

Amanda Sowerby
Interim Dean, Telitha E. Lindquist College of Arts & Humanities
Weber State University
3950 West Campus Dr., Dept. 1904
Ogden, UT 84408-1904

Dear Amanda,

The following is the Master of Arts in English faculty response to the Board of Regents Program Review Report from Sept. 2020. I distributed the Report to program faculty in late-Sept., and the faculty met via Zoom to discuss responses on Oct. 7. Faculty members who could not attend were encouraged to e-mail their suggestions. The MA Steering Committee then met on Oct. 12 to discuss and synthesize faculty responses. I compiled that synthesis, and it was approved by the MA Steering Committee.

A. Mission

Recommendation: Revise the

1. Best practices for intention and planned student engagement including orientation, advising, and
2. The intention to recruit and train students from beyond the local community.
3. The training provided in the

The faculty agree and adopt the following course of action:

- 1.

concentrations. Faculty in each area will be actively involved in revising curricula. This effort will take some time, but we will begin Spring 2021, with the hopes of having the proposals through the curriculum process early in AY 21-22, and the new concentrations in place for the following Catalog Year.

3. MENG 6010 already introduces students to the various subdisciplines in English, including readings, discussions, lectures, and presentations representing each area of study within the broader discipline. As faculty revise the curriculum the program will consider how to better serve each area in this course, perhaps through co-teaching or offering it as a 2-credit hour course for al

D. Academic Advising

Recommendations:

1. The College consider hiring an academic advisor to focus on the graduate students.
2. The program provide further training for the administrative specialist in advising.
3. Clarifying the advising requirement for students.

Program faculty agree and will pursue the following course of action:

1. Support the College hiring an additional academic advisor who can specialize in graduate students, while recognizing that budgets may not allow this in the immediate future.
2. Provide opportunities for the administrative specialist to receive additional training.
3. When necessary due to high advising loads, the director will coordinate with the English Advisor to work with some of the graduate students. Members of the Steering Committee also agreed that each could assist in advising during periods of particularly high load.
4. The confusion that the Team noted on the part of students is likely due to the mix of students they spoke with, as the two-tier structure was only implemented at the beginning of AY19-20. The graduate handbook notes the two required advising sessions, our communications with new admits to the program note this, and we announce it to students at several strategic points during the year via our newsletter.

E. Faculty

Recommendations:

1. Pursue diverse hires.
2. Pursue donors to secure scholarships for graduate students.
3. Implement processes to ensure continuity when program leadership changes.

The program faculty agree with the recommendations, in part, and will pursue the following actions:

1. The program does not hire its own faculty, but relies on the faculty of the English Department, and occasionally other departments. Occasionally, the program has hired an adjunct, and the Review Team notes that more online classes might present opportunities to hire diverse adjuncts. The program faculty will support diverse hiring efforts at the departmental level. However, further contributing to the problem of adjunctification is not the route to achieve greater diversity and equality. As program director, I have a particular concern with the suggestion that we utilize adjunct hiring to diversify the faculty, as this could exacerbate preexisting racial, socioeconomic, and other disadvantages.
2. The Steering Committee presented a list of funding needs to Brent Parkin in the Development Office. Scholarships were #1 on that list. The program will continue to work with the Development Office to build our scholarship endowments.
3. The director and administrative specialist are keeping records of day-to-day and cyclical operations in a calendar-style handbook. This will be available as a manual/guide for future program leadership.

F. Program Support

Recommendations:

1. Revise the website by moving all internal materials off the public-facing area and into a Canvas course as well as removing the remnant of an older webpage.
2. Create a newsletter that would share information with students and could also be sent to alumni, which would help with student retention and encourage program alumni to feel connected with the program.

The program faculty agree with the recommendations and will pursue the following course of action:

1. Kate Johnson will create a Google Site for the program similar to the highly functional page for the College (which she helped create). We will migrate all internal information and documents to that page once it is complete, with a goal of January 2021.

2. The program already produces a monthly newsletter for students, which welcomes new students, provides information about job opportunities, classes, and special projects, and highlights student accomplishments. We will work to make this something that alumni would be interested in receiving and send it to those with whom we have contact.

G. Relationships with External Communities

Recommendations:

1. Develop an external advisory board that can provide feedback to the faculty on the development of the diversity, and enrollment. They also suggest the

2. Devise engaged with the program.

The program faculty do not agree with the recommendation to form an external advisory board at this time, but agree with #2 and will pursue the following actions:

1. The program sent a letter and survey to all 200+ alumni in Sp20, immediately before COVID-19 hit. Approximately 35 responses were returned, giving useful data about alumni and career placement. This information will be combined with data gathered during exit to glean a stronger picture of our job placement rates for use in recruitment materials. The survey will be re-sent to alumni who did not respond. Program faculty members have kept in touch with alumni over the years, and the program is collecting information from them to augment what we learn elsewhere.

Sincerely,



David W. Hartwig, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor and Graduate Director
Department of English, Weber State University
1395 Edvalson, Dept. 1404
Ogden, UT 84408-1404
801-626-7461
davidhartwig@weber.edu