Academic Audit Report for the Department of English M.A. Program Fall 2016

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the largest departments in TTU's College of Arts and Sciences, the Department of English offers an M.A. degree—the University's only graduate program in the humanities. The M.A. in English prepares students for further graduate education, teaching, and other careers that demand advanced analytical, reading, and communication skills.

The graduate program is delivered by a strong research faculty. The Department promotes scholarly activity and creative work by this faculty and the dissemination of research findings through publications, conferences, seminars, and other means. The Department also enhances the cultural life of the University and the region by sponsoring lectures, readings, performances, dramatic productions, writing awards, and other related activities.

A. Goals of the M.A. Program in English
The Department has established five learning objectives for its M.A. students:
- Students will demonstrate a broad and integrated knowledge of literary history, theory, and pedagogy.
- Students will be prepared for success in Ph.D. programs in English.
- Students will be prepared for success in other areas of advanced graduate education.
- Students will be prepared for teaching careers in high schools and community colleges.
- Students will be prepared for careers outside academe that require advanced analytical and communication skills.

A later section of this report presents the Department's methods for assessing these learning objectives. (See **III. A. Learning Outcomes**.)

B. Graduate Faculty
Faculty members with status as TTU graduate faculty (full or associate membership) may teach graduate-level courses or serve on committees for graduate theses or project papers.
In Fall 2011—the date of the Department's previous M.A. program report—twenty-one faculty members in the Department of English and Communications held full graduate faculty status. In the period covered by the present report (2011-2016), the Department downsized from the Department of English and Communications to just the Department of English, with Communications separated into a freestanding department. With this change, the Department of English lost five graduate faculty members with Communications specializations. Since 2011, the Department also lost six members of graduate faculty who were English specialists; four Full Professors retired, and two Assistant Professors relocated to other institutions. The Department also hired five new Assistant Professors, a new Full Professor, and two Lecturers who hold graduate faculty associate membership.

As of fall 2016, seventeen faculty members in the Department of English hold graduate faculty status (fifteen are full members, the two Lecturers are associate members). Of these

seventeen graduate faculty, fourteen hold a Ph.D., and three hold an M.F.A. Eleven rank at Full Professor, one at Associate Professor, three at Assistant Professor, two at Lecturer.

C. Teaching Load
All members of the graduate faculty teach undergraduate courses. Teaching loads for graduate faculty have improved slightly since the previous report in 2011. General education or upper-division undergraduate courses comprise the majority of the teaching load for each graduate faculty member. But while English faculty still teach a base 4/4 course load, in 2015 the department began a research course-release program for graduate faculty. Graduate faculty may request a one course release each year by making a request that outlines a project and agreeing to present a talk to the faculty on some aspect of the faculty member's research during the semester after the course release. This encouragement of faculty research is in keeping with TTU's Flight Plan goal to "expand research and faculty scholarly activity." To date, seven faculty have had these releases and three have presented department talks, with up to four more planned for Spring '17.

D. Range of Educational Backgrounds and Academic Interests
The seventeen graduate faculty members in English exhibit a wide range of educational backgrounds, areas of specialization, and research interests. Faculty members hold Ph.D. degrees from universities throughout the country, including from universities in the South (Tennessee, Auburn, Louisville, Mississippi, North Carolina, Georgia, South Carolina, and Clemson), the Northeast (SUNY Buffalo, Binghamton), the Midwest (Iowa, Indiana, Purdue, and Wisconsin), and the West (Berkeley).

In most instances, one member of the faculty provides expertise in each major literary period or area of study. Some areas of need will need to be addressed by hiring; planned hires of additional specialists in Professional Communication and Creative Writing have been postponed due to an unexpected shortfall in the university budget in 2016-17. These were approved at the Provost level but cut at the College of Arts & Sciences level when a shortfall had to be addressed. In terms of literary coverage, a recent department poll suggested that the biggest gaps exist in these areas, in descending order of importance and urgency: African-American literature; Non-Western/Anglophone/ Postcolonial literature; Modern British literature; and Medieval/Old English literature. In addition to expertise in literature, Creative Writing, and Professional Communication, graduate faculty in the department have training and research experience in areas such as Rhetoric and Composition, Linguistics, Critical Theory, Gender Studies, and Folklore.

E. Admission Requirements for M.A. Students
Regulations affecting admission, degree requirements, and other matters pertinent to graduate study are developed by TTU's Graduate School Executive Committee. Admission to English graduate study is based on merit and limited to applicants who hold an earned bachelor's degree from an accredited institution and whose undergraduate study reflects

sufficient quality and scope to indicate high promise of success in the College of Graduate Studies. At the time of application, a student must supply the College of Graduate Studies with a completed application, an official undergraduate transcript showing an overall GPA greater than 2.5, GRE scores (Verbal score, Analytical Writing score), and a Writing Sample (minimum eight-page critical essay, appropriate for submission in an upper-division, undergraduate English class).

Upon receiving application materials from the College of Graduate Studies, the Department's Graduate Advisor distributes writing samples to three members of the Department's Graduate Studies Committee, and each reader independently assigns the sample a score, using this rubric:

> 0—Reflects unacceptable undergraduate work or fails to meet submission criteria.
> 1—Reflects below average undergraduate work.
> 2—Reflects average undergraduate work and does not show potential for graduate work.
> 3—Reflects superior undergraduate work and/or shows potential for graduate work.
> 4—Reflects graduate work.
> 5—Reflects superior graduate work.

At the discretion of the Department Chair, readers may be asked to attend a meeting to calibrate scoring among readers. The cumulative total of numerical scores from all of the readers will be the Writing Sample Score. The Graduate Advisor reviews the transcripts, the GRE scores, and the Writing Sample scores and assigns a point value in each of four categories, as outlined in Table 1 (the GRE category comprises two separate scores, equally weighted). Students receiving a minimum of ten points in each category or an overall score of at least forty points are granted admission with full standing.

Table 1. Admissions Scoring Rubric for M.A. Applicants.

Transcript, based on QPA in ENGL courses above the 1000-level	GRE Verbal Score*	GRE Analytical Writing Score	Writing Sample Score
2.7-2.999 = 10 pts.	153-159 = 5 pts.	3.5-4.0 = 5 pts.	9-10 = 10 pts.
3.0-3.499 = 20 pts.	160-165 = 10 pts.	4.5-5.0 = 10 pts.	11-12 = 20 pts.
3.5-4.0 = 30 pts.	166-170 = 20 pts.	5.5-6.0 = 15 pts.	13-15 = 30 pts.

Not surprisingly, most applicants possess an undergraduate degree in English. Applicants with fewer than fifteen undergraduate English credit hours may be granted admission with Provisional Standing, with the requirement of additional undergraduate English courses (earning a minimum 3.0 GPA) in order to account for any deficiencies identified in their academic background. In consultation with the Department Chair, the Graduate Advisor determines which course areas are deficient and can waive any of these requirements on a case-by-case basis. Once those deficiencies have been addressed, a provisionally admitted student must then apply to the College of Graduate Studies for a change to full standing.

At present, a provisionally admitted applicant's measure of preparedness is determined by the blocks in the Department's undergraduate program. An applicant who does not possess fifteen undergraduate English credit hours must have completed British and American literature survey courses and, if she attended Tennessee Tech, one or more upper-division courses in the course-area blocks of our undergraduate curriculum. When applicants are informed that they have been granted provisional standing, they may be informed of specific undergraduate courses they need to take in order to qualify for full standing.

F. Applicants

The Department's admission standards maintain a great deal of flexibility in that students who do not meet the requirements for full standing can be admitted provisionally. Following the completion of nine hours of graduate work, the Graduate Advisor consults the student's grades to determine whether admission provisions have been met; if there are questions, and if the student attended Tennessee Tech, the Graduate Advisor confers with one or more graduate faculty members who taught that student in class.

The nature of the admissions process allows provisional admission to students who meet the College of Graduate Studies minimum requirements but who fail to meet the Department's minimum requirements. Students admitted provisionally are ineligible for the Department's graduate assistantships until they gain full standing. Some students admitted with provisional standing eventually meet requirements for full standing, while others either choose not to enroll, fail to achieve full standing, or choose not to continue after a semester or two of coursework.

G. Enrollment

The Department currently budgets for seven full-time graduate teaching assistantships, which carry full tuition remission and a stipend of $8,000 per academic year (beginning fall 2015, stipends were increased from $7,000). Enrollment in the M.A. program is typically composed of this cadre of GTAs along with a smaller number of full- and part-time students who are financing their graduate education through other means. In Fall 2016, the department added a "Fast-Track" option for undergraduates to take courses for graduate credit ahead of their acceptance into the M.A. program; the first student to use this option to take a class for simultaneous graduate and undergraduate credit has contracted do so in Spring 2017. "Fast-Track" was part of the department's plan to remove itself from "low-producing" enrollment status with TBR, a designation that occurs for M.A. programs with fewer than five degree recipients over a five year period. (Reasons for and response to our "low-producing" status is discussed in **II.A. Overall Performance: Graduates**.)

During the reporting period of 2011-2016, the M.A. program received 39 applications. Seven were incomplete (and never completed). Of the 32 complete applications for admission, five were denied admission, and 27 applicants were granted either full or provisional admission.

Three of the 27 declined admission. 24 enrolled. Four dropped out of the program, after one or more semesters. Twelve of the 24 finished the degree, and eight are currently making progress toward completion.

As of Fall 2016, nine students were enrolled in the English M.A. program: eight full-time, one part-time. Five of the eight full-time students are graduate teaching assistants, while three had provisional status.

H. Self-study

The first draft of the self-study was composed collaboratively by the Director of Graduate Studies and the coordinator of Graduate Teaching Assistants, based on program's previous self-studies, the program's recent SACSCOC report, and a variety of current data sources. This draft was shared at a Fall 2016 Graduate Studies Committee meeting, and all eight members of the committee reviewed the document and contributed revision suggestions, as did the Department Chair. The report was uploaded to Google Drive, where it was available to all eight Graduate Committee members and the Chair to edit, prior to submission. The Chair made substantial edits and additions at this stage, and the committee reviewed it a final time before submission.

This self-study is also best understood in the context of changes necessitated by outside factors in recent years. The self-study comes after a longer period of introspection that began with our low-performing designation in 2015, following the first year of the hiring of a new Department Chair. It had become clear, prior to the present self-study, and for reasons that will outlined in the next section, that if the department wished to attract more students we would have to change how we had been defining the purpose of the degree. Two of the goals of our program, to prepare students "for success in Ph.D. programs in English" and to prepare them "for teaching careers in high schools..." had been influenced by outside events, with a resulting loss of students in the program. We are now a program in transition, in the process of adding concentrations and adopting a less conventional focus, while nevertheless retaining our strength as a program in which "students will demonstrate a broad and integrated knowledge of literary history, theory, and pedagogy." The steps we are taking have not to date changed our goals (though such may be in the offing), but create different emphases. None of our goals will likely see more of an increased emphasis than creating "students... prepared for careers outside academe that require advanced analytical and communication skills."

II. OVERALL PERFORMANCE

A. Graduates

There is generally good retention in the program. (Table 4, below.) Graduation figures are relatively stable and directly linked to the number of graduate assistantships awarded by the Department. Full-time students, including graduate assistants, typically complete the M.A. degree within two years. At the same time, the M.A. degree program has consistently lost population over the past eight years. This has happened roughly in two stages. The first drop-off began after

2009. Six M.A. degrees were awarded in 2008, nine in 2009, but the department has never awarded more than five since that time, which coincided with a significant national recession.

Table 2. Degrees awarded, 2007-08 to 2010-11

Year	M.A. degrees awarded
2007-08	6
2008-09	9
2009-10	3
2010-11	4

Recessions, it is customarily held, send students back to school, to gain more training. But for those in English graduate programs, a more striking message seems to have been that the college and university faculty jobs might no longer be available. Table 3 below, from the most recent job report of the Modern Language Association, shows the shrinkage of jobs available through listings in the "JIL," the *Job Information List*, diving downward roughly 40% from 2007-08 to 2009-10, and not yet having recovered. The most recent recorded year, 2014-15, shows the important indicator of faculty jobs in English at a 40-year low -- and maybe worse than that, as the data has only been kept for these 40 years. This is sobering news for anyone with ambitions to use an M.A. program like TTU's as a springboard toward a Ph.D. program, and almost certainly has had an effect on our program.

Table 3. Advertised faculty jobs in English

Number of Jobs Advertised in the *JIL*, 1975–76 to 2014–15
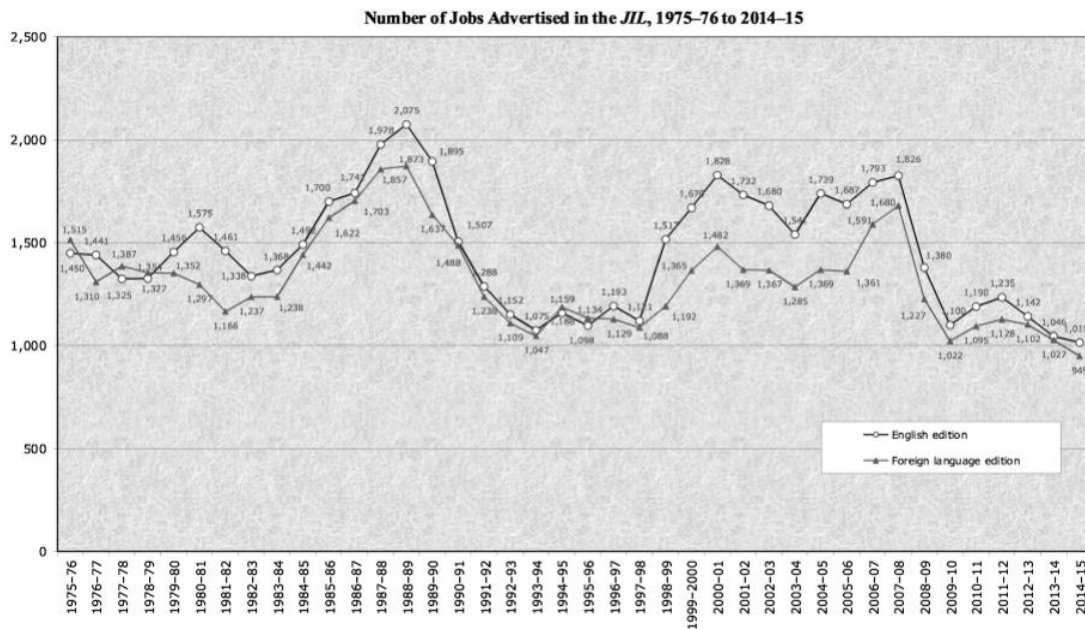
A second drop-off in M.A. students and degrees completed has occurred since, in summer 2013, the Tennessee State Board of Education removed the licensure designation "Highly

Qualified," which subsequently reduced the incentive for a licensed English teacher with only a BA to pursue a graduate degree in English. Since this financial incentive for teachers to earn the M.A. in English was removed, we have not awarded as many as five M.A. degrees in a year, with our average over the last five years being 3.8.

In all, a decline in M.A. graduates is observable over the past three program review periods. The department averaged nearly six M.A. graduates between 2001 and 2007. From 2007 to 2011, the period of the Department's next program review, English awarded an average of 5.5 M.A. degrees each academic year. During the current reporting period, 2011 to 2016, the Department awarded nineteen M.A. degrees—an annual average of 3.8 (see Table 4). Three current M.A. students intend to graduate during the 2016-2017 academic year. Accordingly, the number of assistantship lines in the department decreased from ten to eight in 2009, to seven in 2014. College-level budget reductions were responsible for these decreases, but for several semesters the Department has not awarded all of its available assistantships even with these decreased numbers. Our diminished numbers of degrees awarded are not due to attrition but to fewer new students entering the program.

Table 4. M.A. Degrees Awarded by Academic Year and Retention, 2011 to 2016.

Academic Year	New students*	Projected Graduating**	English M.A. Degrees	% attaining degree
2011-2012	4	5	5	100%
2012-2013	3	5	3	60%
2013-2014	3	4	4	100%
2014-2015	3	3	4	133%
2015-2016	5	3	3	100%
2011-2016 total:	**18**	**20**	**19**	**95%**
2011-2016 annual average:	**3.6**	**4**	**3.8**	**--**

*Counts students in Fall plus any new entrants from prior Spring
**Number entering the program 2 to 2.5 years before

Students in the program have an option of writing a thesis or a project paper. Only three have exercised the non-thesis/project paper option over the past five years, but two of these were in 2015-16, and one of these was with a student who nearly dropped out of the program and likely would have without the non-thesis option. Traditionally, the thesis option has been seen as the more serious option for future researchers, and the non-thesis option has been in place to aid those seeking the degree for more practical, short-term goals, like getting a teaching

license. But the non-thesis option is also helpful for making sure students finish the degree. Other data show the nineteen M.A. students who graduated in 2011 to 2016 to be a strong group. The overall grade point average was 3.85, with seven students earning 4.0 GPA; the lowest GPA was 3.04. Thirteen of these nineteen students (68%) held a graduate assistantship in the Department at some point during their degree program. Eleven of these nineteen students (58%) finished their M.A. degrees within two years of first enrolling; sixteen (84%) completed within three years. The students we have had in the program have generally been impressive.

Nevertheless, improving enrollment is a necessity. A first step in this direction occurred in 2014 with the printing of a new M.A. program brochure, which was distributed at admissions events and to all undergraduate majors. A year later, in our Fall 2015 Program Productivity Plan report, several improvement initiatives were proposed, to give the graduate program more visibility and try to boost enrollment. The earlier mentioned BA-MA Fast-Track was introduced. The department integrated recruitment efforts better with the College of Graduate Studies; a first annual information session in cooperation with a representative from the Graduate College took place in March 2016. That month also we invited back three M.A. program alums who had gone on to successful attainment of tenure-track academic jobs, for an event titled, "From T.T.U. to Tenure-Track You," to offer strategies for getting positions in a difficult market. An annual graduate student/faculty evening reception, to give greater distinction to being a graduate student in a department where undergraduates outnumber them by more than 10 to 1, was held in April 2016. Also, beginning in January 2016, we made the Writing Excellence Studio at Tech ("W.E.S.T.") operational. This advanced writing support center caters to upper-division and graduate students on our campus, which will provide our GAs with experiences in professional and technical discourses outside of English, such as might lead to jobs where skills in interpreting difficult texts and communicating between different discourses are important. Finally, the department began developing new concentrations in our Master's program, in Creative Writing and in Professional and Technical Communication (the latter of these being viewed as particularly important at our technological university campus). At this writing, these programs have been designed and passed through the department level, to be evaluated by the College of Arts & Sciences Curriculum Committee at the end of this month. The excitement surrounding changes in the M.A. program has started to draw more students: five new students entered the program in 2016, the best number we have had in the past five years. We are hoping to begin offering the new M.A. concentration options in Fall 2017.

B. Post-Graduation

Generally, students graduating from the Department's M.A. program have performed well. Three of nineteen post-2011 M.A. graduates are pursuing Ph.D. degrees in English—one each at Louisiana State University, University of Arizona, and University of Florida. Additionally, several current graduate students and recent graduates intend to apply to Ph.D. programs for fall 2017. Students who earned M.A. degrees since 2011 have presented papers at professional

meetings and conferences, including the New Voices Graduate Student Conference at Georgia State University, the Mix Symposium on Comics in Columbus (OH), the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900, the Tennessee Philological Association, the University of Florida's Conference on Comics and Graphic Novels, and the Council of Writing Program Administrators Conference. One published an article in a well-respected academic journal, *Studies in the Novel*. Seven post-2011 graduates have taught either full-time or part-time at universities or community colleges, including TTU, University of Southern Mississippi, and Volunteer State Community College. Three graduates teach at the high-school level in Tennessee. One is a TTU academic advisor.

English M.A. graduates also have placed in a wide variety of careers, but how varied these are did not emerge clearly until, via a general alumni survey in January 2016, we heard a lot of new stories about what our M.A. graduates had done with their degrees, outside of typical academic paths. One graduate, "David" (M.A., 1996), reported a position as Director of Operations at a pharmaceutical company. He came to this in a roundabout way, but via a course that nevertheless showed how English training might function in building a corporate career. Having grown frustrated with limited prospects as an adjunct teaching basic writing, after having finished his M.A., David began working for the university alumni magazine. Through an article he was assigned to write, he became aware of and started to investigate corporate compliance procedures. In time, he recognized he had the skills to interpret syntactically dense government compliance procedures and communicate what was required to others in a company. Work as a compliance officer led in time to a promotion, and ultimately an executive position in a field he had never imagined himself. Another M.A. grad (2006) reported being Communications Director for a Nonprofit Disabilities Research organization; another (2014) National Chess Education Consultant to the United States Chess Federation; yet another (2004) Legislative Auditor for the Comptroller of the Treasury of the State of Tennessee. Wrote this last M.A. graduate: "Though later I went back and obtained an accounting degree, I found that the skills I learned as an English major are far more valuable in my career. Each day, I research State and Federal law, contract agreements, and policy statements, and I spend a significant amount of time interviewing staff and management, drafting memos and audit reports, etc. The communication and drafting skills that I obtained as an English major are far more valuable than my ability to foot an accounting statement or process debits and credits. Sure, the accounting stuff was useful when I sat for the CPA exam, but I use my English degree every day in the office."

It's hoped that the diversity of concentrations in the new M.A. program, as well as the introduction of our graduate students to the writing problems and career trajectories of advanced students in other professional fields, will lead more of our graduate students into the wide array of possibilities for applying the training they receive in our program as well as helping students view graduate education in English as preparation for work outside academia.

III.   PERFORMANCE BY FOCAL AREA

A. Learning Outcomes
The Department has established five program learning outcomes for its M.A. students:
- Students will demonstrate a broad and integrated knowledge of literary history, theory, and pedagogy.
- Students will be prepared for success in Ph.D. programs in English.
- Students will be prepared for success in other areas of advanced graduate education.
- Students will be prepared for teaching careers in high schools and community colleges.
- Students will be prepared for careers outside academe that require advanced analytical and communication skills.

We seek to assess these via:

- Comprehensive exams (see **III.C. Teaching and Learning Methods**) – outcome 1
- Department Graduate Student Survey (see **III.D. Student Learning Assessment)** - outcome 1
- General Alumni outreach - outcomes 2 through 5
- Graduation records (see **II.A. Graduates**) - outcome 1
- M.A. alumni surveys (see **III.D. Student Learning Assessment)** - outcomes 2 through 5

We are able to monitor success of students in our programs very closely, given such low enrollment in the M.A. program. The student-teacher ratio in dedicated graduate classes (6000-level) is approximately 5:1. We have in recent years been less successful at contacting alumni through our dedicated M.A. program survey, though we have had some success through general alumni contacts (many B.A. students having gone on to our M.A. program over the years).

While the learning outcomes of our program reflect more or less fundamental concerns of such a program, it appears that it has been many years since they have been formally examined and re-evaluated. Learning outcomes 2 through 5 appear in the M.A. report in 2002, and it appears that L.O. 1 was adopted when the Comprehensive Exam began to be given in 2003. During this time there has been substantial changeover in the M.A, program. Half of the current eight-member Graduate Studies Committee, as well as the Department Chair, arrived in 2011 or later. This would appear to be a worthwhile Improvement Initiative for our upcoming review period.

In revising the Master's program over the past year, as we move to a degree that will feature concentrations in Creative Writing, Literature, and Professional and Technical Communication, the department has given increased attention to the M.A. core – the courses students in the English M.A. all take regardless of concentration. At present the requirements for the M.A. in English are:

- One graduate course in British Literature before 1800.
- One graduate course in British Literature after 1800.
- One graduate course in American Literature.
- English 6000.

The proposal that has passed the department revises this core, so that all English M.A. students will take these classes; the change equalizes the emphasis between British and American literatures.

In addition to Graduate School degree requirements, the student must complete:
- One graduate course in British Literature before 1800.
- One graduate course in British Literature after 1800.
- One graduate course in American Literature before 1865.
- One graduate course in American Literature after 1865.
- English 6000.

Our one "core course," in the sense of being a course every student in the M.A. program must take, is ENGL 6000 – Introduction to Graduate Studies. This is unchanged from the old to the new versions of the program. Here are the Student Learning Outcomes for this class:

English 6000 will empower students to:
1. Conduct graduate-level research in English studies
2. Interpret texts from a variety of critical approaches to literature
3. Use the conventions of scholarly writing in English studies, including MLA-style documentation
4. Understand professional issues and follow professional practices in English studies
5. Create and begin to develop your *curriculum vitae*

ENGL 6000's SLOs support all of our program outcomes, particularly enhancing "broad and integrated knowledge of literary history, theory, and pedagogy" (1), preparing students for "success in Ph.D. programs in English" (2) and "in other areas of advanced graduate education" (3). Through its attention to career-related issues, preparing and developing a C.V., and the advanced, applied critical thinking and writing activities that are at the heart of graduate education in English, ENGL 6000 also prepares students "for careers outside academe that require advanced analytical and communication skills" (5). With the addition of ENGL 6010 – Teaching Composition, required of all funded Graduate Teaching Assistants, graduates receive excellent support as well for program outcome 4, being "prepared for teaching careers in high schools and community colleges."

The department will review graduate course options (5000 and 6000-level) in the curriculum for consistency of student learning outcomes in syllabi, as an improvement initiative.

B. Curriculum and Co-Curriculum

Curriculum

The M.A. degree in English requires either thirty semester hours of credit including six hours for the thesis option or 33 semester hours of credit including three hours for the project paper for the non-thesis option. At least 21 credit hours including the thesis are required at the 6000 level. The remainder of the courses in the program of study may be taken at the 5000 level; however, not more than thirty percent of courses in a student's program of study may be in dually-numbered 5000-level courses (i.e., graduate courses cross-listed with 4000-level undergraduate courses). The Department also has a core curriculum that requires students to take one graduate level course in British literature before 1800, one in British literature after 1800, and one in American literature. Introduction to Graduate Studies (ENGL 6000) is also required of all M.A. students. Students are limited to a maximum of one Special Topics course (ENGL 6400), which is typically offered as an independent-study course.

As part of our recent curriculum changes, the department opted to equalize the emphasis of American literature with British, and has proposed requiring equal coursework in each tradition as part of the core of each of the three M.A. concentrations, Creative Writing, Literature, and Professional and Technical Communication.

Students may take an additional Special Topics independent-study course only with approval of the Department's Graduate Studies Committee. Students who intend to pursue an M.A. degree in English are normally expected to hold a B.A. in English when they begin their program of study; anyone who does not and whose background is judged deficient in the undergraduate prerequisites by the Department may be required to take courses below the 5000 level to remove the deficiencies. Courses below the 5000 level are not counted toward a graduate degree, and although they may appear on the written program of study as background requirements, these courses are not figured into degree requirements (see section I.E. above).

Graduate courses are typically offered on a two-year cycle. During the current reporting period, courses have been offered as scheduled, taught even in cases where the enrollment was quite small, with the justification that the students needed the courses to complete their degree requirements. Additionally, graduate-level course opportunities are typically offered each summer.

A chief difference between graduate and undergraduate instruction in English, other than the depth of treatment of material in courses, is in the scope of the research component. Students taking courses at the 6000 level are normally expected to complete a substantial research project as part of the course requirement. 6000-level courses are typically conducted as seminars, with students carrying some responsibility for presenting course content. Graduate

students in dually-numbered 5000-level courses are typically expected to complete a research project substantially greater in both quality and scope than undergraduate students in the 4000-level cross-listed course.

Each English M.A. candidate is also required to complete a research project independent of a specific course and to produce a thesis or project paper as a result of that project. Normally, a student arrives at a subject for this research project in consultation with a faculty member, who normally serves as the chair of the student's graduate advisory committee. After choosing a topic, the student prepares a prospectus outlining a plan for the research and establishes a schedule for completing the projected research and for writing the thesis or project paper. Students then submit their prospectus to their respective graduate advisory committees for feedback and approval. Students are expected to consult frequently with their major advisor during thesis or project paper preparation. When a satisfactory draft has been completed, the thesis or project paper is submitted to the graduate advisory committee. The only revisions to be made after this are those suggested by the advisory committee. An electronic copy of the committee-approved thesis must be deposited with the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies by a specified deadline prior to the close of the semester in which the degree is to be conferred. Final approval of each thesis is made by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, using the *Tennessee Tech Guide to the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations* as the approval standard. Students must consult the manual for specific format and other requirements (available from a link at https://www.tntech.edu/graduatestudies/currentstudent/etd).

The M.A. student's advisory committee may be appointed during the student's first term but no later than the term in which the student will complete eighteen graduate credits. The student and the graduate advisor determine a minimum of two additional graduate faculty members suitable for serving on the committee. Members normally represent each of the areas in which the student expects to study, with two members having background in the major area. At least one member of the advisory committee, usually the student's major advisor and the chairperson of the graduate advisory committee, has adequate background and research interests in the area in which the student has proposed a research objective. After formation of the student's committee, the selection is submitted to the College of Graduate Studies for approval and appointment. A student's graduate advisory committee normally consists of three members of the graduate faculty of the Department; however, larger committees have been appointed, albeit rarely; only one committee since 2001 has included four members. In cases where the topic of a student's project paper or thesis warrants expertise outside the Department, a member of the graduate faculty from another department may serve on the student's committee; three graduate committees since 2007 have included faculty members from other departments: History, Curriculum and Instruction, and Foreign Languages. Each proposed program of study must be approved by the student's advisory committee and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

A student plans his/her program of study in consultation with the Department's Graduate Advisor and the graduate faculty member who serves as the chairperson of the student's graduate advisory committee for the thesis or project paper. A second or minor field of study is not required for a M.A. degree in English, and consequently all of the courses in a student's program are typically taken in the Department of English. A student may, however, with the approval of his/her graduate advisory committee, construct a program with the major portion of the courses taken in the Department and courses in one or more minor areas of collateral study taken in one or more other departments. For example, one student who graduated since 2011 took a course in Young Adult Literature offered by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

Co-Curriculum
Members of students' advisory committees also provide valuable career guidance. Because of familiarity with their students' abilities and interests, committee members are better able to guide their students in a course of study beyond the M.A. or the availability of suitable positions. Many students also rely on favorite professors and on teaching mentors for this advice and encouragement, which can also include letters of recommendation for positions, fellowships, and admission to other graduate programs.

The Department appoints a graduate student representative to the Graduate Studies Committee and a graduate assistant to the Composition Committee; typically, these representatives are full- time students who hold graduate teaching assistantships. The Department also hosts planned activities such as an awards ceremony at the end of each academic year and other faculty/graduate student gatherings; these activities provide opportunities for interactions among graduate students and faculty. In fall 2015, for example, graduate students met with faculty for an informal dinner at a local restaurant.

Additionally, several faculty members devised special events outside of the traditional classroom. For example, one professor takes students in his Faulkner seminar on a trip to Faulkner's home in Oxford, Mississippi. Another professor takes composition instructors, including some graduate teaching assistants, to Middle Tennessee State University's annual Virginia Peck Composition Workshop, which features a top scholar in writing pedagogy. The department has membership in the Associated Writing Programs, through which students have access to the AWP website, full of resources for creative writers, free copies of Chronicle, the AWP magazine, and (particularly important as the Master's concentration in Creative Writing develops) access to the annual AWP conference, likely to be a future annual destination.

Several professors encourage their graduate students to submit papers written for their 5000- or 6000-level courses to conferences, and students have often worked closely with their professors to propose and present conference papers at such conferences as the New Voices Graduate Student Conference at Georgia State University, the Mix Symposium on Comics in

Columbus (OH), the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900, the Tennessee Philological Association, and the University of Florida's Conference on Comics and Graphic Novels. Supporting graduate students' revision of course projects for extracurricular conference presentations is important faculty work, since it helps students develop awareness of academia as a profession. Such support provides for increased opportunities for graduate students to interact with faculty. These endeavors also demonstrate that professors take seriously their students' intellectual and professional development.

The Department of English has a student-run literary magazine *Aerie* (formerly *Homespun*), available online. As well, *Under the Sun*, a nationally recognized, award-winning annual journal of non-fiction essays that began in the department some years ago, offers internship opportunities. Graduate students have published work in both of these publications, as well as serving as editorial assistants for each. Additionally, the Department has hosted guest artists and scholars for readings and lectures. The Center Stage Series brings significant famous artists to TTU, and the Department of English has had a successful proposal in this series each of the last several years, including Michael Chabon in 2013, Art Spiegelman in 2014, Margaret Atwood in 2015, and Junot Diaz in Fall 2016. Student interaction with the visiting artist is a goal with each visitor. For example, Margaret Atwood not only gave an hour-long presentation to a general audience but also met with and answered questions from a gathering of approximately 65 (mostly English) students and faculty. At the end of the evening, six students who had won spots by lottery joined Atwood and a small number of faculty for dinner at a local restaurant.

The Bird is the Word! reading series provides students with more frequent one-on-one opportunities to meet and learn from established writers who are generally faculty at other US universities. Founded in 2014 and funded generously by the department's Jere Mitchum endowment, Bird is the Word! brings visiting poets and fiction writers, usually with the Department's chair serving as host. The writers do readings, hold Master Classes for students, and meet socially at the end of the day. A couple events featuring local writers, students, and faculty on stage supplement the invited guest events, for a total of about five each year. California College of the Arts professor and poet Joseph Lease visited in 2015, and guests in spring 2016 included Morehead State professor and fiction writer Thomas Williams and Aimee Parkison, a fiction writer and professor at Oklahoma State University. Both Center Stage and Bird is the Word! augment what's possible with what is presently a rather small creative writing faculty.

The department's own English Faculty Research Series provides an opportunity for our graduate students to see scholarship modelled by our graduate faculty. Presentation roughly five times a year are made by graduate faculty who have received research course-releases in recent semesters. Department members also occasionally propose visiting scholar events; one of these recently resulted in the visit of prominent William Blake scholar and printmaker Michael Phillips, who led a printmaking workshop and gave a powerful talk about the Romantic poet and his wife. The event also featured a collaboration with the Music

department, which performed Blake-themed compositions by Ralph Vaughn Williams, performed by a TTU oboe student Lacy Robbins with voice accompaniment from Diane Pulte, TTU faculty mezzo-soprano. Both the musical collaboration and the printmaking workshop, which resulted in actual prints from facsimile plates from Blake's works that Phillips had re-created from the original prints, took students out of the traditional classroom to give them hands-on experience. With the collaboration of TTU art professor Perry Johnson, this was a truly interdisciplinary event.

C. Teaching and Learning Methods

An important aspect of life as a professional in the academy is presenting papers at conferences, not to mention lecturing or engaging with students in a classroom setting. In order to initiate students into these aspects of professional life, many students in graduate seminars do a presentation on a topic or author, based on research using a set number of peer-reviewed sources, tying their topic to the course's content. After presenting to the class, they respond to questions their fellow graduate students have prepared, which generates discussion in the class.

Developing research skills is another important component of graduate study in English. The projects students submit include proper internal citations and bibliographies, usually in MLA's documentation style, which provides students with a clear and consistent set of guidelines for source attribution. Having to use peer-reviewed sources helps them to distinguish between a credible academic source and a less reliable source.

English faculty remain knowledgeable in these areas by continual faculty development efforts. Graduate faculty have memberships in numerous professional organizations on the state, national, and international levels. They regularly attend professional meetings of these organizations, sometimes presenting, sometimes solely to keep current in their fields, even when this has to occur at their own expense. Faculty are also committed to new ideas and innovative practices in the classroom. Three faculty in the past two years have received Enhanced Discovery through Guided Exploration (EDGE) grants. This program developed through TTU's Quality Enhancement Plan focuses on encouraging Creative Inquiry in undergraduate classes, but as many English graduate classes are 5000-level classes taken by contract via upper-division undergraduate offerings, this program has effect on our graduate offerings as well. One faculty member in English was selected through a competitive process to be an EDGE faculty fellow, serving to nurture new projects among faculty in the Humanities. This program is offered through TTU's Center for Teaching & Learning, and several English faculty have been active through this center, including one who is team-teaching a class in English this Spring with the Director of the center. Faculty engage in conversations about improvements in teaching and learning at both the graduate and undergraduate levels at Graduate Committee meetings and at monthly department meetings. Department meetings have regular minutes recorded by faculty themselves to ensure that our records preserve a

high level of academic professionalism, a practice that began in 2015-16. In summer 2016, English also held its first department retreat, to have a more contemplative space to engage departmental issues and plan potential improvement initiatives. Student IDEA evaluations are offered for every class and required of all faculty in representative courses; these form a central basis for annual evaluations of faculty, as do faculty Effort Reports, where faculty report on their previous year's accomplishments in teaching, scholarship, and service, and are invited to engage in reflection on successes and areas for future improvement. These are discussed in annual evaluation meetings with the department chair each Spring.

Many graduate faculty promote active and cooperative learning by having students post their final projects to an online course management system (such as D2L/iLearn), so that students can learn from reading each other's work. Through online postings, they also exchange ideas generated by in-class discussion and course material.

An assignment in many graduate classes is a long research paper (15 to 20 pages, plus a bibliography). Students may exchange drafts of their projects in class and provide feedback to each other. This process allows graduate students to hone their reading and editing skills. Additionally, peer-feedback sessions in courses encourage development of collegial relationships among peers to the point that, as they go on to work on their theses or project papers, graduate students sometimes ask their student colleagues to comment on their drafts and revisions in an informal way, before submitting their drafts to the chairs of their graduate advisory committees.

During the drafting and revision processes, the students develop some idea of what it might later be like as a professional in the field responding to editors' comments during the publishing process.

During the semester in which the thesis or project paper and all coursework are completed, the student is required to pass a comprehensive examination. Questions for this examination are devised by the student's graduate advisory committee. This written examination consists of two parts, the first related to pedagogy and the second related to the student's thesis or project paper. Table 5 provides details regarding requirements for comprehensive exams and defenses of theses or project papers. The student's graduate advisory committee grades the comprehensive exam on a pass/fail basis. Upon successful completion of written comprehensive exams, the student and advisory committee schedule a date for a thesis or project defense. Upon the successful defense, the student makes a presentation based on research for the thesis or project paper. The presentation is open to all members of the Department. For thesis students, the graduate advisory committee formally approves and accepts the student's thesis on behalf of the Department at the student's successful completion of the thesis defense. For project paper students, the graduate advisory committee formally approves and accepts the student's project paper on behalf of the Department at the student's successful completion of the presentation.

Table 5. Guidelines for M.A. Comprehensive Exams and Thesis/Project Paper Defense.
Comprehensive Exams and Thesis/Project Paper Defense
[MA Comprehensive Examination Guidelines, Department of English, Revised Spring 2003]

1. The student will respond in writing to two questions prepared by his or her advisory committee. The first question will ask the student to discuss some of the teaching techniques he or she has used, or to discuss the ways he or she would present information from the thesis or project paper in a presentation. The second question will ask the student to relate what he or she learned in writing the thesis or project paper to literary movements or critical theories or writers not covered in the thesis or project paper. If the thesis or project paper deals with pedagogical issues, the student will discuss other theories not included in the research. The student will have one and one-half hours to respond to each question.
2. The student's advisory committee will conduct an oral examination or defense of the thesis or the project paper with the student.
3. After successful completion of the written and oral examination, the student will make a presentation based on research for the thesis or project paper. The presentation, which will be held following the written examination and the oral defense, is open to all members of the English department.
4. Variations in items 1 and 2 above must receive approval from the departmental Graduate Studies committee. Students must make the presentation described in item three.
5. The student's advisory committee will evaluate his or her performance in items 1 and 2 above. Prior to the presentation (item 3) the majority vote of the committee will determine whether the student passes or fails the comprehensive exam. The presentation is required, but not evaluated.

D. Student Learning Assessment

All students in the M.A. program must write a thesis or a project paper. Either is supervised by a committee of three members of the graduate faculty and must be defended orally before that committee. These theses and project papers are kept on file in the Department. Theses are additionally submitted to the College of Graduate Studies electronically and bound in print and cataloged in TTU's Volpe Library.

All students in the M.A. program must take a written comprehensive examination. This exam is devised and assessed by the student's graduate advisory committee.

Faculty in graduate courses assess student progress through a variety of means. Most require research papers or some substantial piece of writing such as an annotated bibliography. Many

faculty require oral reports on supplemental reading or on critical works. Many require written examinations covering the material presented in the course. Thus, student progress and student ability to communicate are measured frequently and appropriately. Copies of syllabi from recent graduate courses are on file in the main English office. These syllabi reveal the variety of student outcomes assessment methods practiced by the graduate faculty. Further, faculty frequently encourage graduate students to submit papers to conferences and for publication.

As part of the program's ongoing formative assessment efforts, a survey was given to graduate students enrolled in the M.A. program; the questions on the survey focused on the learning objectives of the program (see Appendix A). Of the students enrolled for this reporting period (2011-16), twenty submitted responses, and the survey and responses are included within the appendices at the end of the report. Table 4 provides the average score received for each survey item (Scale: 4 = strongly agree, 3 = somewhat agree, 2 = somewhat disagree, 1 = strongly disagree).

Table 6. TTU Department of English Graduate Student Survey: Average Scores (n = 20).

Survey Items:	Average Score (1-4)
1. Did course work taken during your major prepare you to work collaboratively?	3.79
2. Did ENGL 6000 prepare you for more advanced courses?	3.68
3. Did the curriculum prepare you to write research papers?	3.95
4. Did courses provide enough topic choice/options/variety to meet your needs?	3.25
5. Did the English major provide you with diverse cultural experiences?	3.10
6. Did the courses provide you with experience in effective oral communication?	3.75
7. Did the English Department clearly indicate to you the degree requirements for the program?	3.70
8. In your opinion, did the courses in your concentration prepare you for the field studied?	3.60
9. Are you developing an understanding of history in British and American literature?	3.90

Additionally, all graduating M.A. students are asked to complete an exit or alumni survey. Unfortunately, only three M.A. students graduating between 2011 and 2016 responded to the survey. Because of this low response rate, the survey results are not viewed as statistically valid. See Appendix B for a copy of the survey.

Through alumni surveys conducted independently of the graduate program, we have gathered anecdotal evidence of student career trajectories, and invited some of these students to

campus to share their experiences. We need to make a better effort to collect data from our recent graduates in a more programmatic way.

E.   Research Environment

The College of Graduate Studies requires a continued pattern of peer-reviewed scholarly or creative activity for full membership on Graduate Faculty. For this self-study, all fifteen of the Department's full members of Graduate Faculty were surveyed regarding their peer-reviewed publications for 2011-2016. Eleven responded. Several have published in prominent peer-reviewed academic journals, annuals, reference resources, or other significant peer-reviewed sources, including a publication by one faculty member in a flagship journal in his field, *American Literature* (Duke UP). Another faculty member authors the annual review of scholarship in "Early 19th Century American Literature for *American Literary Scholarship Annual* (Duke UP). One English graduate faculty member is author of a book on the Tower of London, recently reprinted in paper by Routledge. Two more have book contracts, one for a book in the field of 20th century theatre; the other for an edited collection of essay on the New Zealand author Janet Frame. Several have also engaged in various creative activities, including a fiction writer in the department who in 2015 published a story in the prominent arts and culture quarterly, *BOMB*. Faculty scholarship is itemized on each faculty member's *curriculum vita*, all of which are available in the English office. Faculty publications are also listed on the department website: https://www.tntech.edu/cas/english/faculty-publications. Faculty awards and presentations are reported on the Faculty Highlights page on the site as well: https://www.tntech.edu/cas/english/faculty-highlights.

In addition, English graduate faculty present research at conferences at state, national, and international levels. Funds are available for conference travel for presentations, when papers are accepted or invitations received, through the Faculty Development Travel fund, wihich offers allowances for faculty in two year cycles. In the most recent such cycle, nine graduate faculty received a total of 19 awards. Additional awards are available through a fund sponsored by the Provost's office and through petition to the College of Arts & Sciences directly, which has foundation funds at its disposal. In recent years, two faculty receiving non-instructional leave awards in a competitive process, in 2015-16 and again in 2016-17, received additional funds from these supplemental sources, and another faculty member received supplemental funding for specialized summer immersion training in Latin to better equip her for research in Early Modern British literature. The College of Arts & Sciences Research and Creative Activity award, for which faculty in English are eligible biennially, competitive with other A&S departments, has gone to members of the English department the last two times in was awarded, once to a faculty member in American literature, the next time to a faculty member on Theatre, both members of the graduate faculty.

F.   Support for Quality Education

Volpe Library has a policy of purchasing any books that faculty desire be added to the collection, and faculty take responsibility for improving their areas of scholarship. This is a

welcoming situation for faculty looking to bolster areas of scholarship, but some areas are discovered by recently arrived faculty to be woefully lacking from neglect by previous faculty. As well, journals are not given the same support, given that subscriptions are not one-time purchases but open-ended financial commitments. Interlibrary loan works well and speedily to make available requested items; however, some faculty have reported difficulty obtaining some journals, and lack of physical journals removes the ability to browse journals in order to discover new critical issues and debates.

Thus, the library's budget restrictions do have an effect on English. Another effect on scholarship, and thus on teaching preparation, is the heavy teaching load for faculty in English. Some alleviation of this has also come via the course releases for research provided to faculty who have applied since this program began in the department in 2015. With more students earning their credits for composition classes in high school or community colleges prior to attending Tech, there may soon be room to alleviate faculty teaching loads in English, perhaps to a base 4-3, with researching faculty perhaps able to teach 3-3. There has yet to be serious movement on this issue, given recent budget difficulties. (A deficit in expected international students cause a major shortfall in 2016-17.) The positive effect fornthe graduate program would be that faculty with lessened teaching loads will have more time to devote to research, with the result of more faculty being able to offer a greater range of viable graduate English courses, benefitting a growing program with multiple concentrations.

Various efforts in recent years have improved student engagement toward augmenting program sustainability. Several programs have featured returning alumni, and the most notable of these from the perspective of the M.A. program and encouraging graduate education in general was "From TTU to Tenure-Track You." For this event, in March 2016, three tenure-track assistant professors from around the country who had gotten their M.A.s at Tech and then gone on to earn PhDs visited and presented thoughts and strategies for following in their footsteps. As mentioned, this is just one of the initiatives we've taken over the past two years, most particularly, to educate students about graduate English at Tech. Others have included a presentation by the graduate college to English department students in Spring 2016, with plans for annual such presentations; discussions about the M.A. program at Tech and a general graduate school Q&A with students in the undergraduate English honors society chapter, Sigma Tau Delta; the initiation of Fast-Track, which helps undergraduates move more quickly and efficiently into our M.A. program; the spreading of stories of our M.A.s successful careers via alumni visits and publication of these stories in our department newsletter. Finally, in addition to two new concentrations at the M.A. level, in Professional & Technical Communication and Creative Writing, English has developed a certificate in Professional & Technical Communication. We are hoping greater options entice more students, from various backgrounds, to our programs.

IV. POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

- **Instituting new Creative Writing track in the M.A. program** - Creative Writing is the driver of one of our three leading undergraduate concentrations, "Writing/Language/Genre," and undergraduate courses regularly fill to capacity. Creative Writing is also a growth program in universities nationally. Without much added cost, we should be able to use such a program to boost our enrollment and enrich cultural life in the department.
- **Instituting new Professional and Technical Communication track in the M.A. program** - This would be an extension of another of our most successful undergraduate concentrations, as well as helping bridge our department to other interests across our technological campus, to provide writing support (and experience for our students) and potential graduate opportunities for undergraduates in other departments.
- **Revising the Literature track in the M.A. program** - Desire to equalize the representation of American and British literatures in our curriculum resulted from a fiery but ultimately healthy dialogue between different departmental interests. This revision is currently moving forward.
- **Developing a more effective survey (and survey technique) for measuring recent M.A. alumni experiences** - In order to know how best to prepare students for success after graduation, we need to know better what our students have discovered about the value of this degree and what feedback they can give us toward improvement. Phone contact might be employed as well as email.
- **Review and evaluate M.A. program Learning Outcome**s - Revisiting these may or may not result in changes, but at minimum will increase the sense of ownership of them among the current faculty.

V. MATRIX OF IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVES

	Initiative	Objective	Who	Performance Indicator	When
1	Instituting new Creative Writing track in the M.A. program	Develop a new concentration	Department faculty	Program begins to be offered	Fall 2017 or Spring 2018
2	Instituting new Professional and Technical Communication track in the M.A. program	Develop a new concentration	Department faculty	Program begins to be offered	Fall 2017 or Spring 2018
3	Revising the Literature track in the M.A. program	Develop a revised concentration	Department faculty	Revised program begins to be offered	Fall 2017 or Spring 2018

4	Develop and enact effective survey of M.A. alumni	Revisit and redesign survey and means of delivery	Department graduate faculty	Contact 50+% of graduates from 2007-date	Spring 2018
5	Review and evaluate M.A. program L.O.s	Revisit and discuss L.O.s in the light of new survey data	Department graduate faculty	Graduate committee approval and English dept. vote to accept/ reaffirm outcomes	Fall 2018
6	Review graduate courses in the curriculum for consistency of student learning outcomes in syllabi	Syllabi review and creation of L.O.s by faculty with response-bility for courses in area(s)	Department faculty	Graduate committee approval and English dept. vote to accept/ reaffirm outcomes	Spring 2019

VI. FOLLOW-UP OF PREVIOUS ACADEMIC AUDIT

The Academic Auditor Team Report from 2011-12 made three recommendations:

1. That administration adjust graduate teaching assistant stipends to equal those of other programs in the College of Arts & Sciences.
2. That the department take action to enlarge their graduate program.
3. That faculty more actively support the graduate thesis presentation.

Graduate Teaching Assistant salaries have been increased since 2011-12, including an increase two years ago, but they have not been equalized with other programs in Arts & Sciences. The Dean's office has argued in the past that market factors determine that TAs in different disciplines be paid at different levels. The English department is in agreement with the auditors' past perspective on this issue, and encourage a reaffirmation of this principle in auditors' 2017 recommendations.

The department has undertaken to enlarge its graduate program, although our new programs have not officially been approved beyond the department level, as of this writing, nor have the numbers of students in our M.A. program increased. A serious effort to engage this recommendation began with the arrival of a new department chair in Fall 2014. A new Master's program brochure, designed the previous year, was printed and distributed, beginning in Fall 2014. Discussion of new programs began in 2015 and two new M.A. concentrations are now developed and hopefully on their way to adoption for Fall 2017.

A record of the concerns that recommendation #3 was meant to address has been lost. It may be that students in 2011-12 remarked that their thesis presentations were not well attended. Faculty make sincere and concerted efforts to attend these presentations, at present, and will continue to do so.

Appendix A

Tennessee Technological University
Department of English
Graduate Survey

Please take a moment to complete the brief, anonymous survey below. Your responses will assist us in evaluating our current programs and objectives.

After completing the survey, please return it to your academic advisor.

Instructions – On the line at the end of each question, please enter the number that most closely expresses your response: 4 = strongly agree; 3 = somewhat agree; 2 = somewhat disagree; 1 = strongly disagree

1. Did course work taken during your major prepare you to work collaboratively? ____

2. Did ENGL 6000 prepare you for more advanced courses?

3. Did the curriculum prepare you to write research papers? ____

4. Did courses provide enough topic choice/options/variety to meet your needs? ____

5. Did the English major provide you with diverse cultural experiences? ____

6. Did the courses provide you with experience in effectively communication orally? ____

7. Did the English Department clearly indicate to you the degree requirements for the program? ____

8. In your opinion, did the courses in your concentration prepare you for the field studied? ____

9. Are you developing an understanding of history in British and American Literature? ____

10. What was your area of concentration or course specialty and anticipated year of graduation?   Year

Additional comments:

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix B

Survey of TTU Graduating Students and Alumni: MA Program in English

Directions: The MA program in English at Tennessee Tech is currently undergoing an internal revision, and we would like your input into the process. If you could please fill out the survey below, you could be a great deal of help. Each statement has a scale of 1-5 (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree); please circle one number to indicate your reaction to that statement—if you have no basis to answer, feel free not to respond to that statement. There is additional space beneath that for you to provide additional comments.

1: Strongly Disagree
2: Disagree Somewhat
3: Neutral
4: Agree Somewhat
5: Strongly Agree

1. In this program I received personalized instruction.

    1   2   3   4   5

2. In this program I received personalized advisement.

    1   2   3   4   5

3. In this program I received personalized guidance from faculty.

    1   2   3   4   5

4. The level of instruction offered had a level of sophistication distinctly above that of undergraduate instruction.

    1   2   3   4   5

5. The core of planned coursework was appropriate to the field of study.

    1   2   3   4   5

6. This program allowed me to acquire the appropriate tools, techniques, and methodologies of the discipline.

    1   2   3   4   5

7. This program allowed me to develop a basic knowledge of the research function in the discipline.

    1   2   3   4   5

8. This program allowed me to learn how new knowledge is created in the discipline.

    1   2   3   4   5

9. This program allowed me to learn how to think and act independently in the discipline.

    1   2   3   4   5

10. This program allowed me sufficient room for a broad academic experience.

1   2   3   4   5

11. The capstone event of this program (thesis or project paper) allowed me to demonstrate my ability in the discipline.

1   2   3   4   5

12. This program allowed me to develop the communication skills appropriate to the degree and the discipline.

1   2   3   4   5

13. Coursework within this program allowed me to demonstrate and apply my knowledge of the discipline.

1   2   3   4   5

14. The comprehensive exam allowed me to demonstrate my breadth of knowledge in the field.

1   2   3   4   5

15. The comprehensive exam allowed me to integrate what I learned.

1   2   3   4   5

16. The workload for Graduate Teaching Assistants was both sufficient and fair.

1   2   3   4   5

17. I feel that the method of taking the comprehensive exam was fair and appropriate.

1   2   3   4   5

18. I feel that in this program I was adequately prepared for my teaching duties.

1   2   3   4   5

19. Please use the space below and any additional sheets necessary for any further comments:

Appendix C – New Concentration in Creative Writing Proposal

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Graduate School Executive Committee

VIA: The University Curriculum Committee

VIA: The Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee

VIA: The Department of English Graduate Studies Committee

FROM: Dr. Ted Pelton, Chair, Department of English

DATE: December 7, 2016

SUBJECT: New Concentration in Creative Writing within the English M.A. Program

The Department of English Graduate Studies Committee proposes the following concentration in Creative Writing within the English M.A. Program:

Core (9 credit hours)
One 6000-level course in American Literature
One 6000-level course in British Literature
ENGL 6000

Content Courses (15 credit hours)
Three courses from among ENGL 5430, 5440, 5450, 6710, and 6720 (any of these courses may be repeated, for credit)
Two additional graduate-level electives in ENGL, THEA, or PC (at least one of these must be at the 6000-level)

Thesis Hours (6 credit hours)
ENGL 6990

Justification
This concentration provides an additional option for English MA students wishing to develop their abilities as creative writers, in poetry, fiction, and/or essay/memoir. Graduates of this concentration will develop exceptional creative and communication skills, applicable to a variety of career uses and for artistic development.

Effective Date
Fall 2017

Appendix D – New Concentration in Professional & Technical Communication proposal

MEMORANDUM
TO: The University Curriculum Committee
VIA: The Graduate School Executive Committee
VIA: The Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee
VIA: The Department of English Graduate Studies Committee
FROM: Dr. Ted Pelton, Chair, Department of English
DATE: November 1, 2016

SUBJECT: New Track and Certificate Option in Professional and Technical Communication within the English M.A. Program

I.   The Department of English Graduate Studies Committee proposes the following track in Professional and Technical Communication within the English M.A. Program:

Core (9 credit hours)
One 6000-level course in American Literature
One 6000-level course in British Literature
ENGL 6000
Content Courses in Professional and Technical Communication (15 total credit hours: PC 6030 and 6050, plus 9 credit hours from 5000-level courses below)*
PC 6030 (Core Issues and Research in the Field)
PC 6050 (Teaching Professional and Technical Communication)

PC 5850 (Internship)
PC 5940 (Technical Editing)
PC 5970 (Professional Communication II)
PC 5990 (Seminar in Professional Communication)
*ENGL 6010 may be substituted for one of the 5000-level courses above.
For students who have taken any of the above courses at the 4000-level, two of the following courses may be substituted for two of the above 5000-level courses:
ENGL 5411 Writing in the Professions
ENGL 5421 Forms of Argumentation and Persuasion: Theory and Practice
ENGL 5511 Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics
ENGL 5531 Grammar and Language
ENGL 5541 Topics in Linguistics/Language
ENGL 5551 Introduction to Rhetoric: Theory and Practice
ENGL 5561 American English (NOTE: As of September 29th, this course proposal was in the process of being reviewed by various curriculum committees.)

Thesis Hours (6 credit hours)
ENGL 6990

II.   The Dept. of English Graduate Studies Committee proposes the following certificate option in Professional and Technical Communication within the English M.A. Program:

For students completing the certificate, ENGL/PC 3250 is a co requisite for the first course taken in the program.

Content Courses in Professional and Technical Communication (15 total credit hours: PC 6030 and 6050, plus 9 credit hours from 5000-level courses below)
PC 6030 (Core Issues and Research in the Field)
PC 6050 (Teaching Professional and Technical Communication)

PC 5850 (Internship)
PC 5940 (Technical Editing)
PC 5970 (Professional Communication II)
PC 5990 (Seminar in Professional Communication)
For students who have taken any of the above courses at the 4000-level, two of the following courses may be substituted for two of the above 5000-level courses:
ENGL 5411 Writing in the Professions
ENGL 5421 Forms of Argumentation and Persuasion: Theory and Practice
ENGL 5511 Introduction to Descriptive Linguistics
ENGL 5531 Grammar and Language
ENGL 5541 Topics in Linguistics/Language
ENGL 5551 Introduction to Rhetoric: Theory and Practice
ENGL 5561 American English (NOTE: As of September 29th, this course proposal was in the process of being reviewed in various curriculum committees.)

Justification
This track and certificate option provide additional opportunities for English M.A. students who are preparing for careers or teaching within the field of Professional and Technical Communication. In addition, the Department would like to increase students' opportunities to work with other disciplines (such as Engineering and Business), both on campus and off campus, that require facility with technical writing and effective communication skills in business environments. The certificate option allows students from other programs to gain some expertise in technical and professional writing specifically and communication in general; collaborating with other colleges on campus demonstrates a broad applicability of our English program to the campus as a whole and will increase its visibility and applicability to students who need these skills, yet may not have had the opportunity to develop them during their undergraduate work. Overall, the Professional Communication M.A. track and certificate option provide opportunities for students with various backgrounds who are seeking advanced skills in grant writing, technical writing, or other advanced Professional and Technical Communication proficiencies.

Effective Date
Fall 2017

Appendix E – Retitled Concentration in Literature in English M.A. Program

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Graduate School Executive Committee
VIA: The University Curriculum Committee
VIA: The Arts and Sciences Curriculum Committee
VIA: The Department of English Graduate Studies Committee
FROM: Dr. Ted Pelton, Chair, Department of English
DATE: December 7, 2016

Subject: Newly retitled concentration in Literature within the English M.A. program

The Department of English Graduate Studies Committee proposes the following changes in the current M.A. program, so as to create a Literature concentration within the English M.A. program.

I.   Title change

As part of other changes to the English M.A. program, which will create two new concentrations, in Creative Writing and in Professional and Technical Communication, the traditional, literature-based Master's program will now be known as the Literature concentration, and be one of three concentrations overall in the English M.A.

Justification: This concentration retains the emphasis of the traditional English M.A. for students wishing to further develop their abilities as literary scholars and critics, in preparation for graduate school and/or careers requiring high-level interpretive and written communication skills. No new courses need be developed in order to create this concentration.

This new concentration would result in no additional costs, and is in keeping with departmental goals.

II.   Change in degree requirements

The following change will be made in the degree requirements in the English M.A. program, as it becomes the Literature concentration of the English M.A.

From:

>   In addition to Graduate School degree requirements, the student must complete:
>   • One graduate course in British Literature before 1800.
>   • One graduate course in British Literature after 1800.
>   • One graduate course in American Literature.
>   • English 6000.

To:

       In addition to Graduate School degree requirements, the student must complete:
- One graduate course in British Literature before 1800.
- One graduate course in British Literature after 1800.
- One graduate course in American Literature before 1865.
- One graduate course in American Literature after 1865.
- English 6000.

Justification: This change in degree requirements creates an equal emphasis between British and American literature in the Literature concentration, whereas the degree requirements previously required more British than American literature. This is in keeping with current trends and practices in the field.

Sources of Evidence Available

Type of Evidence	Where Evidence Is Available
Graduate Survey	Appendix A
Alumni Survey	Appendix B
Course Syllabi	The English Office
Graduate Online Catalog	http://catalog.tntech.edu/index.php
Faculty Vitae	The English Office
Annual Reports	The English Office
M.A. Program Admission and Degree Requirements	https://www.tntech.edu/cas/english/maenglish/m.a.-program-admission-and-degree-requirements
Fast-Track Program	https://www.tntech.edu/cas/english/b.a./m.a.-fast-track-program
Program and Learning Outcomes	https://www.tntech.edu/cas/english/program-and-learning-outcomes