### Program Learning Goals

Possession of broad knowledge of English, American, and Anglophone literatures and their interpretation from periods before 1800 to the 20th and 21st centuries in their historical, political, and cultural contexts; specific knowledge of literary and other cultural texts, writers, movements, trends, and attendant cultural debates; and familiarity with issues in translation, the history of the discipline, and the role of interdisciplinarity in ‘English.’

### Assessment Plans

**Assessment:**
- Grades and professors’ written evaluations of students’ work in graduate seminars.
- Student evaluations of teaching and classes, with written self-evaluations additionally required by some professors. (We are planning to introduce a required exit survey for all graduating students.)
- Successful completion of course requirements designed for breadth (Introduction to Graduate Literary Study, two pre-1800 courses, and one American literature course) and of 18 more credits in the Program.
- Comprehensive Exam (over 2 days, 3:30 hrs. each), based on a common reading list (of some 60 authors, more texts), with shorter and longer essay questions about authors/texts in each of the list’s four historical periods designed by the graduate faculty to assess students’ depth and breadth of knowledge of English, American, and Anglophone literature in the various genres by writers diverse in sex/orientation and gender, race, ethnicity, class, and cultural experience, including those from colonial/post-colonial and Commonwealth countries; students’ ability to make connections and comparisons between works and across time; and their skill in applying critical theory with appropriateness, creativity, and intellectual rigor. Blind-graded by two faculty; High Pass, Pass, Low Pass, Fail.
- A one-hour translation exam, in which students must demonstrate reading knowledge of a language other than English at the Intermediate Level by translating a 1-2 pp. printed passage of historical or biographical prose accurately into fluent,

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idiomatic English with the use only of a paper dictionary.

**Role of the Program:**
The offering of courses each year that reflect a variety of approaches and subject matters across authors, texts, issues, and historical periods, with several that fulfill requirements, and some coverage of authors on the common reading list.

- Requirement of Introduction to Graduate Literary Study, which serves all four learning goals. Students study and practice using contemporary critical theories and research methods, become familiar with issues in biographical and textual scholarship, are mentored in academic writing and MLA style, and discuss historical and current issues in the discipline.
- Orientation and advisement of new students by the Program Director.
- Assignment of faculty advisors after the students’ first semester to help their advisees choose classes, navigate through the program, and assess their progress. (Advisors will also help with mid-program individual student assessments we plan to introduce.)
- Design and grading of the translation exams (almost entirely) by English faculty, who work with those few students who are unsuccessful the first time.
- A standing committee of graduate English faculty who assist the Director and the Chair in planning curriculum, surveying syllabi, devising course evaluations, resolving student issues, planning events, and assessing the Program’s effectiveness.
- Encouragement and reward of some strong students with available GS-N tuition scholarships, a small monetary Award for Scholarly Promise each year, and certificates for Excellence in Literary Studies given at commencement.

**Possession of more than passing familiarity with classic philosophy of**

**Assessment:**
- Grades and professors’ evaluation in Introduction to Graduate Literary Study of the students’ grasp of and ability to apply
| Familiarity with issues in biographical and textual scholarship; the ability to conduct advanced literary research, making critical use of available tools in the field (print, electronic, and archival) and developing the qualities of personal theory, use literary terms, and read texts closely.  
  - Grades and professors’ written evaluations of students’ work in courses on critical theory and in other classes, where they are expected to use it.  
  - The Comprehensive Exam’s longer essay questions requiring students to apply critical theory to texts with appropriateness, creativity, and intellectual rigor.  
**Role of the Program:**  
- Several courses in critical theory offered each year, taught from our faculty’s diversity of perspectives, with literary works on the syllabi.  
- Collaborative faculty work in designing questions for the Comprehensive Exam that test the ability to apply critical theory.  
- An annual Graduate Student Symposium in which 6-8 students who are using theory in interesting ways are selected by faculty to present their work professionally and engage in dialogue about it with students and faculty present.  
- Faculty encouragement and mentoring of students presenting theoretically sophisticated papers at conferences through the year and of those preparing articles for peer-reviewed journals.  

| Assessment:  
- Grades and professors’ written evaluations of students’ research projects in Introduction to Graduate Literary Study.  
- Grades and professors’ written evaluations of students’ research projects and researched seminar papers and reports in other classes.  
**Role of the Program:**  
- Requirement of Introduction to Graduate Literary Study, with its strong attention to research skills, dispositions, standards, historical and textual scholarship; professors are encouraged to require several smaller research projects, rather than one large
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<th>Discipline and attention to accuracy this research requires; and the ability to consolidate findings effectively in extended academic writing projects that are clear, verbally precise, well-supported and -organized, and follow Modern Language Association standards for documentation.</th>
<th>The ability to present ideas orally with clarity and poise, to engage collegially in academic dialogue, to collaborate in learning, to conduct independent study of material not covered in classes, and to exit the program prepared to apply for positions in various professional fields, including teaching.</th>
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<td>Opportunities to advance research skills, discover new methods, and write mentored research papers in other classes.</td>
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<td>Offering of courses in research methods and in archival research.</td>
<td>Student dialogue in seminars about research in progress, collaborating in finding areas for improvement, sharing experiences with the research process, and identifying resources to be investigated.</td>
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<td>Students’ self-evaluations of their research process, required in many classes.</td>
<td>Assessment</td>
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<td>Grades and professors’ evaluations of required student presentations in seminars.</td>
<td>Grades on the Comprehensive Exam, for which students must prepare some authors and works on their own, and some collaborate in helping each other learn.</td>
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<td>Tracking of student accomplishments while in the program, such as papers given, and job placements after graduation.</td>
<td>Role of the Program:</td>
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<td>Professors’ mentoring of seminar presenters beforehand, evaluations and advice afterwards, ‘second chances’ in some classes for students who need to improve, and encouragement of student discussion and evaluation of their oral reports.</td>
<td>An annual Graduate Student Symposium at which 6-8 students selected by faculty to model professional presentation of theoretically sophisticated work and research show their peers how it is done, encouraging other students to submit papers for conferences and to exploit their opportunities in classes to develop more confidence in academic debate and oral presentation.</td>
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- Information and encouragement given to students by the Graduate Director and professors about upcoming conferences, and faculty mentoring of those presenting papers and preparing for job interviews.
- Annual Student-Faculty Roundtable, at which current and former students talk about careers related to the broad field of English, including teaching of pre-college and college students, ESL teaching, editing and publishing, private-sector writing, media work; presenting papers and networking at conferences; and preparing applications for advanced study in English and related fields, law school, and schools of education and library science among others.
- Annual offering of a seminar in the theory and practice of the teaching of writing taught by the Department’s expert in this field.
- Periodic offering of a course in editing and publishing.
- Faculty mentoring of students placed in internships in editing, publishing, assisting with research, and journalism fields or at think tanks such as the Nation Institute.
- Regular dissemination of job information through the Program list serv, through e-mails to targeted students, and through the Program Director’s efforts to identify work on and near campus for continuing students and graduates. (We are working on Department web site features to enable wider sharing of job opportunities and networking among alums and current students.)
- Teaching opportunities on campus through the Writing Program and through the English Department, tutoring through the Writing Center, and grading opportunities for several professors who occupy chairs or teach large enough undergraduate classes to justify the college’s hiring a graduate student grader.