endeavor to ensure that whatever their professional or creative goals, students majoring in English will be provided with the expertise to become active interpreters, rather than passive observers, of the world around them.

## **V. Description of the English Department**

### **V.1. General Overview**

The Department of English offers three degree programs: the BA, the MA and the PhD in English. We also offer a Minor in English, and provide important courses towards a number of other Majors in Arts and Sciences including the newly established Film Media Major (four courses), the Women's Studies Major (two courses), the Comparative

Literature Major (two courses) and the African and African American Studies Major (6 courses). We also offer a number of Honors courses, serving students who are receiving Honors degrees, and we offer over 3600 seats in General Education courses each year. In the Spring and Fall of 2005, over 5000 seats in undergraduate courses were taught by the English Department.

In the 2004-05 academic year, there were at least 374 English Majors, 319 based in Kingston and 55 based on the Providence campus. Of these Majors, there were 52 freshmen, 84 sophomores, 117 juniors and 121 seniors, indicating that English becomes a popular major as students take lower levels general education courses in the subject and are drawn toward the discipline.

**2006 Update:** as of February 2006, there were just under 400 Majors, with 49 on the Providence Campus and 350 on the Kingston campus. Of these Majors, there were 60 freshmen, 97 sophomores, 111 Juniors, and 129 Seniors.

In 2005, the Graduate Program has a total of 98 students, including 34 Masters and 64 PhD candidates, many of whom are in the dissertation stage of their studies.

**2006 Update:** as of February 2006 there were 22 MA candidates and 46 PhD candidates.

At present (2005) the English Department has 19 full time faculty members, and two more members split with other programs (Women's Studies and Writing), bringing the total count to 20 full time faculty. Instruction is carried out by a combination of these faculty, 28 TAs (14 of which are shared with the Writing Program) and somewhere between 20-25 per course instructors. This means that the ratio of English Faculty to English Majors is 1/19.

**2006 Update:** after retirements, deaths, departures, and some hires, the count is still 19 full time faculty members, with three half time members split between English and other programs (Women's Studies, Writing, and Film Media), bringing the count to 20.5. In Fall 2006, 25 per course instructors will help to cover the curriculum in Kingston, with another 20 per course instructors covering the curriculum in Providence.

Because the graduate program is taught by both English and Writing faculty, the count of active graduate faculty is 16 from English, 4 from Writing, bringing the total to 20 who teach and advise on a regular basis. This means that the ratio of Graduate Faculty to Graduate students is approximately 1/5.

Through a rich array of course offerings in literary, film, and cultural studies, the English Department rigorously trains students in critical reading, thinking and writing skills, and ensures their preparation in a broad range of canonical and non-canonical texts. While the theoretical, methodological, and historical training of our faculty is diverse, we share the conviction that close, sustained engagement with the written word can be at once aesthetically exhilarating, ethically compelling, and politically transformative.

Our undergraduate program is challenging and flexible; many of our students supplement English with a minor or second major in closely related fields such as Writing; Film Media; Comparative Literature; African and African-American Studies; Women's Studies; History; Philosophy; Communications; Art History; or Modern Languages. About 24% of our Majors combine their English B.A. with an Elementary or Secondary Education major, allowing them to become public- or private-school teachers immediately after graduation. Many receive the advanced training and professional advising that enables them to enter first rate graduate programs in English, Creative Writing, Comparative Literature, Film or Media Studies, History, Medicine, and Business Administration. Others go on to some of the country's top Law Schools, while many find that their strong writing and analytical skills prepare them to enter careers in publishing, journalism, advertising and marketing, college administration, grant writing, non-profit organizations, social services, insurance, civil service, retail business, and NGO's.

Graduates of our M.A. program either go on to enter Ph.D. programs of their choice, or put their advanced degree to good use in both academic and non-academic jobs. A high percentage of our Ph.D. graduates find full time teaching jobs in colleges and universities around the country.

## **V.2. *BA in English:***

### **V.2.a Overview**

Students majoring in English are required to take two core methodology courses, one of which (ENG 202) entails a series of guest presentations by full-time faculty, and is designed to demystify the process of literary critical writing by offering anecdotal, informal accounts of how a faculty member's article (which the students have read in advance) was conceived, developed, revised, and found publication.

Students also take a number of courses designed to give them coverage of every major period of literature in English, and choose from other courses to get expertise in one of four "focus areas" (currently conceived as Genre Studies, Identity Studies, Creative Writing and Publishing, and Cultural Studies). Seniors may choose to take a Senior Seminar which serves as an optional "Capstone Experience" and results in the composition of a Senior Thesis on a topic of their choice.

### **V.2.b. Double Majors in English and Education:**

The English Department works closely with the Department of Education to ensure that those double majors in Secondary Education and English receive the courses they need to ensure they are properly certified in English as their content area. We also ensure that courses in Children's Literature and Linguistics are regularly offered, to meet the needs of Elementary Education Majors.

### **V.2.c. Interdisciplinarity**

The English Department is engaged at the undergraduate curricular level with several interdisciplinary programs on campus, including Women's Studies, African and African American Studies, Film Media, Comparative Literature, Honors, and the New England Studies Program. In 2001, the Writing Program, which used to be housed within the English Department, became an independent program of its own. However, English Majors with a special interest in Rhetoric, in other discursive forms of writing, or in the teaching of composition, are encouraged to take courses from or even to Minor in the Writing Program. While both programs place a heavy emphasis on writing instruction in their courses, the English Department emphasizes writing about literary, filmic or other cultural texts, and offers Creative Writing courses, while the Writing Program emphasizes writing in such contexts as business, science, technology, and electronic environments.

### **2006 Update: Judaic Studies Program**

In Sept 2005 A&S Dean Brownell convened an ad hoc Judaic Studies Planning Committee (JSPC) to propose a major and minor in Judaic Studies at URI. She noted that Judaic Studies has a significant potential for increasing the attractiveness of URI to Jewish applicants and to students of religion, for enhancing the strength of the humanities at URI, and for attracting external funding. In 2005-06, the JSPC reviewed our current offerings in Judaic Studies, developed a proposed minor and major in Judaic Studies, and developed a timetable for implementation of courses, hiring of personnel, and associated budget issues. In the upcoming year, the JSPC will submit papers through the A&S curricular process for approval of the major, the minor, and the formal designation of the Judaic Studies program (as per 8.85.10-30 of the University Manual). The committee will also submit course proposals for electives and offer 5-6 electives per semester under the informal rubric of Judaic studies. Once the Judaic Studies program is up and running, English faculty will participate as following: Naomi Mandel will teach a course on Modern Israeli literature in translation (possibly crosslisted with comparative literature) and/or a course on Topics in Judaic Studies focusing on Jewish writings about the Holocaust. Karen Stein will teach a course on American Jewish Women Writers. Matt Frankel will teach a course on Topics in Judaic Studies focusing on Spinoza. The JSPC plans to propose each of these course in the coming 2006-7 academic year.

### **V.2.d. Edmund S. and Nathalie Rumowicz Literature of the Sea Program**

The Edmund S. and Nathalie Rumowicz Program at the University of Rhode Island encourages interaction between disciplines in the sciences and the humanities dedicated to the study of the sea. The Rumowicz Endowment Fund supports three interrelated annual activities within the English department: 1) the "Literature and the Sea" seminar; 2) the Undergraduate Maritime Essay Contest; 3) and a keynote lecture.

### **2006 Update:**

The most recent "Literature and the Sea" seminar was taught by Dr. Matthew Frankel in the Spring of 2006. His seminar was entitled The Question of Technology and American

Literature of the Sea. This course explored the wedding of thinking and the sea through the issue of technology.

The annual Undergraduate Maritime Essay Contest has awarded three undergraduates for their work. Jenna Wood was awarded first prize for her piece, "My Kind of Place." Adam Langlais was awarded second prize for his work "My Body Lies Over the Sea: Melville, Deleuze, and a Mapping of the Self." And Trianna Testoni was awarded third prize for her work "Up From Algae."

The 2006 Rumowicz Colloquium, entitled "Meditation By the Sea," took place on April 24. The event included an Awards Luncheon to celebrate the winners of the Undergraduate Maritime Essay Contest, as well as a Keynote Lecture entitled "Writing the Sea: Scientists and Nineteenth-Century Voyaging" given by Assistant Professor Helen M. Rozwadowski (Department of History; Coordinator, Maritime Studies, University of Connecticut, Avery Point).

Assistant Professor Martha Rojas will join Matt Frankel as co-director of the program in **2006-07**.

### **V.2.e. URI in England Program**

The English Department, in collaboration with the Office of International Education and the History Department offers a Summer study abroad program in Bath, England. Students spend three weeks in Britain, living on the campus of the University of Bath. The program includes classes in English Literature (ENG397: The Literary Landscape of Britain, 3 credits) and History (HIS397: The Historical Landscape of Britain, 3 credits), bus tours to famous historical and literary sites such as Stonehenge, Salisbury Cathedral, Chepstow Castle, Jane Austen and Thomas Hardy country, and free weekends for personal travel in Britain or Europe. Students earn credit towards their undergraduate degrees, and graduate students may participate to earn Independent Study credits towards the MA or PhD degree.

### **V.2.f. Internships Program**

The English Department offers two 3-credit Internship courses designed to give students practical experience in jobs related to their English degree, to help them identify professional skills and explore career goals. The courses inform students about the wide range of career opportunities available to English majors and teaches them useful job skills. At their jobs, interns write newsletters, help organize conferences and meetings, produce Web sites, edit, revise, and proofread reports and manuals and perform a variety of other routine or creative office tasks.

Since the Internship Program began in 1995, students have worked in a variety of placements including the office of the Mayor of Providence, the Newport Tennis Hall of Fame, Rhode Island Magazine, David Godine publishers in Boston, Moyers Bell publishers in Wakefield, the United Way in Providence, the Coastal Resources Center at

URI, and Wizard Comics in New York. During the school year placements are usually in Rhode Island or Connecticut. However, summer interns have gone to Washington, NY, Boston and other places. Interns find the experiences very valuable and usually get job offers at the internship sites.

### **V.3. MA and PhD Programs**

We offer both the MA and the PhD degree, with an emphasis on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century literature and culture, literary theory, rhetoric and composition, and literature and interdisciplinary studies. The Graduate Programs in English are taught and administered by faculty from both the English Department and the Writing Program (with its expertise in research on Rhetoric and Composition). MA and PhD students may opt to emphasize an area of specialization in either Literature (and related studies) or Rhetoric and Composition. We offer 28 Graduate TAs, which provide our students with tuition waiver, health and other benefits, and a stipend for teaching the equivalent of three courses per year. Most of these TAs are held by PhD students, and are renewed for up to four years, though in some cases talented MA students may hold TAs.

We believe that what makes our Graduate Program unique is that our exceptionally well trained and internationally published faculty offer our students the equivalent of an “ivy league” education, for the affordable tuition rate of a state university. Unlike most graduate programs, we offer our students invaluable expertise in college level teaching of both composition **and** literature courses, since every TA alternates back and forth between the Writing Program and the English Department in his or her yearly teaching assignment (PhDs from other programs often go on the market either with little teaching experience, having never had responsibility for the design and teaching of a course themselves, or have only had experience teaching composition courses, but no literature courses in their area of expertise). They receive more rigorous teacher training than in most Graduate Programs, and are engaged throughout their careers here in at least three instructional development programs: the English TA training provided by the English Department, the Writing TA training provided by the Writing Program, and other workshops offered by the URI Instructional Development Program. In all of these cases, our TAs begin as “students” and later in their careers, are active as pedagogical instructors themselves, offering valuable assistance and skills to their peers in English and to other instructors across the campus through IDP. In addition, our students have the opportunity to gain valuable experience in the Writing Center, or to learn through experience the skills of editing a scholarly journal by becoming Assistant Editor of the University’s only scholarly journal, *ATQ*. Overall, it should be noted that they teach the equivalent of 84 General Education courses in English and Writing each year (with some hours devoted to the Writing Center and *ATQ*.)

Our doctoral candidates compete successfully each year for the university wide Graduate Dissertation Fellowship, granted to advanced PhD students for the purpose of researching and writing their dissertations. Almost every year, one or two English doctoral students have won this distinguished award.

## **V.4. Contests and Scholarships**

### **V.4.a. Contests**

The Department of English offers a variety of awards and prizes. Four contests are open to both undergraduate and graduate students, whether majors or non-majors. These include: The Nancy A. Potter Short Story Contest, The Academy of American Poets Contest, The Creative Non-Fiction Contest, and the Critical Essay Contest. In addition, thanks to generous funding from Nathalie and Edmund Rumowicz, the English Department also hosts the Rumowicz Maritime Essay Contest for undergraduates, which boasts a first prize of \$1,000. Each award recipient in all of these contests receives a monetary prize and a Certificate of Recognition in their prize category. Prizes are awarded annually, and presented at a reading/celebration at the English Department's Awards Day Ceremony held in April of each year. If they wish, contest winners may have their entries published on the English Department Website. The English Department, in collaboration with Film Media, also hosts the Essay Contest Division of the Visualizations Film Festival each year, many of the winners of which wrote their essays in English Department film courses.

### **V.4.b. Scholarships**

The Department of English offers five merit-based undergraduate scholarships. These are open to English majors and include the Nancy A. Potter Scholarship (established in 1988), the Edna L. Steeves Scholarship (established in 1995), the Rox-Ellene Greenlaw English Scholarship (established in 1998), the Dana Shugar Memorial Scholarship (alternating with Women's Studies, and established in 2001), and the Spencer Award Scholarship (established in 2005). Scholarships are awarded annually and presented at the English Department's Awards Day Ceremony held in April of each year.

## **V.5. Literary Journals**

### **V. 5.a. *ATQ***

The English Department houses and produces *ATQ: American Transcendental Quarterly: a journal of 19<sup>th</sup> Century American Literature and Culture*, the only scholarly journal published by the University of Rhode Island. *ATQ* is a quarterly journal of 19th-century American literature and culture, publishing studies of literary works and authors, as well as non-technical articles on all other aspects of 19th-century American culture and society. The administrative staff of the journal consists of the senior editor, the business manager (half-time staff employee), and the assistant editor (a graduate student). The Assistant Editor position gives students the experience of all aspects of publishing a scholarly journal, including research, working with manuscript authors, completing layout design, and overseeing the printing process.

### **V. 5.b. Council for Literature of the Fantastic**

CLF is an internationally recognized organization which has given URI a great deal of positive recognition as a force of literary change. Its staff consists of both URI graduate students and faculty, and literary professionals from around the country and abroad. With the help of state and university funding, in 1995 Professor Daniel Pearlman launched CLF. Five issues of its magazine/newsletter, *CLF News*, have seen print. CLF has now gone completely online. The purpose of CLF is to promote the recognition of marketing of serious literature in English that departs from the realistic tradition and includes non-mimetic, or fantastic, elements.

### ***V.6. Series, Events, and Public Relations***

The Department of English has co-hosted (with the Honors Speakers Fund, the Center for the Humanities, Women's Studies, Film Media, and other affiliated programs) a host of distinguished speakers and events over the past decades, drawing diverse audiences from the University, the South County Community, and neighboring communities in Connecticut and Providence. In recent years, we have sought to formalize our speakers events into regular series, in hopes of establishing a more solid funding base, making it possible to offer distinguished speakers honoraria more in keeping with their high profiles. At the same time, we have also formalized the public relations component of our program, and are now publishing an on-line monthly newsletter of the professional, outreach, and pedagogical accomplishments of faculty, per course instructors, undergraduate and graduate students.

#### **V.6.a. URI Writer's Collective and R E A D / W R I T E Series**

For decades, the URI Writers Collective, a dedicated group of faculty, graduate students, and occasionally community members, have hosted readings and workshops, organized colloquia and discussion groups relative to the literary arts, initiated a Coffee Hour for URI undergraduate English majors, (to encourage dialogue beyond the classroom), and orchestrated undergraduate and graduate readings that emerge from our Creative Writing seminars. In 2004-2005, URI English major alum and New School graduate, Penelope Cray, having returned temporarily to teach part-time at URI, formalized the Writers Collective reading series, titled it **Read/Write**, and co-organized the series with Professor of English, Mary Cappello.

In its inaugural year, the Read/Write series was designed specifically to showcase the range and depth of literary practice, talent, and expertise of per course Instructors who teach in the English Department, whose work otherwise might miss attention, as well as to continue the initiative to bring writers from across the country and abroad to read at URI. In '05/'06, the series featured writers Talvikki Ansel, Matthea Harvey, Amity Gaige, Kevin Prufer, Gillian Kiley, Anna Rabinowitz, Miranda Mellis, Christina Pugh, Kate Schatz, Jason Stumpf, Tisa Bryant, Robert Leuci, Timothy Watt, Mary Angel Blount, Sam White, Jessica Gianfrocco, Craig Morgan Teicher, Matt Derby, Kathleen Hughes, and Jody Lisberger.

In years past, the Writers Collective boasted the presence on campus of acclaimed British novelist, Sarah Waters; biographer, memoirist and literary critic, Sharon O'Brien; Russian literary theorist and writer, Mikhail Epstein; Sicilian American writer and critic Edvige Giunta and filmmaker, Kym Ragusa; queer nonfiction, fiction writer, and film theorist, James Morrison; African American fiction and nonfiction writer, Thomas Glave; poet and editor of *Barrow Street*, Peter Covino; URI alum Norah Pollard, the poet, and daughter of the famous jockey, "Red" Pollard, and URI alum, Michael C. Keith, author of numerous books on broadcast media-radio, and the memoir, The Next Better Place, to name a few.

### **V.6.b. Faculty Colloquium**

The new Faculty Colloquium Series was instituted in 2004 as a showcase for featuring the creative and scholarly work of full-time Faculty in the Department of English. This forum for the exchange of ideas and work-in-progress has contributed towards a renewed sense of intellectual vitality in the Department of English.

### **V.7. Outreach**

#### **Changing Lives Through Literature Program**

In the spring 2001 semester the URI English Department became an affiliate of a nationally recognized and highly acclaimed program that offers criminal offenders the opportunity of participating in a literature seminar rather than going to jail. The Changing Lives Through Literature program was founded in 1991 by Dr. Robert Waxler, Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts/Dartmouth. Dorothy Donnelly helped to found the Rhode Island Chapter of the CLTL program in 2001, and since then, the URI English Department, in collaboration with English Departments at Rhode Island College and Bryant College, has been offering non-credit literature seminars through this program since it was founded in 2001. Associate Professor Valerie Karno currently heads the program. To date, the program is run on a voluntary basis, with no funding from public or private sources.

## **VI. Affiliated Programs:**

### **VI.1. English Language Studies Program**

English Language Studies offers a variety of services to assist URI undergraduate and graduate students for whom English is not a first language. The Program offers two levels of assistance; at the undergraduate level, courses are available for students who wish to improve their oral and written English skills. At the Graduate level, ELS houses the International Teaching Assistants (ITA) Program, whose purpose it is to enable International Teaching Assistants to demonstrate their oral proficiency in English. The ITA Program at URI is part of a network of New England college and university ITA Programs called NEITAN. The URI English Language Studies Program also offers courses specifically designed to help international students succeed in their graduate

studies. While the ELS Program is fiscally housed in the English Department, it is a separate academic entity, is administered by a full-time lecturer, and its classes are taught by the lecturer and a per course instructor. Lecturer Mary Jo La Rocco currently directs the ELS program.

## **VI.2. Feinstein College of Continuing Education, Providence**

Currently, it is possible for returning or non-traditional students to receive the BA in English by taking courses through the Feinstein College of Continuing Education, located on the Providence Campus. While this program is fiscally separate from the Kingston-based English Department, the Chair of the English Department, in consultation with the coordinator of scheduling and advising at FCCE, is active in the development and maintenance of all academic and curricular aspects of the FCCE program in English. Undergraduate courses on the Providence campus are staffed by a combination of per course instructors and full time Kingston English faculty teaching on an overload basis. Every attempt is made to offer the range of courses necessary to fulfill all the requirements for the BA in English. Of the 375 URI English Majors in the 2004-05 academic year, 55 of them were classified as based in the FCCE program.

**2006 update:** 49 out of 400 students were based on the Providence campus as of February 2006. In addition, three graduate courses per semester are offered on the Providence campus by full time Kingston faculty on an in-load basis, to ensure that Providence-based graduate students may take advantage of our MA and PhD programs. This program is especially appealing to Rhode Island school teachers seeking to maintain or upgrade their certification.

## **VII. Strategic Goals**

Following are a number of strategic goals which the English Department has set for itself with the objective of overcoming barriers that impede our mission to provide the best academic and experiential opportunities for our Undergraduate and Graduate students, and to maximize our chief strengths. These goals include first and foremost the **hiring of full-time tenure track faculty**; followed by Curricular Revision and the completion of Student Outcome Assessments; the Enhancement of our Reading Series; Improved conditions for our per course instructors; the Clarification of our relationship to the FCCE Program; enhanced resources for maintaining a healthy liaison with Alumni; enhanced resources for our Outreach programs; and the institution of an American Studies Program.

### **VII.1. FIRST GOAL**

#### **Restoration of Full Time Faculty to Acceptable Minimum of 27**

As mentioned above, our primary goal is to restore the minimum number of full time faculty in the English Department to a level we believe is acceptable for the best functioning of the department in all its aspects. Due to a spate of retirements, non-

renewals, deaths, the secession of the Writing Program, and other untimely departures, the total count of full-time English Department faculty has dropped from 30+ in the late eighties to an overworked corps of 20, where it has hovered for the past several years despite some recent hires. As outlined above in Section V.1., the ratio of Graduate Faculty to Graduate students is about 1/5. At University of New Hampshire (the only peer institution which has a PhD program) the ratio is 1/4. We wish to reach a desired ratio equal at least to that of UNH, that is, 1/4.

The ratio of English Faculty to English Undergraduate Majors (in Kingston and Providence combined) is 1/19, and in Kingston only, is 1/16. Our desired ratio in this case is 1/14 for Kingston and Providence combined, and 1/11 for Kingston only.

To meet desired ratios we would need to reach a minimum total of **27 full time faculty** in the English Department alone. Given projected retirements over the next 5 years, it is estimated that in order to reach this goal, we will need to hire a total of at least **11 faculty**.

With only 20 FTEs on staff we are stretched to a bare minimum with regard to a number of areas:

- \* staffing of all upper levels courses necessary to meet the needs of our majors and minors;
- \* staffing of enough lower levels General Education courses to meet the needs of majors, minors and General Education students (most sections are staffed by TAs and Per Course instructors, thus diminishing the department's ability to provide best possible instruction and advising support);
- \* staffing of Departmental and University wide committees (faculty find it difficult to maintain departmental governance and participate in University-wide committees as well; indeed, we have had to suspend activity of at least two departmental committees until our total FTE count reaches an adequate minimum again);
- \* all aspects of graduate program, but especially refinement and maintenance of curriculum and comprehensive exam process.
- \* review of per course instructors (presently, due to understaffing, there is no review process for per course instructors)

We agree with the policy of the Association of Departments of English regarding the ratio of part-time to full-time faculty, that:

Each department should establish an appropriate limit on the number of adjunct faculty members in relation to the number of tenured or tenure-track faculty members and of graduate students serving as apprentice teachers. The norm in a department should be the tenured or tenure-track position. As tenured faculty members retire, they should be replaced by tenure-track faculty members. Departments that routinely assign a large part of undergraduate instruction to adjunct faculty members should reconsider their staffing practices.

Restoration of total English Faculty to a minimum of 27 FTEs will help to ensure that no single faculty member will be stretched beyond her share to meet teaching, research, and service goals, and that Undergraduate and Graduate students are able to take full advantage of our teaching and advising expertise. Moreover, bringing our count to a minimum of 27 will enable English Department faculty to make more regular yearly commitments to other interdisciplinary programs such as Film Media (at present, it is very difficult to spare a faculty member who wishes to teach a FLM [as opposed to ENG] history or theory course); Honors (at present, it is difficult for English to release faculty members who wish to sign up for limited joint appointments with Honors); Comparative Literature, Women's Studies, African and African American Studies, etc. It will also help us to revive the New England Studies Program, and to make steps toward establishing an American Studies Program.

Following are areas which will be enhanced by an overall restoration of English Faculty count to 27; in each case, we have also indicated where hiring in a **particular** area will ensure vitality of a given emphasis in English and affiliated Programs.

#### **VII.1.a. OBJECTIVE 1. Maintain and Enhance Coverage of Historical Periods**

At present, we require our majors to take three courses, choosing from among a large selection of courses in the University Catalog, that cover periods prior to 1700. Even with planned curricular revision, we expect to require Majors to take a range of courses in all historical periods. However, only four faculty are qualified to cover courses in these earlier periods; two of them hold administrative positions in the Department and thus have limited teaching loads, a third is on leave this year, and the fourth has also taken an unexpected leave. At least two of these faculty members are near retirement. It is thus imperative that we hire faculty whose expertise covers earlier periods, to meet the Department's mission to offer comprehensive coverage in all major periods of literary and cultural study, at both graduate and undergraduate levels.

##### **Action:**

By 2006: Hire 1 Faculty member in period pre-dating 1700

By 2007: Hire second Faculty member in period pre-dating 1700

**2006 Update:** in the Spring of 2006 we hired a specialist in Early-Modern literature, and made an offer to a specialist in Medieval literature, but the Medieval offer was declined. We will be requesting permission to hire in the area of Medieval literature and culture in the 2006-07 academic year.

##### **Resources:**

Recent retirements of 2 faculty in this area; Items E and F in President Carother's 2003-2006 Strategic Plan: to increase the number of full-time, tenure track faculty committed to undergraduate education by twenty and to increase total tenure track faculty by twenty. Permission granted to conduct search in Fall 05 for Specialist in "Critical or Cultural

Theorist in British Literature before 1700 specializing in Medieval or Early Modern” to begin in Fall of 2006.

### **VII.1.b. OBJECTIVE 2: Maintain and Enhance Creative Writing Program**

In keeping with our mission to offer creative as well as critical training in literature, we have a strong commitment to maintaining the integrity of the Creative Writing component of our program. Two retirements in the past year have reduced our Creative Writing faculty to 1 full time faculty member, but she is also responsible for covering courses in American Literature and Culture. While many of our per course instructors are talented creative writers, holding degrees from some of the most prestigious MFA programs in the country, they cannot be expected to mentor students, coordinate reading series, and offer advising about publishing opportunities: this is really the role of properly compensated full-time faculty. It is obvious that we must hire two Creative Writers to at least maintain the integrity of our program. In the long run, we would welcome the establishment of an Endowed Chair in Creative Writing, which would allow us to bring Distinguished Visiting Creative Writers, thus bringing our program in line with some of the most exciting Creative Writing Programs in the country. We might also entertain the idea of hiring one or two MFA’s in Creative Writing as Lecturers (given that they do not have PhDs and cannot be hired into full time tenure track positions).

#### **Action:**

By 2006: Hire 1 Creative Writer (Fiction, Poetry, or Screenwriting)

By 2007: Hire second Creative Writer (Fiction, Poetry, or Screenwriting)

By 2010: Establish an Endowed Chair in Creative Writing and hire 2 Creative Writers with MFAs as Lecturers, to cover both Creative Writing and general education courses.

**2006 Update:** In Spring of 2006, we hired a specialist in Creative Writing/Poetry. We will be requesting permission to hire in Creative Writing in another genre in the 2006-07 academic year.

#### **Resources:**

Recent retirements of two faculty in this area. Items E and F in President Carother’s 2003-2006 Strategic Plan: to increase the number of full-time, tenure track faculty committed to undergraduate education by twenty and to increase total tenure track faculty by twenty.

### **VII.1.c. OBJECTIVE 3: Maintain and Enhance Film Media offerings**

The English Department has always contributed some of the most exciting, rigorous, and dynamic courses to the Film Media Program, and has been actively involved in the founding, development, and recent success of the program since its earliest stages. The study of film has for decades been an integral component of the undergraduate and graduate English Department Curriculum, with enrollment in film courses going up every

year. We have even found it possible to offer lecture-style film courses at the 300-level to classes of over 100 students, in an effort to meet the demands of the growing population of students interested in film studies. While the new Film Media Major (and continuing Minor) has an important studio base, offering courses in a range of film media practices from experimental to more commercially oriented courses, the English Department believes that no Film Media Program can claim to offer a seriously academic study of the history of the moving image without courses devoted solely to the critical and theoretical assessment of a range of film and media practices. This, we believe, is the most important contribution made by the English Department through film and media based courses. Thus, in keeping with our serious and abiding investment in Film Media Studies, and with our commitment to a truly interdisciplinary program, we are eager to hire at least two faculty whose training is solely in Film Media Studies. At the same time, at least two English faculty who have been major contributors to our film offerings have retired or left the university, with a third near retirement. This year, one of our most popular 300-level film courses has had to be staffed with an advanced Graduate TA—a situation that needs immediate remedy through the hiring of full time faculty in Film Media. The hiring of at least two FTE with exclusive training in Film, Media or Digital culture and bringing total FTE count to 27, will ensure enhanced participation in Film Media Program, through continued offerings of ENG film courses, and through release of English Faculty from at least one section per semester for the purposes of teaching FLM courses (for a total of 2 FLM courses per year).

**Action:**

By 2006: Hire 1 specialist in Film/Media Studies with emphasis on U.S. and Global Film traditions

By 2007 or 08: Hire second specialist in Film and digital culture

**2006 Update:** No searches were granted in Film Media Studies. We will request permission to hire a specialist in Film Media Studies in the 2006-07 academic year.

**Resources:**

Recent departure of two faculty (with expected departure of a third) who had been teaching the bulk of our film courses; commitment expressed by URI Administration to the growth of the new Film Media Major; expected increase in enrollment due to new Film Media Major. Items E and F in President Carother's 2003-2006 Strategic Plan: to increase the number of full-time, tenure track faculty committed to undergraduate education by twenty and to increase total tenure track faculty by twenty.

**VII.1.d. OBJECTIVE 4: Maintain Linguistics offerings**

Regularly offered linguistics courses are essential both to the rigorousness and vitality of the English Major and Minor, and especially for Education Majors who are required to get training in Linguistics in order to be certified in both Elementary and Secondary Education. Our current Linguistics specialist expects to retire in the next couple of years;

hence he will need to be replaced promptly enough so that there will be no gap in our linguistics offerings (which would make it impossible for some Education Majors to graduate on time).

**Action:**

By 2007 or 08: Hire 1 Linguistics Specialist

**Resources:**

Expected Retirement of current linguist in next 2 years. Items E and F in President Carother's 2003-2006 Strategic Plan: to increase the number of full-time, tenure track faculty committed to undergraduate education by twenty and to increase total tenure track faculty by twenty.

**VII.1.e. OBJECTIVE 5: Maintain and Enhance offerings in English Studies, American Studies, and Interdisciplinary Studies**

With our commitment to offering a full range of courses in English, American Studies, and Interdisciplinary courses, we believe it is imperative to hire at least 4 more full time faculty in these areas to bring the count of full time faculty to the minimum of 27 by 2010. We believe that some of these hires will help maintain our commitment to diversity in hiring practices as well.

**Action:**

Between 2007 and 2010: Hire 4 FTE in relevant areas, with possible emphases on Native American Literature and Culture; Asian American Literature and Culture; Literature of the Americas; Literature and one other discipline such as Science, Medicine, or Business.

**Resources:**

Recent and expected retirements of 4 FTE in English and American studies. Items E and F in President Carother's 2003-2006 Strategic Plan: to increase the number of full-time, tenure track faculty committed to undergraduate education by twenty and to increase total tenure track faculty by twenty.

**VII.2. SECOND GOAL**

**Curricular Revision and Student Outcome Assessments**

While both our undergraduate and graduate curriculums were revised in the 1990s, we are currently reviewing them in light of problems that have come up regarding flexibility of the major for students, shifts in Departmental focus with new hires, and a desire to consolidate and streamline some of our course offerings. During the 2004-05 Academic

year, we made considerable headway towards rethinking aspects of our undergraduate curriculum, and will be taking more concrete steps in the coming year to solidify changes that we wish to make. We also plan to make some changes in the Graduate Curriculum. At the same time we understand that the English Department is slated to undergo Student Outcome Assessments starting in the Fall of 2006. With that in mind, we have begun to integrate our efforts towards curricular change with our initial steps towards Student Outcome Assessments.

**VII.2.a. OBJECTIVE 1: Make desired changes to Undergraduate Curriculum using Student Outcome Assessments materials as guiding documents**

**Action:**

Fall/Spring 2005-06: English Department Retreat in September 05, for the purpose of finalizing our plans for a revised undergraduate curriculum. At this same retreat, all faculty will be acquainted with the purpose, procedures, and schedule for Student Outcome Assessments. We will use some of the driving questions provided in the Assessment materials to more clearly articulate the overall shape and details of our undergraduate curriculum. Throughout the following year we will finalize the revisions to our undergraduate curriculum.

**Resources:**

A grant has been provided by the Office of Learning and Outcomes Assessment for catering and photocopying for the September 2005 retreat.

**2006 Update:** A significant change was made to the undergraduate English Major program: students are no longer required to take four courses in a specified Focus Area; Focus Areas are now optional. We are observing student demand for focus areas and will develop curricular changes in accordance with their needs as well as with our strengths as a program. For instance, students taking an emphasis in Creative Writing were disappointed when we dropped the Creative Writing Capstone course (along with our other capstone courses) a couple of years ago. In recognition of student demand for Creative Writing Capstone courses, we are offering one section of an optional Senior Seminar per year in Creative Writing. Further curricular changes are to be considered as we move forward with the Student Outcomes Assessments process in 2006-07.

**VII.2.b. OBJECTIVE 2: Reduce Class size to 25 for all Writing Intensive Courses**

We are in agreement with the Association of Departments of English's "Guidelines for Class Size and Workload for College and University Teachers of English: A Statement of Policy" that :

College English teachers should teach no more than thirty-five students in a literature course and no more than twenty-five in a writing-intensive course. For

each additional thirty-five students, a teacher should have a qualified assistant to help with the evaluations of written assignments.

In keeping with this policy, we believe that since almost all URI English Courses are by definition writing intensive, their capacity should be set at no more than 25 students. The exception to this are large lectures of 100 students, in which case 3 graduate student graders are provided to help the professor with the written assignments and to make small group work possible.

**Action:** Limit all writing intensive classes to no more than 25.

**2006 Update:** no action taken on this initiative yet.

**Resources:** Most upper-level courses are already set at 25; this revision would pertain to some remaining General Education courses. Item G in President Carother's 2003-2006 Strategic Plan, to "complete implementation of the new General Education program" will help to ensure that our Gen Ed courses are limited to 25, given their nature as writing intensive courses.

**VII.2.c. OBJECTIVE 3 Carry out Student Outcome Assessments Plan (including additional curricular revision)**

**Actions:**

Fall/Spring 2005-06: Process and refine undergraduate curricular changes.

Summer 2006 Identify committee for Assessment of English Major and Minor, and determine chair of committee

Fall 2006      Develop Expected Student Outcomes

Spring 2007    Establish Level of Attainment expected for each outcome  
Develop Assessment measures and timeline

Fall 2007      URI and Area Assessment Advisors consult with English Department  
Consider curricular or assessment process changes as per Assessment  
Advisors recommendations  
Conduct Assessment according to timeline

Spring 2008    Analyze results of third phase assessments

Fall 2008      URI and Area Assessment Advisors consult with English Department  
Consider curricular or assessment process changes as per Assessment  
Advisors recommendations

2008-09        Results of complete round of assessments; follow up with any necessary

revisions

**Resources:**

Additional Grant opportunities promised as a way of facilitating the Assessments process at URI. Release time will be requested for Chair of Outcome Assessments Committee.

**2006 Update:** The English Department has received two Davis Educational Foundation Grants: one to secure a course release for Assistant Professor Ryan Trimm to coordinate the first phase of the English Department's Student Outcomes Assessments process in the 06-07 academic year, and one to fund retreats in aid of this process.

**VII.3. THIRD GOAL: Enhancement of our Reading Series**

**Objectives:**

In 2005/06, the READ/WRITE Series was made possible by a hugely successful weeklong Book and Bake Sale carried out by the faculty in the English Department, and thereafter by the generous individual contributions of Professor Dorothy Donnelly, Dean Winifred Brownell, and Provost Beverly Swan. We do not think it is feasible to rely on time-consuming sales and fundraising events, however, to replenish the Writers Collective account at the URI Foundation. To date we have included only URI faculty in our Faculty Colloquium Series, but we would like to enhance this series with a permanent Invited Speakers' Series, to enhance opportunities for engaging in dialogue with the national and international literary and cultural scholarly community, and to enable our students to witness such dialogue here on our own campus.

**Action:**

We will therefore be seeking contributions from Alumni, and are working closely with Tom Zorabedian in the Development office to increase the funding base for what we hope to be a Creative Writing series and a scholarly speaker's series with national recognition.

**Resources:**

While we have always relied on support from the Honors Speakers Fund and the Center for the Humanities, it is felt that additional funding housed in our own URI Foundation accounts would ensure continuity for our Speakers' Series, and reduce bureaucratic paperwork that often hinders and discourages faculty from inviting outside speakers. Support from Development Office in efforts to raise funds for this series would be very welcome, and we have, and will continue to, put together packages featuring these Series to help the Development Office attract donors.

**2006 Update:** In the Spring of 2006, we developed a flyer featuring the READ/WRITE Series, and gave multiple copies to Tom Zorabedian in the Development Office. It is hoped that with the help of these flyers, he will be able to find donors who will fund our upcoming Series, or even to establish a foundation base from which to fund the Series in future years.

#### **VII.4. FOURTH GOAL: Improve conditions for our per course instructors**

The English Department recognizes that hiring some per course instructors is necessary to meet the changing needs of the university due to fluctuations in enrollment and in total number of full time faculty due to sabbatical, fellowship, and medical leaves. However, the current ratio of full time faculty to per course instructors is grossly disproportionate; moreover, per course instructors on the Kingston campus are currently making only \$3150 per course, and receive no benefits. Moreover, we would like to find ways to make instructors feel more integrated into the life of the department. We are in agreement with the Association of Department of English policy on adjunct faculty, which we think is also appropriate as pertains to per course faculty. It reads as follows:

All adjunct faculty should be treated as professionals. Each department should develop a set of guidelines for adjunct faculty employment. These guidelines may vary from institution to institution but should address the following concerns:

- a. Adjunct faculty members should be hired, reviewed, and given teaching assignments according to processes comparable to those established for the tenured or tenure-track faculty members.
- b. They should be given mailboxes, office space, and clerical support.
- c. They should receive adequate introduction to their teaching assignments, departments, and institutions.
- d. They should be paid prorated salaries and should receive basic benefits such as health insurance.
- e. They should be eligible for incentives that foster professional development, including merit raises and funds for research and travel.
- f. As appropriate, they should participate in determining departmental and institutional policies.

While we have succeeded in meeting the recommendations in b and c, we need additional resources to implement the other recommendations.

**2006 Update:** Due to lack of resources, no action has been taken on this goal.

##### **VII.4.a. OBJECTIVE 1: Restore Total Full-time Faculty Count to 27, thus reducing Per Course to Faculty Ratio**

**Action:**

By 2010: Hire at least 11 Full time Faculty

**Resources:**

See VII.1. Items E and F in President Carother's 2003-2006 Strategic Plan: to increase the number of full-time, tenure track faculty committed to undergraduate education by twenty and to increase total tenure track faculty by twenty.

**2006 Update:** While we hired two new faculty in 2006 (Early Modern and Creative Writing), we lost 3 faculty: one death, one retirement, and one departure from the university. We are therefore no closer to our desired goal of bringing the Full-Time faculty count to 27.

**VII.4.b. OBJECTIVE 2 Institute Review Process for Per Course Instructors**

**Action:**

Once Objective 1 above is attained, this will ensure that we have adequate full time faculty to develop a review system for per course instructors. We envision a review system that includes the participation of both full time faculty and per course instructors, to encourage the exchange of ideas about pedagogy, to help further integrate per course instructors into the life of the department, and to establish a more transparent base from which to make future per course hiring decisions.

**Resources:**

See VII.1. Items E and F in President Carother's 2003-2006 Strategic Plan: to increase the number of full-time, tenure track faculty committed to undergraduate education by twenty and to increase total tenure track faculty by twenty.

**2006 Update:** Due to lack of resources, no action has been taken on this goal.

**VII.4.c. OBJECTIVE 3: Advocate for Increased Salary and Benefits for Per Course Instructors**

Not only is it ethically imperative to help in any way possible to bring per course salaries and benefits more in line with those of other area schools, but it also has the practical benefit of making us able to compete with other schools for the best instructors in the area. The most qualified instructors are increasingly reluctant to teach for us, and have in fact declined teaching offers when they discover how little they will be compensated.

**Action:**

Assist in any way possible when per course instructors themselves seek increased compensation across the board.

**Resources:**

Item G in President Carother's 2003-2006 Strategic Plan, to "complete implementation of the new General Education program" will, we assume, necessarily entail the general improvement of conditions for per course instructors, since so many of the General Education courses offered by the English Department are staffed by per course faculty.

**2006 Update:** Salaries of per course instructors in Kingston are still at \$3200, in contrast to the salary for the Providence campus of \$3548. This is a serious problem; this summer, I lost several regular per course instructors to schools who pay better wages, despite the instructors' desire to remain at URI—it just was not economically feasible for them to stay here. Additionally, there were several occasions when, upon finding a well qualified instructor to teach some of the 14 courses that were left un-covered, I was told by the potential instructor that s/he had to decline my offer because of low pay and lack of benefits. I remain confident that all our courses for the Fall semester will be delivered by well-trained instructors; however, I had to go quite far down on my list of applicants before I was able to make the final hires. This situation gets worse, not better, every year.

## **VII.5. FIFTH GOAL**

### **Clarify our relationship to the FCCE Program**

Currently the relationship between the English Major in Kingston and that offered to returning students in Providence has some ambiguities. These include the initiative in recent years to increase the number of WebCT-based courses offered through the FCCE program, and the question of whether the FCCE Program could successfully offer the BA to traditional students.

#### **VII.5.a. OBJECTIVE 1: Review impact of WebCT based courses on Kingston English Major**

While we understand that there are economic reasons for wishing to expand Web-based course offerings on the Providence Campus, we are as yet unconvinced that these courses best serve our Majors, or even our General Education students. Since these courses are increasingly being sought by Kingston as well as by non-Kingston based students, we find it imperative to investigate these courses with two objectives:

- \* to determine their efficacy in carrying out the Mission of our programs, noting their limitations, their advantages, and determining which courses, if any, are appropriate for Web-based instruction and

- \* to determine the impact on enrollment in our face-to-face courses in Kingston, given the increase in enrollment in Web-based courses offered through Providence.

#### **Action:**

2005-06: Full time Kingston based faculty have agreed to “monitor” the WebCT courses currently being offered by per course instructors on the Providence campus, and will make recommendations about the efficacy of these courses by the end of the Spring semester.

Spring 2006 (and possibly thereafter): Registration in WebCT courses will be limited for Kingston students to only those who can show sufficient need for and ability to perform well in a WebCT based, rather than a Kingston face-to-face section of the course.

**Resources:**

Faculty have agreed to monitor and evaluate the courses on a volunteer basis, though some kind of compensation for their time would be appreciated, say, increased travel money for conference participation. The Dean of Arts and Sciences has indicated that a university-wide examination of online instruction will be taking place in the near future: we expect that this will involve participation by the English Department, and that resources will be set aside to assist in the process. No doubt the assessment of online teaching, as a very specific way of delivering the undergraduate curriculum, will be a component in ongoing Student Outcome Assessments, and will therefore receive some funding from the Outcome Assessments Office for evaluation.

**2006 Update:** No funding has been offered as yet for the development of Online courses by full-time English faculty, and thus, no such courses have been developed. Nor has the English Department been invited to serve on the university-wide committee that was established in 2005 to examine Online courses, despite our request that we be represented on that committee. Meanwhile, the number of WebCT courses offered through the FCCE program has been significantly reduced. Any student may register for these courses because it was very difficult to provide adequate advising staff to screen Kingston-based students and determine whether they qualified for WebCT courses due to special circumstances. It is still felt that the face-to-face format is more appropriate for our English Department Programs. Some WebCT courses have been retained to help with the needs of students who are truly limited and prevented from attending face to face courses, and to ensure enrollment levels at the FCCE campus.

**VII.5.b. OBJECTIVE 2: Review question of FCCE based Major for Traditional Students**

Recently, the English Faculty voted against approving a proposal whereby traditional (as opposed to returning) students might receive the BA in English solely through instruction at the Providence Campus. The primary reason is that we are presently too understaffed to adequately maintain the Programs on the Kingston Campus, and therefore obviously too understaffed to begin a program for traditional students on the Providence campus. We believe that students receiving the BA in English on the Providence campus should have access to the same teaching and advising resources available to Kingston students; to assure this, there must be enough Full Time Faculty in the English Department to allow several of them to participate in the CCE program each semester on a regular basis.

To recap: presently the ratio of FTE to Majors in Kingston only is 1/16. Desired ratio is 1/11, which would be achievable were we to increase total FTE count to 27.

**Action:**

**Hire 5 Additional Full Time Faculty in English**

We believe that the same ratio would be necessary to properly administer a Majors program on the Providence campus: that is, the ratio of FTE (teaching in-load) to majors would need to be 1/11. To achieve this, with the current Providence Majors count being 55 at Providence, an additional 5 FTE would need to be hired, bringing the total of full time faculty on the Kingston campus to 32 (27 to administer the Kingston program, and an additional 5 to administer the Providence Program). This would ensure that both programs had the desired FTE to Majors ratio of 1/11.

**Resources:**

The Plan that had been presented for this program included the proposed hiring of extra Full Time Kingston-based faculty, who would teach and advise on the Providence Campus as part of their regular load. We are in agreement with this proposal, though we would argue that more faculty need to be hired overall. Our position at this point is that the establishment of the English Major for traditional students on the Providence campus would require first that the total full time faculty count on the Kingston campus be increased to the acceptable minimum of 27, and only after that, with the hiring of 5 more full-time faculty, bringing total count to 32, could we take on the increased workload of offering the Major to Providence students.

**2006 Update:** Despite recent hires, the total count of Full-time Faculty is still too low to adequately run the Kingston-based programs while also expanding the Providence-based program. However, in an effort to enhance the Majors experience for Providence-based students, and to reinforce ties between the Kingston and the Providence undergraduate programs, two changes were made as of Spring, 2006. First: a full-time faculty member from the Kingston campus has taken over the role of coordinator for the Providence courses and second: the number of graduate courses offered on the Providence campus has been reduced to two, but a 400-level undergraduate course, open to MA students, and taught in-load by a Kingston full-time faculty member has been added. This last change means that we continue to meet the graduate curricular needs on the Providence campus while also increasing the availability of Kingston faculty to the Providence-based students.

**VII.6. SIXTH GOAL**

**Enhance liaison with Alumni**

The English Department has already completed an e-mail and snail-mail database of English Department alumni. The Alumni Liaison Committee established a number of objectives it wished to achieve in the next year:

\* to make use of email addresses in contacting alumni and inviting response. It is important to let alumni know what the department is doing, but we also would like to know what alumni may be doing in their professional lives.

\* to re-establish a Newsletter directed specifically at alumni, in both hard and electronic format, and including:

- a) the calendar of the Faculty Colloquium and the Read and Write Series.
- b) a tear-off section (or a section one could key on) so that alumni may make contributions to the URI Foundation for the English Department (using our Foundation number). It may be desirable to have some options available to donors: scholarships, speakers, etc.
- c) articles from alumni themselves.
- d) bi-annual publication: in the fall and late spring.

\* to establish student internships to help with the Newsletter and databases

\* to establish one social event, preferably in the fall, that would include alumni, faculty, and graduate students. This event might be held at the University Club or at the new Alumni Building.

\* to invite interested/interesting alumni, across a range of professions, to campus to speak with undergraduate and graduate students where appropriate.

\* establish a website whereby alumni may e-mail each other (as well as faculty) with ideas and concerns having to do with the English Department.

By 2010, it is hoped that we will be able to establish an English Department “House” that is simultaneously international, where students might live and work together and where alumni, faculty, and students might gather both to play—and to work—on issues existing not merely in Kingston but in this country and in the world at large.

**Resources:** President Carother’s Strategic Plan aims for an “increase by at least 6% each year of this plan the numbers of alumni who directly participate in some form of support to the University (i.e. as donors, boosters, members of volunteer committees and boards, or attendees at University and alumni sponsored events)” We expect that the English Department will be the beneficiary of some of this Alumni support, both through its own efforts, and through those of the Development Office.

**2006 Update:** Since faculty count is still too low, individuals have been stretched too thinly as they try to meet the demands of teaching, advising, curricular discussions, PR and Readings Series, Student Contests and Scholarships, administration, research, editing, etc. Thus certain committees have made little progress beyond devising a plan.

The Alumni Liaison committee is one of them. However, it is hoped that we can enlist a student worker to begin the process of contacting alumni and working towards a newsletter in the 2006-07 academic year.

## **VII.7. SEVENTH GOAL**

### **Enhance resources for our Outreach programs**

**Actions:** While the **Changing Lives Through Literature Program** has been run entirely on a volunteer basis, it is hoped that donors might be found who have an interest in supporting this program. Operating currently with no resources, we would like to find funding for a number of objectives including:

- \* provide students with instructional materials they can keep for reference after the program (no such materials are currently given to students).
- \* develop a tracking system for our participants, to note what they are doing months and years after our interactions with them. To do this we need funds for creating and staffing a computer database.
- \* encourage increased faculty participation in this program by compensating instructors for the significant time commitment involved in teaching this class.
- \* increase our visibility and public relations. We are involved in making a documentary about the program we hope to air on PBS, and funding to help complete the documentary would be invaluable as well.

### **Resources:**

Section III of the President's Strategic Plan for the University (under Research and Outreach) lists as its foremost goal to "focus the University's research and outreach programs toward assisting Rhode Island achieve its goals for a strong economy, a highly productive workforce and an involved citizenry." The Changing Lives Through Literature Program clearly contributes to this goal by helping citizens to return to the workforce, thus contributing to the strength of the economy. It is presumed, therefore, that this very important Outreach program will receive some of the assistance afforded to other outreach programs originated through URI.

**2006 Update:** While this program has continued to proceed with the aid of three faculty volunteers, and although several participants have successfully graduated from the program, no funding has yet been established to enhance and enrich it.

## VII.8. EIGHTH GOAL: Create an American Studies Program

**Objective:** At the cutting edge of interdisciplinary studies, American Studies programs have been implemented at nearly all major universities across the country—many of which have been started through English departments. As a major step in linking departments and colleges across URI, and thinking about the links between American policies and the globe, an American Studies program would be an important addition to the progressive English Department and URI curriculum.

**Action:** Work on developing this program within the English Department, and as a collaborative effort between Departments and Colleges, including History, Film Media, Philosophy, Art History, Languages, Communications, Economics, Psychology, Textiles, and programs in the Sciences which might want to collaborate in an interdisciplinary way on the investigation of American culture. Create a “Center for American Culture,” out of which the American Studies Program is run, and through which American Studies faculty already in the University hold colloquia. Once the program has been initiated, provide course release for the director and coordinator of the Program. Employ Graduate Students 5 hours a week to help with research and organizational aspects of the program.

### **Resources:**

We would need web space to advertise the American Studies Program once it was implemented, but the program could be staffed using current URI faculty. English Department secretaries could help with the administration of the program. Restoration of Full Time Faculty to Acceptable Minimum of 27 would ensure that faculty had time and energy to fully implement an American Studies Program that would showcase the most exciting and dynamic courses, research projects, outreach efforts already underway on campus.

**2006 Update:** Again, inadequate faculty means that not much progress has been made on this front either.

**General Update:** Obviously the single most pressing concern is inadequate faculty to meet the needs of the program. On the positive side, English Department faculty continue to be extraordinarily active in the realm of research, publishing, editing, and attendance at national and international conferences (see “English Department Annual Review for 2005-2006”). Moreover, after a serious mold outbreak in Independence Hall in Summer 2005, as well as other facilities-related hindrances to a healthy academic atmosphere (mice, insects, leaks, inadequate or broken furnishings, etc), we enjoyed a relatively pleasant academic year (2005-06) in the Surge Building on 210 Flagg Road, where we were moved during the renovation of Independence Hall. As of Fall 2006, we are enjoying a beautiful new interior environment in the newly renovated Independence Hall, complete with a brand new “Hoffmann Room” looking out onto the garden, new classroom furniture, and enhanced Audo-Visual equipment in many of our classrooms.