

English

Program Review, July 2026



WILLIAM WOODS
UNIVERSITY

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2025 Program Review

English (BA)

Mission and Introduction

Introduction

1. Provide an overview of the program and the context of where it's housed within the institution (what department, etc.).
2. Discuss any changes in the focus of the program over the cycle of this review.

Narrative:

The English program has a long history at William Woods, serving institutional needs through its GE offerings, especially but not exclusively comp, as well as a historically small number of majors as well as offering coursework that supports the ASL-ITP program (ENG 301: Grammar and Syntax) and the Bachelor of Science: English Education program.

The program had developed four specific tracks (lit, film, creative writing, and professional/technical writing), but around the time of the last report, declining enrollments and faculty departures, the program was refocused, and then refocused again to reflect the current capability of the program, which is staffed by one faculty who is tasked with teaching in and overseeing the composition curriculum (ENG 101 and 102), and two faculty to teach in that area and the upper level courses (200-400), along with a couple trusty adjuncts.

This report finds us at a crossroads, using this report as a tool to find a way forward that is a) responsive to the manpower available to teach the major, and b) recognizes the student program enrollment. Though the assessment data, etc., are largely favorable, factors related to enrollment and staffing are driving us to investigate making significant changes.

Program Mission Statement

1. What changes has the program made to the mission statement over the course of this cycle?
2. Why were these changes made?
3. Are any revisions planned?

Narrative:

The program has not changed the mission statement during this review cycle. No revisions are planned at this time.

Alignment to Institution Mission

1. How does the mission of the program align with the mission of the institution?

Narrative:

The English program mission, with its emphasis on **analysis** and varied **social contexts**, dovetails neatly with the University's mission of **intellectual inquiry** and **inclusion**. The **creative** writing courses (ENG 218, ENG 306) develop creativity, but this **creative** spark infuses most of our coursework. We believe the emphasis on **textual production** and **analysis** lead to success at the **collegiate** and the **professional** level.

Service to the University (Contribution to Campus Climate)

1. What programming and organizational support are offered by the program that benefits the greater student population?
2. Does the program support on-ground/OLC General Education Courses?
3. Highlight any cross listed courses with other programs
4. Highlight any interdisciplinary programming or activities
5. Identify student enrichment programming that could include volunteer opportunities, field trips, workshops... (does not have to be specific to the program, but is beneficial to students on campus)

Narrative:

1) The English program contributes significantly to the undergrad curriculum at William Woods. This is most evident in the composition core (ENG 101 and ENG 102) which offer instruction in writing that is applicable across course areas, but it goes beyond that. One faculty has during this cycle supported the Writing Center in an Admin role. Another has helped recruit and train writing tutors for the Academic Success Center.

2) ENG 101 and ENG 102, noted above, are both required courses in the Tier 1 Gen Ed program under the heading of "written communication." The curriculum in both classes was developed to integrate skills that students will be asked to employ in all classes throughout the University where students write essays and reports.

Other ENG classes support Tier 2 gen ed areas: ENG 210, ENG 215, ENG 238 and ENG 239 and others are designated "Q" courses in the Inquiry and Analysis area; ENG 218 is a "X" course because it meets the requirements of "Expression and Invention."

3. ENG 301: Grammar and Syntax is required of students completing the ASL-ITP program. Several courses, like ENG 238 and ENG 239 are required for students in the Bachelor of Science: English Education program. ENG 306: Writing With Style offers instruction in business and technical writing, hoping to interest student writers in other programs.

4. The English program regularly collaborates with other programs. English faculty were part of the Illustration Club, developed to give support to students who wanted to combine art with narrative to make graphic novels

5. Students could be brought on field trips to hear visiting writers, or the same could happen on campus. Students have participated in the film festival during the period covered in this report.

Student Learning Outcomes Assessment and Curriculum

Program Student Learning Outcomes and Results

1. Describe how these Outcomes (Objectives) pertain to the program's mission. Have any changes been made to these outcomes over the course of this cycle? Why or why not?
2. Describe the extent to which students in the program have met these outcomes. Include a 5-year picture of the student outcomes with corresponding data that reflect the success or struggles in assessment.

Narrative:

1. The longstanding mission of the English program is to prepare students to navigate in a world of texts—teaching students ways to analyze the rhetorical and social contexts of the texts they encounter and how to produce texts in response that are theoretically engaged and personally informed. The four outcomes (objectives) serve this mission well: objectives 1 and 4 explicitly address the creation of effective writing by our students, where objective three develops what those writings should include and objective three addresses the professional standards and concerns of field of English studies as it is understood beyond the boundaries of our campus. These outcomes (objectives) have not changed during this cycle. (There remains some tension over how important objective 3 is, given that standards in the profession are evolving and also that our explicit goal at present is not to send students to grad school, where they will likely be expected to be well versed in these standards. In this cycle, maybe 25-50% of graduated majors went on to grad school on the humanities, often in English.)
2. We are generally happy with the rate at which students are meeting our current assessment benchmarks. The issues that most need to be dealt with probably relate to how we are collecting data and where we set our benchmarks. There have been cycles in this report when technical issues have prevented us from collecting data on key program courses (like Eng 239). Also, it's probably appropriate for us to reconsider our benchmarks-- given how rare it is for students to not meet those benchmarks, the success rate might not be telling us much. But given the turmoil in the program, between faculty departures, declining enrollment, etc., we haven't focused on it since by our own standards, we're still successful.

Evidence:

- [ENG 218 - Introduction to Creative Writing -L - 01 FUL - 3 Spring 2223 Activity Assessments Aggregated Result 05-01-2023 094048](#)
- [ENG 218 FUL ENG Obj Data](#)
- [ENG 239 - American Literature II-L - 01 OLC - 3 Spring 2223 Activity Assessments Aggregated Result 05-01-2023 094425](#)
- [ENG 280 Spring 22](#)
- [ENG 301 Spring 2022](#)

- [ENG F2F Data 2020-2025](#)
- [ENG OLC Data 2020-2025](#)
- [ENG327DataS24](#)
- [ENG440DataF23](#)
- [ENG_218_FUL_ENG_Obj_Data](#)
- [Eng 218 Objective1](#)
- [Eng 308 Objective 1 and 4](#)
- [English \(BA\)_2024-2025 Curriculum and Assessment Findings_2024-2025](#)

Assessment Measures

1. Discuss the measures (rubric evaluation - tool used to gather information) you've selected or developed to measure for each Outcome (Objective).
2. Why were these measures chosen?
3. Were any measures or assessment instruments changed over the course of this cycle? Why or why not?
4. Note any action items related to assessment measures that will be changed moving forward due to the review of assessment data.

Narrative:

1. The rubric we use to evaluate assignments was developed by two of the faculty members in English maybe a decade ago, and it has been a consistent instrument since then. We haven't made changes because the rubric still works well for us.
2. The measures were chosen to allow us to consider what we consider to be the primary products of our mission, to guide students in the creation of certain kinds of texts that address certain broader disciplinary concerns.
3. The rubric was not changed during this period. Assignments were refined, for a variety of reasons but also to generate results more consistently iterable through the rubric, but the rubric/ measure itself was not changed.
4. No changes to assessment measures are planned at this time. We remain confident that the measure is effective and that the results we have collected show that students consistently perform within the benchmarks we have established.

Evidence:

- [English \(BA\)_2024-2025 Curriculum and Assessment Findings_2024-2025](#)

Curriculum Map

1. Highlighting any key or core courses, have any changes been made to this pathway or degree requirements over the course of this cycle? (Upload Program Checklist)
2. Why or why not?
3. Explain how the program sequence of courses is designed and why it is laid out in that way? (scaffolding)

Narrative:

1. No significant changes have been made to the curriculum map during the cycle of this report. Though several courses were dropped from the English course offerings, with one exception, they were not courses assessed for the English program. The one exception is ENG 308, which was offered during this report, but which has been supplanted by ENG 306, which takes its place in the assessment matrix.
2. We are generally happy with the results we have been getting, so we haven't seen a need to change or update the curriculum map.
3. The basic program sequence is set out to introduce key concepts in specific domains (literature, creative writing, film studies) at the 200-level. These skills are expanded and developed at the 300-level (ENG 306/ 308, ENG 316 and 327). The capstone, at the 400-level, requires students to identify artifacts, usually from those courses, that show their ability to meet program requirements. On occasion, those artifacts are refined before they are submitted as part of the final portfolio.

Concentrations

1. If the program has concentrations, please upload the concentration data.
2. Speak to the enrollment distribution of students within the concentrations and any impact on course rotation.
3. Include strategies or processes for retention and recruitment within the concentration.
4. Explain the value of each concentration and how they enhance the skills students need to be successful in the field.

Narrative:

There were no concentrations in English during the years covered by this report.

Course Descriptions

1. Highlight any changes to course descriptions that have occurred over the identified timeframe. (upload a pdf of the course descriptions)

Narrative:

There were no changes to course descriptions. One course (ENG 308) was removed and one (ENG 306) was added. Both course descriptions can be seen in the course descriptions document.

ENG 220: World Literature was developed from two previously existing courses, ENG 201 and ENG 202, World Masterpieces 1 and 2 respectively. This decision was made based on workload considerations as well as a recognition of the relatively niche requirement to offer 6 hours in world literature.

Other courses, like ENG 222, were removed from the program when qualified faculty left the program and no one with the cognate specialization was hired to replace them.

These changes are noted in the course descriptions.

Evidence:

- [ENG Course Descriptions](#)

Curriculum Delivery

1. Does online enrollment impact enrollment in the campus enrollment?
2. If the program has an online component, explain how the program coordinates schedules and curriculum between the two modalities.

Narrative:

1. Online delivery impacts on-ground enrollment in a minimal way. For example, ENG 239 used to be offered online and on-ground, but a decision was made to offer it only online because it was easier to staff the course that way. Students who take the course online may not need to take a similar course on-ground (in this case, either a GE course area L or I or an English elective), but while that course has been offered online for years, it's only more recently that we've seen declines in on-ground courses that meet similar programmatic needs. This makes us conclude it's not the modality that is affecting on ground enrollment.

ENG 218 is still offered in both modalities, and on-ground enrollment hasn't seemed appreciably affected by the online offerings.

2. The program is not offered online. Most ENG courses online serve a GE function, or else they support the ASL-ITP program (ENG 301), which is an online program.

Evidence:

- [English Course Enrollment](#)

Participation in Assessment

1. Discuss faculty participation in program assessment
2. How involved are faculty and what is their responsibility for the assessment of the program.

Narrative:

1. Faculty participate assessment in two primary ways. First, faculty teaching "core" English courses that are assessed for programmatic purposes score an assignment in those classes with the rubric and report the data back to the faculty who feeds that data into the annual program review, and ultimately this report.

Faculty also take part in planning Student Performance Review days and assessing student work in that context.

2. We try to make assessment an "all hands on deck" situation, and generally we get good results. One faculty doesn't like to assess work on Watermark, but he is generally able to send spreadsheets of his findings from outside Watermark.

Action Items and Use of Results

1. Summarize or highlight action items taken as a result of program's assessment results.
2. How have the results driven improvement over the course of this cycle?

Narrative:

1. Generally, English program assessment data shows students meeting or exceeding program benchmarks when data was collected. Repeated annual reports have demonstrated failures to collect relevant program data in particular classes, especially those in online classes (ENG 218, ENG 239, and ENG 280, specifically). This has been a lingering problem, where we'll fix one problem (for example, the rubric was not attached) to encounter another (the instructor chose to not evaluate in Watermark). We keep endeavoring at collecting this data, but the data we do have for other sections makes us confident that if the data were collected, it would also meet expectations.

2. The failure to collect data has led us to revisit assignments and to reach out to instructors, to get the different elements working in harmony.

Evidence:

- [English \(BA\) 2024-2025 Curriculum and Assessment Findings 2024-2025](#)

General Education

1. • How does program coursework expand on the skills learned in General Education curriculum?

Narrative:

The broader architecture of the GE program changed during the course of this report, which impacted some, but not all, of the courses offered in English that also serve the general education program.

At the start of the review period, ENG 101 and ENG 102 were required to satisfy the "Communication" area of the GE apparatus. Though this area was renamed "written communication" after the GE apparatus was revised, the requirements were unchanged.

At the start of the review period, all or nearly all ENG courses at the 200-level satisfied the requirements of the "L" or "Meaning" area in the then-current GE apparatus. After the GE apparatus was revised, ENG courses at the 200-level came to serve different areas in the "Tier 2" level of GE courses. Many courses 200-level ENG courses serve the "Inquiry and Analysis" or "Q" area, given that the artifacts produced mean the requirements of that area.

Some courses, like World Literature (once two courses, but not just one) produce artifacts that can be assessed with the rubric for the "Cultures and Communities" or "U" area. Others, like ENG 218, Intro to Creative Writing, produce artifacts that can be assessed using the rubric for the "Expression and Invention" or "X" area.

There are a few fewer courses offered in English that meet the newer GE designations, but overall enrollments, counted as seats in the classes with the new GE designations, have declined. We don't have a good idea about why this is, but we also aren't being asked that here.

Faculty Qualifications, Activities and Scholarship

Faculty Specialization

1. Discuss the scholarship and research content of the faculty in the program, being sure what their specialization brings to the program.
2. Explain the core features of the program based on the current faculty.
3. How could the program be expanded (new courses, areas of specialization, etc.)?
4. How might additional instructional members allow the program to expand and/or change the focus of the program curriculum?

Narrative:

1. The English program is somewhere between optimal and plain terrible in terms of our scholarship and research and how it serves the broader program. This results as much from a shortage of available teaching hours as it does from manpower, though more manpower would help to more fully serve the program as designed.

Currently, the English program includes three full-time faculty. One specializes in composition, where a lot of our assigned teaching hours reside, but the comp program isn't assessed as part of the English major. Another faculty is responsible for the film side of the program, which includes courses at the two and three hundred level, as well as the senior capstone course. A third faculty teaches only one course per 16-week term, but is responsible for teaching both the writing (creative and professional-technical) and literature courses. Two adjuncts, one assigned to the library and one outside a formal unit, teach to support the program, generally in the "literature" category.

2. The program as currently designed means to support different trajectories, including film studies, literature, and (mostly creative) writing. There are courses that serve each of these tracks at the 200, 300, and 400 level, and as part of the capstone course, students can pursue a longer project in any of these areas.

3. The program doesn't need new courses at this time. One issue we face is declining enrollment, where there isn't enough demand for the existing courses at the upper-division level to offer them as full courses. Instead, we offer them as tutorials. That said, there is a plan to reorient the program after this report, to experiment with ways to streamline the different trajectories and to expand the focus of the existing major, in an attempt to generate more majors. This strategy, in the planning stages, would include at least one new course at the 300-level. But this plan wasn't in effect in the period this report covers, so it's hard to analyze it here.

4. Additional instructional members might allow us to expand our offerings, but given current enrollment trends, described elsewhere in this report, our general strategy is one of consolidation and not expansion. We could, for example, offer more and different 200-level literature survey courses, but there are not students to make such courses viable. Instead, we've collapsed some courses, like the two-course World Literature sequence, into one course.

Faculty Awards and Honors

1. Discuss and highlight awards and honors received by faculty over the course of the cycle.

Narrative:

English faculty engaged in extensive service to the University during this period and also earned recognition outside of the community.

For example, one faculty led study sessions to prepare students for an ASL to English interpreting exam. Another developed curriculum for the digital filmmaking degree.

One faculty served as editor for a revision of a film studies textbook and another published stories, poems, and creative non-fiction in online and print magazines.

Another faculty was awarded the Louis D Beaumont outstanding faculty award and served as the assistant faculty marshal at graduation.

Faculty Workload

1. Summarize the workload and responsibilities of faculty.
2. What actions are you taking to avoid faculty overload?
3. % of course load is taught by program faculty vs adjunct
4. % of courses covered by full-time faculty
5. % of courses covered through faculty overload

Narrative:

1. The English program is supported by three full-time faculty. One of those faculty has a 4/4 teaching load, and all her courses are taken up by composition courses (ENG 101 and ENG 102). Another faculty has a 3/4-time contract. Most semesters, this means he teaches two composition courses and one other course, usually in film. (He sometimes teaches an overload, which might include the capstone or else an online film course.) The third faculty has 3/4-time administrative responsibilities, which means he teaches one class per term. Ideally, he would alternate between a lit class in the fall and a creative writing class in the spring, but the last couple years, depressed enrollment in lit classes meant he teaches a comp class in the fall instead.

2. The posted course rotations have not required faculty overloads much in the time period covered by this report, but one faculty regularly elects to take an overload course and teach a course in the summer, off-contract. The exception to this has been composition classes, which sometimes require overloads from full-time faculty. Working with two relatively consistent adjuncts has allowed full-time faculty to avoid burnout.

3. In the five years covered by this report, 41% of online and in-person classes were taught by adjuncts.

4. In the period covered by this report, 79 ENG courses were offered online and in-person. 46 of those classes (58%) were taught by full-time faculty.

5. One faculty member taught 3 overload courses per year, one per semester and an additional off-contract course in one of the online summer terms. That accounts for 15 courses in the period of this report, making 18% of our courses taught as faculty overloads.

Evidence:

- [FT v PT Staffing](#)

Program Data: Student Experience

Enrollment and Recruitment

1. What are the trends with enrollment in this program over the course of the review cycle?
2. How does this compare to institutional trends or similar programs on campus?
3. Describe recruitment efforts or goals such as increased enrollment.
4. Have these initiatives been successful?

Narrative:

1. Enrollment trends during this review cycle were scarifying. While we would on average attract two or so majors a year, they would more often than not be transfer students, which created situations where they would immediately need the upper-level courses we struggled to offer due to low enrollment. At the end of this review period (AY 2425), our last two majors dropped out of WWU, leaving the program with zero enrolled majors over that summer.

The fall following the term of this report saw some improvement: two transfer students started that fall as English majors, and in spring, a third student switched his major from ASL-ITP to English (he is also a transfer student).

2. The period of this report covers a variety of institutional periods, including COVID and the brief tenure of an administrative team who had contrary impulses. During that time period, enrollment at the University decreased during COVID, and then bounced back under the new administration, with the caveat that retention was a challenge during that period. When enrollment did sure, it was mostly in a couple areas like business. Campus-wide, other programs in the humanities, for example, saw similar declines in enrollment, though not as drastic as in English.

3. The English department has sought to increase enrollment by being more visible: there was an Illustration Club formed, which connected English with Fine Art. Several open mics were held as student-centered events. The film faculty continued to teach courses serving the digital film making program. We didn't make much progress making enrollment a priority at the University admissions level, but we've been told a push will be forthcoming.

4. It's hard to know what is successful. We're trying to reach out to students on campus more, but we recognize that what we need most is students outside the campus. Prospective students who visit campus always meet with a faculty member for one-on-one conversations about the pleasures of studying English at WWU.

Retention

1. Has student retention remained in an acceptable range over the course of the review cycle?
2. What strategies are program faculty using to raise retention rates within the program?

Narrative:

1. Retention has been a struggle University wide, and it has also been a struggle in English. Given our small number of majors, it's hard to lose any. We regularly offer tutorials and substitutions to students to help them make progress toward their degree. Sometimes that is not enough, and other campus resources, like counseling services, are more in line with what students need to persist.

2. English faculty use the WWU retention software OwlsAware to report student problems. We try to keep up with students outside of class with semi-regular lunches.

Curriculum/Course Retention and Success

1. Describe enrollment trends in the courses within the program. (upload course enrollment spreadsheet)

2. Reflect on the success of the students within the courses over the designated time frame.

- Highlight some completion or withdrawal and failure rates in the core courses.
- Were these in line with expectations? (we will need to provide this data)

3. For programs with dual modalities, reflect on the success of students within the courses over the designated time frame.

- Highlight some completion or withdrawal and failure rates in the core courses.
- Were these in line with expectations? (we will need to provide this data)

Narrative:

1. There are no obvious trends to be discerned in the last couple years, except to note that macro and micro turbulence and perceptions of the same are bad for enrollment. So, in the years covered by this report, we've experienced some faculty changes in the English program, which has required various tweaks to course offerings and who taught what. Likewise, university-sized changes between administrations (and athletic staff) introduced further churn into the sample data.

Or to put it another way, there was a two-year period where even the most GE of 200-level courses could barely sustain enrollment in some terms. But now, in the 2025-2026 school year, that trend seems to have reversed, leaving us where we've been for a decade or so: teaching mostly gen ed courses and struggling to gather a critical mass of students to fill upper-level courses. Often, that means we offer these courses as tutorial, though we're also more often able to direct the student to an online class through CIC, which so far has been pretty helpful.

2. We don't have the data for successful completion during this time period. Anecdotally, it seems rare for students to not complete a course with a failing grade, in the absence of other notable factors. In other words, failure in English courses is more often a symptom of emotional or other disturbances, and rarely the cause of them.

3. We, again, don't have successful completion data on online course completion. However, we have moved more ENG courses, again usually at the 200-level, to online. At this point, we get solid end-of-course evals out of these courses and hear good things from the instructors. Enrollment in online classes seems to have only a marginal effect on in-seat enrollment, at least right now. There was that moment, mentioned above, when it felt like there weren't enough students to go around. But that does not seem to be the case anymore.

Evidence:

- [English Grade Distribution 20-25](#)
- [English Grade Distribution 20-25](#)

Completion

1. How many students are graduating from the program?

Have the completion rates been in line with expectations?

2. Describe findings resulting from exit surveys or program alumni surveys that were conducted over the course of the cycle. (programs will need to do annual exit surveys to capture this data)

Narrative:

1. We've had a discouraging couple years, with two students in the last two years leaving the program without finishing their degree, leading to a moment during the summer of 2025 when, in spite of not graduating any English majors, we had no currently enrolled majors. This year, we have two majors and a third who intended to declare English. However, that student who intended to study English says financial pressures prevent him from returning next year; another of the two declared majors will also not return, we think because of athletic pressures. This is unusual for us; traditionally, we've graduated students in four years if they came to us as freshman, and if they came as transfers, we could often graduate them in two years or less.

2. We don't have survey data at this time.

Course Evaluation Data

1. What were some positive and negative feedback received from students who completed the courses?

2. Highlight any trends or insights that came from course evaluations over the course of the cycle. (data will have to be available)

Narrative:

1. We hear all kinds of feedback from students on end-of-course evals, and given that most of our teaching is in GE courses, more feedback than most. One course left students asking about the relationship between course readings and assessments. Though the instructor felt the connection was evident, he redesigned readings and assessments to make that connection more direct, even if it detracts from those pedagogical insights that are "brought...out only as a glow brings out a haze, in the likeness of one of these misty halos that sometimes are made visible by the spectral illumination of moonshine," to paraphrase Conrad.

Student regularly complain about the cost of textbooks, which has caused instructors to switch from assigned texts to OER materials.

Another instructor noted negative feedback around the prohibition on the use of AI in his classes. These led him to develop a "contract grading" scale, where grades would be

determined, in part, by how AI was used in the assignment. This experiment is ongoing and so far no results can be affirmed.

2. We've been given a chart comparing online to in-person end of course evaluations. The results aren't illuminating, especially. Our classes, regardless of modality, regularly score higher in end-of-course evals than the University average. In some areas, like "The instructor treats students fairly while setting clear expectations for learning," online students rated the instructor lower than in an in-person class, but not to a significant degree. Likewise, when asked if "The instructor demonstrates enthusiasm for the subject they are teaching," online students rated their instructor higher than in-person instructors. I can identify which online instructor is being referred to with high confidence, but the variation between online and in-person results is not large enough to draw conclusions.

Evidence:

- [English EOC Data Program Review](#)

Student Advising

1. Describe the advising process for your program?
2. What strategies and structures are in place to facilitate a successful advising period?
3. What is the optimal ratio of advisees to adviser for the program?
4. Explain any other processes to increase the effectiveness of the current advising procedure.

Narrative:

1. Students are assigned an advisor to help them select and register for the courses that would help them complete their program in a timely manner. This means a meeting in the fall and spring semesters to prepare for the upcoming term. At Student Performance Reviews, a face-to-face meeting with all majors, we talk about upcoming courses and who might need them.
2. University schedule advising is a set-aside period of two weeks that all departments abide by. The advising period is well-known and understood by students.
3. The optimal ratio of adviser-to-advisee is probably ten students per advisor. We are currently in no danger of that cap being breached.
4. The current process is successful, so no changes have been developed.

Student Awards and Achievements

1. Highlight the accomplishments and external honors received by students in the program over the course of this cycle.

Narrative:

In three years that the University has hosted the Research Symposium, students in English have been selected to present their work as part of the marquee "night sessions." One of those two years, an English major's presentation was selected as the most accomplished of

the symposium.

Several students entered or completed graduate degrees in English during the period of this report.

Two students were awarded special recognition for their accomplishments in Secondary Ed: English. We work closely with English Ed students and want to celebrate their accomplishments here.

Clubs and Co-Curricular

1. Does your program support any clubs and co-curricular activities that contribute to positive student experiences?
2. How does this contribute to the program?
3. To the campus experience of students?

Narrative:

1. The English department has supported several clubs. Writers Ink and the Illo Club were both sponsored by English faculty. English faculty also played a sponsoring role in the student film festival. Faculty have hosted LEAD events, including book discussions, film screenings, impromptu writing sessions, etc., all of which serve to move the magic of English outside of the classroom and credit structure.

2. LEAD events and clubs both serve to emphasize that the English major can speak to the whole student, outside of a credential on a diploma. We hope the broad awareness of English study's potential to speak to and center the whole person might encourage interest in our course offering.

3. The campus life is improved by the integration of English skills and our passion for the best that has been thought and written. We expose students to divergent voices and approaches to the world that might offer them solace and challenge.

Program Analysis

SWOT Analysis

1. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats.

Narrative:

Strengths: The English program is small but broad in its interests. In addition to the traditional lit and composition roles of an English program, the WWU program includes well-developed and long-standing film studies and creative writing areas. This means students get a diverse education in areas that are both interesting and well-suited for life after graduation. Traditionally, the program also featured training for writing in the professions; we are currently wrestling with how to maintain/ rebuild/ develop that area.

Weaknesses: The two largest weaknesses in the English program relate to two versions of scarcity. On the one hand, we have limited teaching hours to give, since so much teaching is

swallowed by the comp program that there's not a lot of teaching time left over to teach other courses. The other, converging scarcity is the lack of students enrolling in the English program as majors, and more lately, in even the English GE courses at the 200-level. It's hard to draw a direct line between the reconstituted GE tier two requirements and the decline in enrollment in those 200-level classes, but the enrollments suggest that student interest in these courses has declined over the course of this report.

Opportunities: The faculty in the English program have strong partnerships with other campus programs, including through the composition program, which serves all WWU students, the place ENG 301: Grammar and Syntax has in the ASL-ITP program, the crossover between the film studies curriculum and the digital film making program and the ongoing ad hoc collaboration between creative writing and fine arts in the forms of the illustration club. These informal and formal collaborations position the English faculty near the heart of several university communities, and though enrollment in the English major has declined, the role and visibility of English faculty remain high.

Threats: This is another twofer: First, the widespread use of generative AI is a huge threat to our program, which has for years presented itself as a place to learn to write. Generative AI makes a certain kind of writing very easy, even if the results aren't always very high. The way this devalues the skill of writing strikes a blow at the way the program understands our mission and how we communicate our value to the University community is a threat for us. Alongside this, there is a recognized decline nationally in the Humanities, which is not new but has accelerated in the last five years. Students are reading and writing less, and finding less skill in those values. This is not entirely attributable to generative AI, and predates that. But it also presents a threat to the continued presence of English programs, even ones as practically-career situated as ours.

We might simply be teaching skills that are less widely valued than they were previously.

Campus Facility and Resources

1. Provide an analysis on how adequate the spaces that are most used by the program on campus (laboratories, office space, classrooms/LMS, etc.).
2. Please discuss any updates or modifications to the facility or resources available to the program that have impacted student learning.
3. Recommendations to Improve Facilities and Resources

Narrative:

1. At this time, university spaces are broadly adequate to the needs of the English program. Most comp classes take place in computer labs which are up to that task, though the labs are getting older and maintaining the functioning of the mini pcs is a small, but manageable, challenge. Other classroom spaces are, as noted, mostly adequate. The exception to this general sufficiency relates to the film program: for the last two years, there has not been an adequate screening room for watching films. The existing hardware in KAC 112 has degraded, as a regular result of use and wear, to the point where it is no longer up to the task. The library auditorium is somewhat better, and has been used as a substitute, but it too has limitations, especially around audio reproduction. English faculty have developed strategies to address and remediate this lack, but so far no one aside from English faculty have made visible moves to address this gap.

The LMS is generally well-suited to our purposes. The one striking issue that we face re: LMS support is the rise of generative AI by students and the relative insufficiency of the existing detection software (we're using Turnitin) to address this problem. But this problem is fluid on both sides, in terms of effectiveness and student use, so it's something to watch more than something to declaim.

2. The low quality of film screening spaces has negatively impacted the film side of the program. Otherwise, there haven't been any updates or modifications to teaching spaces, except maybe the transition from connected pcs to the mini-pcs currently used in several classrooms.

3. The primary facilities focus for the department at this point is upgrading the film screening facilities. (This upgrade was completed in January 2026, during the writing of this report.)

Library Report

* Upload the Library report provided by the University Library

1. Please describe the usage of library resources.
2. How do faculty and students feel the library meets the program's needs?

Narrative:

1. The English department makes substantial use of library resources. This is most evident in our comp classes, which make up the bulk of English faculty teaching-- these courses rely on the University databases as the source and subject of many student writing projects. English faculty regularly bring in librarians for instructional sessions, and we rely as well on resources like guides to citations, ask the librarian chats, etc.

Other English courses at all levels use library resources to support assignments, whether it is "respond to a critic" essays or simply developing seminar-style papers for the Senior Capstone and symposium projects.

2. It's a long-held contention that the students and especially the faculty need the MLA International Bibliography database to make contributions to the field of English studies. We won't re-litigate that here, but the library has elected to not subscribe to that database for a decade or more, citing restricted budgets and limited usage relative to other databases used by larger programs.

Otherwise, we're satisfied with the library holdings.

Evidence:

- [Library Collection Analysis -- English 2026](#)

Cost Analysis

1. What was the annual budget for the program for the past 5 years?
2. How was the budget spent? (breakdown of budget expenses)

Narrative:

1. The budget has been variable for the last three years, but this is the info we've been given:

FY 2023/2024	Budgeted \$500.00	Spent \$109.00
FY 2024/2025	Budgeted \$300.00	Spent \$7.36
FY 2025/2026	Budgeted \$705.00	Spent \$52.00

As a program faculty member, I don't think I knew what our budget was, and I have no insight into how the budget decisions were made. If ignorance explains why our budget went up so much between last year and this, I'm hesitant to ask too many questions.

2. This year, the money we spent was to buy lunch for our majors for the Student Performance Review days. Last year, faculty spent their own money to buy lunch. Looking forward, if we have a comparable budget next year, we'll plan to bring outside experts to campus, maybe through a poetry reading or film screening, etc.

Specialty Accreditation

Does the program hold specialty accreditation?

If yes, please include the name of the accrediting body and upload the most recent accreditation letter. (description of the data points – describe the accreditation cycle– identify any points of concern noted on the most recent accreditation)

Narrative:

None of the faculty hold specialty accreditation.

Industry and Program Trends

Analysis of the Discipline

1. Provide context for the status of the discipline today.
2. What are some emerging trends in this discipline across the country?
3. What is happening in the industries related to this discipline?

Narrative:

The state of English as a discipline today is in crisis, as numbers of enrolled students and majors has declined sharply: "between 2012 and 2020, institutions such as Tufts University and Ohio State University lost nearly half their humanities students. The number of bachelor's degrees awarded in the humanities over all fell 14.1 percent from 2012 to 2018, according to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences' Humanities Indicators," according to a 2023 article from Inside Higher Ed. In the face of this decline enrollments, English programs are searching for ways to reverse this trend. According to that same article, one-way programs are doing this is by emphasizing film studies and creative writing; both foci are already present in the WWU English program. Another suggestion is to extend the range of what is meant by writing, beyond the traditional essay into, for example, to include podcasting and webpage development. (At WWU, courses in those areas are offered in other departments,

but that doesn't mean that English courses couldn't rethink how we frame assignments, to include a wider range of possible artifacts).

The widespread adoption of generative AI presents a challenge for English, further devaluing the artifacts produced by our field. I think this is more of a perception problem than an accurate evaluation of what a student learns compared to what ChatGPT can produce-- but I think it is a perception.

The industry trend seems unchanged: English majors are recognized, broadly, as able to write well, and that is still a valuable skill. While it might be devalued some by the adoption of generative AI, I think writing skills might be more valued in industry, where the written report is the valued product, than in the University, where the degree itself and to a lesser degree the grade is more important than the work that produced that grade. In other words, industry might value the labor of an English major more than a University student.

Comparison to Similar Programs at Peer Institutions

1. Identify and discuss how similar programs compare to your program in terms of size, curriculum and any relevant attributes.

Narrative:

On a macro level, the English program William Woods faces the same headwinds as programs at other schools. So, the American Academy of the Arts and Sciences notes, "The number of bachelor's degrees conferred in the historical categories has been falling more quickly than for the field as a whole—with a decline of almost 37% from 2012 to 2022," where English can be understood as one of the "historical categories." The decline in the number of majors enrolled in English has declined at our peer schools (Stephens College, Westminster, Columbia College and Central Methodist) and this same trend can be seen at the University of Missouri. William Woods has not been immune to these declines. At the end of academic year 2425, there were no English majors, as one major graduated and two others dropped out of WWU. In academic year 2526, we have two new majors, both of whom are transfer students. We have two others who are flirting with the idea of adding English as a second major.

This decline in enrollment reflects a general national dissatisfaction with study in the Humanities, we think. Though as a program, we advance a "professions focused" approach, with an emphasis on writing that serves all kinds of professional opportunities, it's probably fair to say that message doesn't overwhelm the general cultural script that an English degree is frivolous unless it leads one to teaching grade school. (Both elements of this-- the broad applicability of the degree and the concentration in education, are borne out by the labor statistics included elsewhere in this report.)

Our curriculum is more varied than some of our peer schools, who lean more into creative writing and lit (like Westminster, Stephens and Columbia College) and the coursework we offer in film studies is unmatched in those schools. We lost some of our range when we lost the professional writing plank of our program, and we're still trying to redevelop that, but it's uncertain how much that was a draw for students in our program.

Senior Exit Surveys

1. What were some positive and negative feedback received from students as they complete their degrees?
2. Highlight any trends or insights that came from exit surveys over the course of the cycle.

Narrative:

We don't have data on this yet. We're hoping now that there's a dedicated process to capture this information, we'll start collecting some.

Graduate/Alumni Feedback on the Program

1. What were some positive and negative feedback received from alumni?
2. Highlight any trends or insights that came from alumni feedback over the course of the cycle.

Narrative:

We haven't received explicit feedback from alumni about the program.

Recommendations from Previous Program Reviews

1. Summarize recommendations from previous PRs, describe how those recommendations were applied throughout this cycle.

Industry Relevance and Employment

1. How do your student learning outcomes align with industry needs?

Narrative:

As addressed repeatedly above, our focus on writing and analysis aligns strongly with industry needs. I'm not going to go through it again here, as my statements above suffice.

Employment Outlook

1. Describe employment outlook for the degree.
2. What types of employment would constitute working "in the field?"
3. Are there changes to program offerings and activities that would improve the employment outlook for graduates?

Narrative:

1. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics "Occupational Outlook Handbook," those holding a bachelor's degree in English have a median income of \$60K/ yr, where the labor market average is 70K/yr. Slightly more are employed part time than those in the labor market as a whole. Roughly the same number are employed in jobs requiring a bachelor's degree as in

the labor market as whole, while a significantly higher number (48/38) hold an advanced degree, compared to participants in the labor market as a whole.

The suggests lower labor market value for the degree, expressed via the lower median wage and slightly higher percentage of folks working part time. The higher percentage of advanced degree holders suggests it might be harder to stand out in this field, but may also just reflect the path to higher degrees that is built into some industry areas (like primary and secondary ed, for example) where English majors are over-represented.

2. The way we've designed the degree at William Woods, we emphasize writing skills, especially in the form of written analysis. This reflects the fact that management and entertainment careers are well represented in the career outlook for English. Educational instruction and library occupations make up the largest single category of careers, but no single category is larger than "other," which might suggest the writing skills of an English major are broadly applicable and desirable, or it could suggest employers don't know what to do with English majors.

3. We could make broad changes to the English major that would impact the employment outlook some. For example, we could retool upper-level offerings to emphasize writing in the profession, to highlight the way English majors can analyze data and present it for review. But I'm not sure this would make a big difference, given that the student would still be seen as having an English degree, which has a reputation as a degree for recondite wallflowers. We might help students by coaching them how to make the case in interviews that they are not that person, but that is probably more extra-curricular than curricular. And really, that might be something that could be taught better by career services, for example, than by English faculty.

External Review

Executive Summary

General observations and comments are provided as to how the program aligns with and supports the University mission and curriculum, the quality of student learning and the achievement of student learning outcomes, the qualifications and achievements of faculty, the student experience, the state of facilities, the value of online resources and supports (if relevant), on-campus resources, financial resources, and how the program is responding to trends within the larger perspective of the program field.

Narrative:

This review provides an external point of view of the English Program at William Woods University, and its challenges, opportunities, and accomplishments during the review period.

As the department communicated to me, they see themselves at a point of transition where their program requires revision to better attract students or a change of what kind of program they offer and that they view this report as part of their decision-making process toward that end. It is my opinion that they have reached this point in their trajectory as a department due to a combination of factors some of which are currently prevalent across U.S. Higher Education, the devaluing of humanities education by prospective students and their families for one, while others are more localized, including a lack of staffing, lack of financial

transparency and support, and varying enrollment across the university.

While these are difficult circumstances faced by many programs right now, it is clear to me the English Program faculty are crucial members of the William Woods community, accomplish irreplaceable work toward programmatic and larger university goals and missions, and are valued teachers, mentors, and advisors to their students. I understand why the English Program's decision is a hard one to make, and my meetings with them have stayed very much at the forefront of my thinking in the time since my visit with them.

While I think both pathways for the program are available to the English faculty, and I will lay out what I see as possible steps for both directions, the English faculty seemed to think there would be more energy, excitement, and camaraderie in creating an interdisciplinary program with other Humanities disciplines on campus in similar positions, and it is my view that the energy, on the English faculty's part and that they expect to see from the rest of campus, are important factors to consider in their decision-making process.

Commentary

Reviewers provide comments about the program strengths and challenges.

Narrative:

Commentary

1. Mission & Service to the University

The English program has not changed its mission during the review period because of its alignment with the university's institutional mission. The English program sees its role at William Woods as fostering the critical practices of intellectual inquiry, cultural and textual analysis, creativity, and textual production through their program courses, their deep level of involvement with the general education curriculum, their mentorship of students, and their involvement in larger campus initiatives.

As at other colleges and universities, the English program is crucial to the undergraduate curriculum from the very first semester a student steps on campus thanks to the importance of establishing a strong foundation in writing and rhetoric in their composition classes. That said, English is not only crucial to general education through composition; English's 200-level courses are approved for the general education tier system, ENG 301 is required for the ASL program, their American literature courses are required for the English Education program, they recruit and train writing tutors for the Academic Success Center, administer the Writing Center, and more.

2. Student Learning Outcomes & Curriculum

It was clear from the data presented to me and from my conversation with the assessment director, that the English program does a great job helping students achieve the program's learning outcomes and assess how those outcomes are achieved; as the assessment director told me, they are a model for other undergraduate programs at the university and go "above and beyond" what's required of them.

There were a few difficulties in gathering the data in this review period that would typically be included in a program review. Some of these difficulties were due to low enrollment in the English program (mentioned below) but others were provided to me later in the process, even if the program faculty hadn't seen the data when writing their report. As I know fully from my own experience at a similar institution, consistent access to institutional research data is crucial to a program's success but also largely outside the hands of the program's faculty; I imagine that is doubly so when there's not an administrative figure within the program such as a department chair to advocate for that information and keep track of it over time.

3. Faculty Qualifications, Activities, & Scholarship

After reading through the English Department's Program Review Report and having my on-campus meetings with the faculty, the director of assessment, and students in the program, I am confident that one of the English Department's strengths is its faculty. It's clear to me that the three faculty members are crucial community members: overseeing first-year writing, the online program, designing assessment practices and curriculum for their own and other interdisciplinary programs such as the new program in Digital Filmmaking, and more. I was glad to see their work has been recognized by the larger university through an Outstanding Faculty Award and major university roles such as Assistant Faculty Marshall. Given all the responsibilities for such a small department, I was impressed that the faculty were able to research and publish to the degree they were, publishing creative pieces and editing a film studies textbook for just two examples, although as a faculty member myself I understand their expressed desire to be able to do more of that work as circumstances and professional development support allow.

4. Program Data: Student Experience

The program's concerns were most evident to me when reviewing the realities of the last few years in terms of their enrollment. I'd like to break down this section into course and semester-level concerns and then longer-term or program-wide concerns, as it's clear to me that in some areas of the student experience the program is quite strong while in others they are facing hardships.

1. Course Retention, Course Evaluation, Advising, Student Achievement, Clubs

In terms of course and semester-level attentions, the department seems to me to be quite strong. They receive strong course evaluations, especially noteworthy given how many courses in their program are taken primarily as general education courses, and they have students whose work is recognized outside their classrooms through later success in graduate school and at the university student research symposium, including one's being selected as the most accomplished of the symposium. Additionally, the English faculty's formal and informal advising was particularly emphasized by the students with whom I met. Students who engage with the English program feel well-supported as they move through their degree and toward graduation due to the personable and personalized mentor relationships the faculty establish with them.

While there's not significant English program presence in student clubs or campus events currently, I was glad to hear of the faculty's awareness of this and to talk with them about somewhat recent examples of what their program has done, including working with the Fine Arts program to support an Illustration Club, working with the filmmaking program to host a film festival or series on campus, and having had an English club and/or honors society

chapter. Unfortunately, given what the program faces in terms of workload, lack of faculty, and some of the structural limits I discuss below, I understand why that kind of engagement work is hard to accomplish consistently. That said, I agree with the program's faculty that opportunities like these are important to fostering student interest, community, and retention.

2. Enrollment, Recruitment, Retention, Program Completion

In terms of enrollment in the program, the period under review has been an incredibly volatile period for higher education in general and for the humanities in particular across the country. A combination of the COVID pandemic, a volatile economy, and societal questioning of the role and worth of higher education have combined to make a particularly difficult context for liberal arts institutions and English programs across the country to attract and retain students. More specifically to William Woods' English program, there has been a fair amount of turnover in administration for the university, related shifts in enrollment strategies for the institution, and, given the large size of the athletic cohort at WWU, notable turnover in athletics coaches as well. Closer to home, the loss of a faculty line within the English program exacerbated those external factors.

That said, the basic facts of the English program's current enrollment are quite concerning with zero majors as of last summer and an ongoing trend of major enrollment in the low single digits. Given this reality, it makes sense that the English program doesn't have some of the information a typical program review might include: program completion information, student exit interview responses, meaningful relationships with or feedback from alumni, etc. Without many students in the program for several years, that information isn't meaningfully present for an evaluation of it to occur.

An area of concern that I know is not limited to William Woods, and which the faculty didn't raise with me directly but which I do think is important to raise, regards transparency and organizational structure. Given the English program's position as one program among several within the larger Humanities umbrella without the structure of a department (with a department chair doing administrative work for, advocacy for, and leadership of the program), I do not think the English faculty have ongoing access to several of the tools necessary for success and, as they hope to have, growth.

Even though they don't exist as a department in terms of organizational structure, the English faculty were expected to review and assess their program (which makes sense, as they know their discipline best) but, given that all of the program's faculty members are teaching faculty and not administrators for the program, that work had to be done above and beyond the expectations of them as teaching faculty. There was a lot of coordination between English faculty and various campus offices to compile this review; through being part of just a small portion of that coordination, it was clear to me the English faculty didn't have ongoing access to their budget, important materials such as completion or withdrawal rates, consistent methods of communication with the enrollment or alumni offices, and more. I'm not sure how the faculty or the university might solve this problem best, but it's clearly a contributing factor to the program's current position and its uncertainty toward next steps.

5. Program Analysis

The program's self-analysis makes sense to me, and I generally agree with their SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, threat) analysis: the applicability of the skills taught and the openness to collaboration with other campus programs are definite strengths and the rise of generative AI, decline in humanities enrollments nationally, the fullness of each faculty

member's teaching load, and the dip in general education enrollments in English courses at William Woods are all threats. I would perhaps add to their analysis the particular difficulties around budgets, faculty lines, and institution-wide enrollment at William Woods, which are related to but which are not wholly understood through the decline in humanities or liberal arts enrollments nationally.

I was glad to see that the program is well-supported by its campus facilities and that their concerns are heard by administrators when it comes to physical space needs, for instance with the recent improvements to the film studies classroom space. The library serves the program quite well in terms of its spaces and physical holdings, but the program faculty are correct in stating the importance of the MLA International Bibliography's importance to English and humanities research more generally. It would be a marked improvement to the faculty's scholarly and creative activity as well as that of WWU's students for the library to have a subscription to that database.

As for the cost analysis, I've spoken to the lack of transparency or control around budgets, budget proposals, and their use already, but I will simply add here that this is the smallest program budget I've seen. That the program does anything on such a small amount speaks to their diligence and hard work, especially given the incredibly positive feedback about the faculty members, their mentorship, and their genuine concern for students from the English students with whom I spoke.

The program review's understanding of the field aligns with my own, especially in terms of the gap between the utility of the skills taught in an English program and the cultural misinformation about a degree like one in English as a space for either teachers or "wallflowers." Employers are quite vocal about wanting the critical thinking and communication skills taught in humanities and liberal arts programs such as English, but the misunderstanding of the field continues to be prevalent among prospective students and their parents. Perhaps this will change in the near future as generative AI makes some of the pre-professionalization work in other degrees less distinctive and emphasizes degrees that foreground creative and critical thinking skills, but for now it's a challenge for all English programs to simultaneously prepare our students as we have historically and argue in different and more forward ways for the kind of education work we do, in our classrooms, with enrollment services, and in our communities. I differ in some ways in my thinking from the program review's statement that career services would be better suited for teaching some of those pre-interview or pre-professional skills; obviously, career services should be a helpful resource, but I've found myself and peers at other institutions speaking much more directly to students about these skills in my classes in ways I might not have in the past. I'd argue for a combined approach potentially working best, collaborating with career services but also incorporating professionalization more straight-forwardly within the program, which I'll touch on later on in the review.

Lastly, I agree with the program review's understanding of how it differs from peer institutions, especially with its collaborations with the digital filmmaking program as one element that distinguishes it from other nearby colleges and universities who lean more toward literature and creative writing.

Recommendations

Comments provide future direction for the faculty to use to improve student learning. Evaluative feedback is offered, as well as suggestions to improve any aspect of the program.

Recommendations that require no new resource as well as those that do are welcome, alongside identifying areas for program development based on market/industry demands not yet identified by the university or program faculty. The report may include recommendations that have been shown to be effective elsewhere.

Narrative:

As mentioned in the executive summary of this external review, the English program at William Woods University sees itself at a crossroads between revamping the English program and consolidating with other campus programs similarly impacted by national and institutional-specific trends such as Philosophy and History. I will outline my recommendations for both paths, but I'd like to start with recommendations applicable regardless of which path they take.

The first and most important recommendation I have is to hire another English faculty member. I understand the faculty believe that isn't possible right now, but much of what they're experiencing as a program is occurring due to the lack of a full-time English faculty member. As they explained to me, of the three faculty members one teaches solely composition courses, another works primarily in administration, and a third currently teaches at a reduced course load but wouldn't be able to teach all the literature courses even when full-time (as evidenced by the period under review when he was teaching full-time). Another faculty member could help with teaching composition, literature, and other courses, help organize campus events and other methods for outreach, and help transition the program, whether toward a revamped English program or a new interdisciplinary model. More generally, I would recommend the program faculty have more input over and ability to use the budgetary process for their program, have more of a budget generally, have consistent access to exit interviews and enrollment data, and have regular meetings with enrollment and career services, all of which would also be more realistically possible with a faculty member teaching full-time in the department to share those tasks that go beyond teaching duties. Lastly, I would recommend the library provide access to MLA International Bibliography for faculty and student use, which would support work across several areas in the humanities and not solely the English program.

If the program decides to try revising and reenergizing the English program, which I think, while difficult, is still possible, there are a few ideas I would recommend based on my own experience and that I've witnessed at other schools. If this were the path chosen, I would probably recommend consolidating the two-course sequences for English Literature and American Literature to reflect the one-course model of World Literature in your curriculum, primarily to consolidate offerings and simplify teaching sequences to make sure as many students as possible could sign up for courses when they are offered. I would also recommend the English faculty work together to find a way to incorporate more hands-on professionalization and intentional conversations about the field, possible careers or internships, and other similar matters, perhaps in a Careers in English class, required internship, or a capstone course and/or through student-focused initiatives such as a campus magazine or film festival that would have the additional benefit of connecting English with other parts of campus that have natural affinities. In particular, I think if there's able to be more consistent student enrollment in English, an English student organization would be quite useful, such as a chapter of the English honors society Sigma Tau Delta (which I understand WWU's English program used to have but which phased out through lack of students and budget; and I think it's important to note this was one program request the students mentioned specifically wishing were still in existence to me).

If the program decides to try creating a new interdisciplinary program with other humanities disciplines, I could see how there may be renewed energy with a new beginning. I believe my more general recommendations would still hold for this pathway, as well as finding ways to incorporate professionalization opportunities and discussions intentionally in the curriculum. I'm not sure how different or similar marketing an interdisciplinary humanities degree to prospective students may be in comparison to English, Philosophy, or History, a reality the program would have to consider with their colleagues in the admissions and enrollment offices. That said, I understand the practical limitations the faculty currently have as well, and they may ultimately decide working with faculty from other programs in an interdisciplinary capacity to be the most viable path for reenergizing humanities education on William Woods' campus.

Program Response to External Review

Program Response

After the External Report is submitted, the Program faculty will respond to any comments where the reviewer has noted need of improvement or where additional explanation is needed. The faculty response will also include a response to the recommendations of the reviewer and their action plan to move forward with recommendations, or what is needed for the program to move forward with a recommendation. This response is added to the report and submitted to Academic Council for final review.

Narrative:

We want to thank Dr. Reed for his program review and provided comments. We explicitly asked him to reflect on the future of our program because we felt like we needed some sort of major correction to make the program viable and effective in the near and longer-term. We feel like Dr. Reed identified several factors that we should address to reconstitute the major. We feel like these can be expressed as two challenges. The first is declining enrollment in English, and the second is our inability to adequately staff our classes at our current size.

To tackle declining enrollment, we think the major can be reconfigured to better reflect contemporary concerns and, we hope, to increase student interest in the program. Taking inspiration from a course like Westminster's "Careers in English," we propose to develop, in the next year, a course focused on "AI and Workplace Writing" which will spend significant time--while its relevant--exploring what AI can and cannot do for academic writers, but which will also cover the kind of writing students can expect to do after they graduate. This is one way in which we hope to make English coursework more relevant to the needs of William Woods students.

Less directly inspired by Dr. Reed's feedback, we think it's time to survey our collective faculty again about what kind of writing they are asking students to do in their classes so that we can make sure our composition sequence, and possibly even the "Workplace Writing" class, are offering maximum value to students and the broader WWU community.

We remain committed to the value of a Humanities-framed method of inquiry, and we believe this approach is well suited to meet the current moment. However, students do not always readily perceive this to be the case, and it will take more than a couple of course revisions to address this dynamic adequately. We plan to increase our place in the campus conversation

by bringing in speakers to talk to students and by attending off-campus civic events and conferences, but some of this is dependent on budgetary concerns. There are also opportunities to start a literary magazine and / or to revive and expand the high school creative writing conference if funding is forthcoming.

We think, as well, that it might be time to revisit our objectives. Our current objectives have served us well for the twenty years or so since their initial implementation, but we realize these might be constraining us from connecting with today's students in some regards. Revising our objectives will probably occupy us for the next year or so, and we might move composition classes into the core of the major as a result. Dr. Reed mentioned that Westminster English courses tend to have more engaging titles in the interest of attracting students, and while it's possible that could work at WWU, we should first think about what we are teaching.

The above suggestions are directed at addressing our largest problem, which is enrollment and the consequently diminished place English occupies on the WWU campus. The other persistent challenge we face is understaffing. Dr. Reed suggested hiring another full-time faculty member, but current budget limitations make this course of action unlikely. He also suggested trimming back our course offerings so we would offer one American Lit survey instead of two, and the same for Brit Lit. However, our sense is that 2-course coverage for these subject areas is needed for English Secondary Ed, and if we're correct, this may be something we can address another way—for example, to get six hours of contact with the subject area, this sequence could be reimagined as one survey course and a more focused 300-level course. Basically, our intention here is to assess and reduce the sprawl in our department. Our major is focused as a lean 39-credit requirement, but we offer too many paths to 39 credits to cover without reliance on adjuncts and the goodwill of a librarian or two. It's premature to say exactly what this reconstitution would look like, as we need to revise our objectives first, but it might mean fewer offerings at the 200-level, with students spread less thinly.

We appreciate Dr Reed's fresh energy, and we hope to build on that energy to reimagine and redirect our important program.

Academic Council Review

Academic Council Response

Academic Council will review the report in its entirety and come together to discuss any remaining questions or concerns. The council will highlight noted areas of improvement for program focus. Issues of resources are discussed if additional resources are needed to implement improvements noted by the Reviewer, the faculty or Academic Council.

Narrative:

Academic Council met in July to discuss the report and recommendations of the External Reviewer. The following discussion is a summary is to benefit the English faculty as to the thoughts and recommendations of Academic Council.

Strengths:

- The English faculty wrote a thorough and well-written report with good supporting documentation. .
- The program and faculty play a vital role in the general education requirements, the dual challenge of navigating that responsibility while also strategizing how to grow enrollment numbers in the major is well articulated throughout the review.
- The threat assessment included important information about the role of AI in the discipline.
- The Industry and Program Trends section was well articulated.

Weaknesses:

- All issues and concerns were well explained by the report. A weakness is the lack of majors, but this was discussed by the societal discussion on what is happening within the humanities right now.
- A point of benefit would be to write the report for the non-English faculty. The notation of course by code only and not including the title was an added step in going to look up content that takes away from the reading of the report.

Action plans:

- The program is aware of the challenges and possible pathways forward. Discussions and action toward improving the program should be supported.
- Explore revisions to course offerings and faculty load in order to better utilize expertise and garner student interest in the program courses.