April 15, 2005

MEMORANDUM

TO: James F. Harris  
Dean, College of Arts and Humanities

FROM: Victor Korenman  
Associate Provost for Academic Planning and Programs

SUBJECT: Proposal to Modify the English Major Curriculum (PCC Log No. 04082)

At its meeting on April 15, 2005, the Senate Committee on Programs, Curricula, and Courses approved your proposal to modify the English major curriculum.

The change is effective in Fall 2005. The College should ensure that the new requirements are fully described in the Undergraduate Catalogue and in all relevant descriptive materials, and that all advisors are informed.

VK: sfm
Enclosure

Cc: Dr. Sylvester Gates, Chair, Senate PCC  
Dr. Mary Giles, University Senate  
Ms. Barbara Hope, Data Administration  
Dr. Phyllis Peres, Undergraduate Studies  
Dr. Charles Rutherford, College of Arts and Humanities  
Ms. Anne Turkos, Archives  
Dr. Linda Yokoi, Office of the Registrar
THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK
PROGRAM/CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

DIRECTIONS: Provide one form with original approval signatures in lines 1 - 4 for each proposed action. Keep this form to one-page in length. Forms and appropriate attachments should be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs, who will assign a Log Number to each proposal. Also submit an electronic version of as much of the proposal as is possible.

DATE SUBMITTED: December 10, 2004            PCC LOG NO.

COLLEGE/SCHOOL: ARHU

DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM: English

PROPOSED ACTION (A separate form for each) ADD____ DELETE____ CHANGE____

DESCRIPTION (Provide a succinct account of the proposed action. Details should be provided in an attachment. Provide old and new sample programs for curriculum changes.)

See attachment. No substantial change in basic English 301, diversity, and chronological distribution requirements. 36 credit hours replaces 39 credits, and a tougher minimum of four 400-level courses replaces a cumbersome concentration requirement.

JUSTIFICATION/REASONS/RESOURCES (Briefly explain the reason for the proposed action. Identify the source of new resources that may be required. Details should be provided in an attachment.)

See attachment. Strengthening of current 400-level course requirements will result in minimal reallocation of existing resources; and greater flexibility for students may speed progress toward degree.

APPROVAL SIGNATURES

1. Department Committee Chair

2. Department Chair

3. College/School PCC Chair

4. Dean

5. Dean of the Graduate School (if required)

6. Chair, Senate PCC

7. Chair of Senate

8. Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost

DATE

4-4-05
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4-15/05
4-15/05

VPAAP Rev. 3/1/04
PROPOSAL FOR REVISED UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH MAJOR

Introduction

Outline of Revised Major

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II. Required Gateway Course

III. Course Requirements
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      2. Course Distribution

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Appendix III: Courses that Fulfill Group II Requirements

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INTRODUCTION

The proposed revised English major preserves the best features of the present major while adding strength to the existing program and allowing greater flexibility to students seeking to fulfill requirements in a timely manner. The revised major retains the Critical Methods requirement (English 301), as well as diversity and historical and geographical course distribution requirements similar to those in the present major. The revised major strengthens the existing program by substituting for the requirement of one senior seminar taken in the final year a new requirement of a minimum of four courses at the 400-level to be taken over the last four semesters in the program. (The current senior seminar [English 399] will be renumbered English 428, and can serve as one of those four courses.) Because the present major contains no 400-level course requirements, the addition of a formal requirement of four such courses will provide greater assurance that all students conduct in-depth research in subjects of their choice and produce significant written work on those subjects. This addition will also provide clear markers to indicate student progress through the major. As if ascending a pyramid, students will start with broader background courses on the 200 and 300 levels (Group I requirements) and proceed to explore their interests in more specialized and generally much smaller classes in later semesters (Group II requirements).

There are a number of ways in which the proposed revised major permits greater flexibility for students. Students will be required to take 36 credits beyond the university’s Fundamental Studies requirements in English 101 and English 391-95 (rather than the current 39 credits), putting the major more closely in line with other programs of this kind. Students will no longer be required to choose a four-course concentration, a requirement that sometimes slowed student progress toward the degree when a key faculty member in that concentration was on leave and specific courses were not available. As noted above, the student now will choose four 400-level courses—guided by recommended “pathways”—that will enable the same in-depth study previously provided by the concentrations and that will provide the added benefit of permitting students to realize that objective by choosing among the courses that are actually being offered in any given semester. Also, because current concentration requirements are often quite specialized, it has not been possible for students to track their progress through the major on Degree Navigator. With its flexibility, compatibility with Degree Navigator, and relative transparency, the proposed new major offers undergraduates a much better chance of completing the major in 4 years, aligning the English department with the new university-wide student success initiative.

OUTLINE OF REVISED MAJOR

The English major has been designed by the English Department faculty with three purposes in mind: 1) to give students an overview of the history and variety of literature
written in English; 2) to use the critical study of language and literature to help students to think carefully and to express themselves well; and 3) to introduce students to the debates about literature and culture that shape our intellectual lives and our national conversations. Our hope is that our graduates will enter the world with the sympathy born of wide reading and the skills needed to carry their convictions into action, no matter what line of work they pursue.

I. Credit Hours

The revised English major requires 36 credits beyond the university Fundamental Studies requirements in English101 and English 391-5. At least 30 of the 36 credits for the major must be in 300- or 400-level courses, with at least twelve of these credits at the 400-level.

A grade of C- or better is required in each of the courses making up the 36 credits of the major.

Only three credits of English 388 (internship courses) can be included in the 36 credits.

Only six credits of English 429 (Independent Study) can be included in the 36 credits.

II. Required Gateway Course

English 301, Critical Methods in the Study of Literature (3 credits), is a required course for all English majors. Students should take English 301 before they take other 300- or 400-level English courses, preferably in the sophomore year. In special cases, students may be permitted to take English 301 concurrently with their first upper level course.

III. Course Requirements

Students must take three courses (nine credits) from Group I courses and eight courses (24 credits) from Group II courses. The English major requirements in Group I assure that students read widely and become aware of the questions an inquiring reader might ask of a text. The requirements in Group II offer students the opportunity to read more deeply in areas of particular interest.

III. A. Group I Requirements

Course requirements in this area are intended to provide a broad foundation in literary history. As part of this broad foundation, students will take at least one 200- or 300-level course in each of three areas: 1) Literary and Cultural History; 2) Literary, Linguistic, and Rhetorical Analysis; and 3) Diversity. Only two 200-level courses can be used toward the major.
III. B. Group II Requirements

Course requirements in this area are intended to provide the student with the opportunity to explore in greater depth both literary periods and literary themes that cross periods and to develop skills in reading, criticism, writing, and research. The eight courses in this group are to be selected according to the following guidelines.

III. B. 1. Course Levels

Students must take at least four of the eight Group II course requirements at the 400-level courses. Courses at the 200- and 300-level not used to fulfill Group I requirements may be used to fulfill Group II requirements. Students may use a total of only two courses at the 200-level to satisfy requirements for the major, however, so are encouraged to apply that total to satisfying Group I requirements.

III. B. 2. Course Distribution

Among the eight courses used to fulfill Group II requirements, students must take at least:

Two courses in Writing before 1800;

One course in Modern British/Anglophone/Postcolonial Writing (after 1800);

One course in American/African-American/US Ethnic Writing.

For the remaining four courses, students may pursue individual interests or follow recommended “pathways” through the major.

Students may take a literature class in a literary tradition other than English, either in the original language or in translation, at the 300- or 400-level, as one of these four courses.

IV. English Honors Program

Students must apply for admission to the English Honors Program. Honors students meet the same requirements as other English majors, but six of the courses in the major will be special Honors courses. Three of these courses are related to the Senior Honors Project; the other three will be Honors seminars on various topics. Two or three of these seminars (English 428) will be offered each semester. Students who are not in the Honors Program may enroll in honors courses with the approval of their advisor and subject to availability of seats.
IV. A. Senior Honors Project

All students in the English Honors Program complete a Senior Honors Project—a thesis, a reading project, or (for students who have excelled in creative writing workshops) a creative writing project. Planning for the Senior Projects begin in the second semester of the junior year, when students enroll in English 370: Junior Honors Conference (one credit); by the end of that group conference, students select their topics, arrange for faculty directors, and begin work on their projects. In the fall of the senior year, students enroll in English 373: Senior Honors Project (two credits), a writing and editing workshop. In the spring of the senior year, students enroll in English 495: Independent Study in Honors (three credits), an independent study in which they complete their Senior Project and defend it in a colloquium with three or four faculty readers.
APPENDIX I: DESCRIPTION OF COURSE LEVELS

200-Level Courses

These are the foundational courses of the major, teaching an awareness of diversity, a range of analytical approaches, and the significance of historical depth. In literature and rhetoric courses, students will learn basic techniques of literary, rhetorical, and/or linguistic analysis; they will acquire skills in argument, support, development, paragraphing, the proper use of evidence, and close reading. Students will be introduced to broad cultural, historical, and theoretical frameworks for thinking about literary texts and rhetorical issues in these classes. Literature courses explore the uniqueness of particular texts as well as their connections to and revisions of literary history, their historical importance, the ways they represent and intervene into their historical moments, and the way they operate aesthetically. Creative writing classes introduce students to fundamentals of writing, such as setting, characterization, dialogue, plot, point of view, narrative voice, line, stanza, syntax, diction, figurative language, and rhetorical trope.

English 301: Critical Methods in the Study of Literature

English 301 will continue to function as the gateway course for English majors. English 301 introduces students to the discipline of English studies, its history, and its research methods. The goal of English 301 is to increase student awareness of critical and reading practices and to learn multiple strategies for literary interpretation. English 301 teaches close reading through attention to language, literary tropes, and formal organizations, but also raises questions about intentionality, the author, the text, representation, performance, and narrative. English 301 further explores how the understanding of texts and literary history can be enriched through attention to other histories, such as those of gender, race, sexuality, the book, national identity, colonialism/postcoloniality, class, subjectivity, economics, material culture, religion, and personal identity. English 301 also introduces students to research methods that they will need for 300- and 400-level courses. In English 301, students will become aware of the conflicts that have shaped the discipline, such as the stakes of canon formation and the disputed meaning of literature itself.

300-Level Courses

These courses build on English 301 by further developing interpretive skills. Courses at this level provide an introduction to a particular topic, genre, culture/subculture, and/or historical period, with in-depth reading assignments. In literature courses, students will begin to develop their own critical strategies, drawing from what they have learned in English 301. They will be expected to form independent arguments, choosing among multiple reading strategies. Research may become part of course assignments. While instructors provide detailed frameworks for understanding the literature in 200-level courses, students in 300-level courses will be encouraged to help build this framework and to develop individual responses to textual meaning. In rhetoric and language courses, students will analyze
language in depth, develop a repertoire of writing skills for different audiences and occasions, explore web-based literacies, and study the history of rhetorical theory. In creative writing courses, the critical vocabulary expands to consider definitions of genre; mimesis and anti-mimesis; developing and sustaining figurative logic; narrative vs. lyric strategies. 300-level creative writing classes emphasize revision.

**400-Level Courses**

Courses at the 400 level will form the capstone of the English major. Courses at this level will be smaller in order to enhance the building of skills in verbal communication, productive argument, and collaborative thinking; even smaller seminars will focus on a particular topic or area in considerable depth. All courses at this level will offer a specific historical or thematic focus. Students will learn to sustain an argument over longer papers, linking various readings to one central point, gathering evidence, using outside sources judiciously, and organizing insights into sharp paragraphs with topic sentences. Students will learn to think about their own arguments in relation not only to classroom discussion, but also to the work of practitioners in the field. All 400-level courses will include a research component: students will learn to find and respond to published critical essays and books. They may explore historical events that surround a literary text, investigate the author's life, reconstruct the production history of a play, or try to come to terms with the cultural phenomena to which a particular text responds. Students thus begin to frame their own approaches to texts in 400-level courses through close reading, discussion, knowledge of literary, rhetorical, and linguistic theories, and research. In creative writing classes, fewer exercises shift the balance of responsibility onto the student for generating material for stories or poems. Students can opt to work on a continuous longer form: extended lyric, meditation, and narrative mode; or, for example, the sequence and open serial; or chapters of a novel.
APPENDIX II: COURSES THAT FULFILL GROUP I REQUIREMENTS

Students will take at least one course in each of the following three areas. Only two 200-level courses may be used toward the major.

A. Literary and Cultural History

201: Literature of the Western World: Ancient to Medieval
202: Literature of the Western World: Renaissance to Modern
210: Love, Adventure, and Identity in Early English Literature
211: English Literature: Beginning to 1800
212: English Literature: 1800 to present
221: American Literature to 1865
222: American Literature: 1865 to present
302: Medieval Literature in Translation
304: Major Works of Shakespeare
305: Shakespeare and His Contemporaries
310: Medieval and Renaissance British Literature
311: British Literature 1600 to 1800
312: Romantic to Modern British Literature
313: American Literature

B. Literary, Linguistic, and Rhetorical Analysis

205: Introduction to Shakespeare
241: Introduction to the Novel
242: Introduction to Non-Fiction Prose
243: Introduction to Poetry
244: Introduction to Drama
245: Film and the Narrative Tradition
262: The Hebrew Bible: Narrative
263: The Hebrew Bible: Poetry and Rhetoric
278W: Literature in a Wired World
280: Introduction to the English Language
282: Introduction to Rhetorical Theory
345: 20th century Poetry
383: The Uses of Language
384: Concepts of Grammar
385: English Semantics
391-395: Professional Writing. These courses count toward the major only if the Fundamental Studies requirement has already been met; students may take no more than a total of two courses in this series.
C. Diversity

233: Introduction to Asian-American Literature
234: Introduction to African-American Literature
235: Introduction to Literature of the African Diaspora
250: Literature by Women
260: Folklore
265: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Literature
277: Mythologies
339: Native American Literature
348: Literary Works by Women
349: Asian-American Literature
359: Special Topics in Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Literature
360: African, Indian, and Caribbean Writers
368: Special Topics in the Literature of Africa and the African Diaspora
362: Caribbean Literature in English
APPENDIX III: COURSES THAT FULFILL GROUP II REQUIREMENTS

302: Medieval Literature in Translation
304: The Major Works of Shakespeare
305: Shakespeare and His Contemporaries: An Introduction
310: Medieval and Renaissance British Literature
311: British Literature from 1600-1800
312: Romantic to Modern British Literature
313: American Literature
339: Native American Literature
345: Twentieth Century Poetry
348: Literary Works by Women
349: Asian American Literatures
359: Special Topics in Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Literatures
360: African, Indian, and Caribbean Writers
362: Caribbean Literature in English
368: Special Topics in the Literature of Africa and the African Diaspora
369: Honors Seminar: Major Traditions
370: Junior Honors Conference
373: Senior Honors Project
377: Medieval Myth and Modern Narrative
379: Special Topics in Literature
381: MGA Legislative Seminar
383: The Uses of Language
384: Concepts of Grammar
385: English Semantics
386: Experiential Learning
388: Writing Internship
391-395: Professional Writing (see qualifications noted in Appendix II)
396: Intermediate Fiction Workshop
397: Intermediate Poetry Workshop
399: Senior Seminar
402: Chaucer
403: Shakespeare: The Early Works
404: Shakespeare: The Later Works
407: Non-Dramatic Literature of the Sixteenth Century
408: Literature by Women Before 1800
410: Edmund Spenser
412: Literature of the Seventeenth Century, 1600-1660
414: Milton
415: Literature of the Seventeenth Century, 1660-1700
416: Literature of the Eighteenth Century, 1700-1750
417: Literature of the Eighteenth Century, 1750-1800
418: Major British Writers Before 1800
419: Major British Writers After 1800
420: English Romantic Literature
422: English Victorian Literature
425: Modern British Literature
429: Independent Research in English
430: American Literature, Beginning to 1810, The Colonial and Federal
431: American Literature: 1810 to 1865, the American Renaissance
432: American Literature: 1865 to 1914, Realism and Naturalism
433: American Literature: 1914 to the Present, The Modern Period
434: American Drama
435: American Poetry: Beginning to the Present
437: Contemporary American Literature
438: Major American Writers Before 1865
439: Major American Writers After 1865
440: The Novel in America to 1914
441: The Novel in America Since 1914
442: Literature of the South
443: Afro-American Literature
444: Feminist Critical Theory
445: Modern British and American Poetry
446: Post-Modern British and American Poetry
447: Satire
448: Literature by Women of Color
449: Playwriting
450: Renaissance Drama I
451: Renaissance Drama II
452: English Drama from 1600-1800
453: Literary Theory
454: Modern Drama
455: The Eighteenth-Century English Novel
456: The Nineteenth-Century English Novel
457: The Modern Novel
458: Literature by Women After 1800
459: Selected Topics in Sexuality and Literature
461: Folk Narrative
462: Folksong and Ballad
463: American Folklore
464: African-American Folklore and Culture
465: Theories of Sexuality and Literature
466: Arthurian Legend
467: Computer and Text
468: American Film Directors
469: Honors Seminar: Alternative Traditions
470: African-American Literature: The Beginning to 1910
471: African-American Literature: 1910-1945
472: African-American Literature: 1945 to Present
475: Postmodern Literature
477: Studies in Mythmaking
478: Selected Topics in English and American Literature Before 1800
479: Selected Topics in English and American Literature After 1800
482: History of the English Language
483: American English
484: Advanced English Grammar
486: Introduction to Old English
487: Foundations of Rhetoric
488: Topics in Advanced Writing
489: Special Topics in English Language
493: Advanced Expository Writing
494: Editing and Document Design
495: Independent Study in Honors
498: Advanced Fiction Workshop
499: Advanced Poetry Workshop

Note: As indicated in the text of the proposal, up to two 200-level courses may be applied toward Group II requirements.
APPENDIX IV: PATHWAYS THROUGH THE MAJOR

The concentrations in the current English major are listed below. The revised English major eliminates required concentrations and substitutes recommended “pathways” through the major.

Before the new major takes effect, and at designated intervals after that, English Department faculty will be invited to propose pathways to the English Department Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for possible adoption. Those pathways may be revisions of the concentrations below, or may represent new subject areas.

Pathways will provide detailed guidelines for coherent course selection in recognized areas within English Studies. They will focus primarily, though not exclusively, on course selection for Group II requirements. They will be distributed to advisors and posted on the website.

Concentrations in the Current English Major:

American Literature

British and American Literature

British, Postcolonial, and International Anglophone Literature

Creative Writing

Language, Rhetoric, and Writing

Literature by Women

Literatures of the African Diaspora

Mythology and Folklore