

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE
POLICY MANUAL

Revision of April 2015

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1. ENGLISH DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of English and Comparative Literature takes as its mission: to develop the reading and writing skills, the interpretive ability, and the cultural awareness of its students by maintaining and enhancing a tradition of strong teaching, good scholarship, and vigorous support of creative literary activity. To fulfill this mission, the Department affirms these goals:

- 1.1 Develop students' literary understanding, including their reading ability, critical thinking, interpretive skills, and historical knowledge of literature and language;
- 1.2 Deepen students' appreciation of diverse cultures and expand their views of the world through study of the written word;
- 1.3. Develop students' rhetorical and creative skills: ability to think, speak, listen, and write effectively;
- 1.4. Maintain a broad-based program of General Education courses at both the lower and upper division levels;
- 1.5. Foster professional growth and development for the faculty;
- 1.6. Recruit and retain a diverse student and faculty population;
- 1.7. Develop and maintain excellent relations with and service to our wider Community, including alumni and emeritus faculty.

2. DEPARTMENTAL GOVERNANCE

The Department of English and Comparative Literature is governed by By-Laws that outline the committee structure, voting procedure, and processes for appointing department administrators, including the department chair. Please refer to these By-Laws for any governance issues.

3. CHAIR

3.1. **Appointment:** University policy mandates that Department Chairpersons are appointed and removed by the President, in consultation with the Provost and the College Dean.

3.2. **Nomination/Election:** The recommendation to the Provost and the President shall be based on a majority vote of the department obtained in a secret ballot election. Eligibility to run and to vote is defined in University policy.

When an election is to be held, (1) the College Dean shall set a calendar for each step of the nomination process; (2) nominating petitions shall be drawn up and issued to any member of the electorate who requests one (To qualify, a petition must have the signatures of at least 20% of the electorate); (3) the Associate Chair shall arrange a meeting of the faculty at which the candidates may make statements and answer questions; (4) the Associate Chair shall draw up ballots listing the names of those nominated; (5) a representative from the Dean's Office and the Associate Chair shall count the ballots and announce the results to the faculty; (6) the results shall be formally submitted to the Provost and the President.

If no candidate receives a majority vote, a run-off election between the two candidates will be held. In case of a tie, the Provost and President will review the results and determine who shall be named Chair.

3.3 **Term:** The Chair shall serve for a period of four years. In order to be reappointed, the Chairperson must proceed through the regular nomination, election, and appointment process. A Chairperson shall not be reappointed solely on the basis of a satisfactory performance review. There shall always be a Department election.

3.4 **Review:** University policy mandates that, during the semester preceding the regular nomination election, the eligible Department faculty shall elect from its ranks a committee which will review the Chairperson's performance. In consultation with the College Dean, this committee shall determine the procedures and scope of the review. Following the completion of the review by all department faculty, the committee shall present its report to the College Dean. The College Dean shall then complete an additional review. Subsequently both the department committee's review and the Dean's review

shall be distributed to all faculty. When the incumbent is not a candidate for the next term, a review of the incumbent's performance will be conducted only if the incumbent so chooses.

4. DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES (See Departmental By-Laws)

5. ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENTS

The following positions are appointed as needed by the Chair, to whom they report, and at whose pleasure they serve. Any assigned time associated with such positions is advocated for by the department chair, but must be approved by the Dean's Office.

5.1. **Associate Chair:** Develops faculty schedules for the Chair's review. Surveys faculty for course and time preferences. Coordinates the RTP calendar with college and university deadlines. Proposes assignments for peer evaluations of faculty to Chair and Policy Advisory Committee, and notifies peer evaluators and persons being evaluated. Coordinates RTP committee's annual reviews and post-tenure review committee. Conducts all elections for Department and college committees. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .2 per semester.

5.2. **Writing Program Administrator (WPA):** Chairs Department Composition Committee. Advises students in the composition program. Arranges for meetings of composition faculty. Reviews syllabi for all composition courses to assure the course content meets department guidelines. Coordinates English 1 and English 2 and their assessment.. Reviews articulation requests for composition courses. Serves on Department Curriculum Committee and University Writing Requirements Committee. Supervises, observes and evaluates the teaching of all Graduate Students in the Teaching Associate Program. See Appendix A for Department policy on employment of Teaching Associates and Graduate Assistants. Attends CSU English Council meetings each semester. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .6 per semester.

5.3. **Graduate Coordinator and M.A. Advisor:** The Coordinator chairs the Graduate committee, writes and distributes *The Graduate Newsletter*, which details course descriptions and schedules for each semester. Drafts a proposed schedule of graduate courses for the Associate Chair and Chair. The M.A. advisor advises current and prospective M.A. students and reads and evaluates applications for admission to the M.A. program. Arranges for the creation, administration, and evaluation of M.A. Comprehensive and Foreign Language examinations. Facilitates formation of Thesis committees and serves as the third reader on all M.A. theses. Updates the online "M.A. Guide" as necessary. Facilitates selection of Graduate Assistants and Teaching Associates. Facilitates graduate awards. Oversees assessment of the M.A.

program. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .2 per semester.

5.4. Director of Creative Writing: Chairs Creative Writing/MFA Committee. Prepares proposed schedules for creative writing faculty teaching. Reviews articulation requests for creative writing courses. Advises undergraduate and graduate students. Serves as the faculty advisor for the Poets and Writers Coalition. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .2 per semester.

5.5. Curriculum and Assessment Coordinator: Represents the Department on the College Curriculum Committee. Prepares agendas and chairs all meetings of the Department Curriculum Committee. Assists the chair in meeting deadlines for course proposals and revisions, conducting of program planning and review, and other curricular initiatives, as they arise. Oversees assessment of department programs. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .2 per year.

5.6. Director of English Teacher Education: Advises credential candidates and evaluates their subject matter competency. Arranges for Credential candidate interviews each semester. Recommends student teacher and paid internship placements in area schools. Recommends initial appointments of supervisors for student teachers to the Chair. Maintains credential program records. Coordinates ENED 365 and 353, seminars in English Education. Arranges for meetings of English 184Y/Z faculty and student teachers. Regularly attends CSU English Council meetings. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .4 per semester.

5.7 Career and Professional Writing Program Coordinator: Advises students in the Career Writing Concentration in the English major and in the Technical Writing Minor; places and supervises interns; maintains liaison with industry partners, University departments, the Career Placement and Planning Center, and other universities with professional writing programs. Serves as Faculty Advisor for the Student Society for Technical Communication and the newsletter, *The Writing Life*. Supervises all activities in the Technical Writing Certificate Program, including scheduling classes and recruiting qualified faculty (in conjunction with the Chair and Associate Chair). Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .2 per semester.

5.8. Undergraduate Advisor: Counsels students and helps them to complete worksheets and other paperwork associated with courses and completion of the baccalaureate major and associated programs. Directs students to other English Department Advisors. Maintains regular office hours for the purpose of general advising. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .2 per year.

5.9. Assistant Writing Program Administrator: Supports the administration of writing programs, including the university's Stretch English program.

Supervises instruction and assessment in Stretch composition courses, and other writing courses, in close coordination with Writing Program Administrator and the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Director. Participates in hiring and evaluation of faculty teaching in the Stretch program as well as providing professional development for those faculty. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .4 per semester.

5.10. **Honors Program Coordinator:** Coordinates the recruitment and advising of English Honors students; aids in the scheduling of Honors Colloquia, in conjunction with the Chair, Associate Chair, and Curriculum Committee. See Appendix D for Honors Program Guidelines. Currently there is no release time for this position.

5.11. **Reed Magazine Advisor:** Supervises the student staff of the magazine and sees that the magazine is produced, following guidelines of the Department (see Appendix B). The magazine is run as a class (English 135), which affords the Advisor a .2 per semester.

5.12. **Director of Writing Across the Curriculum.** Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .4 per semester.

5.13. **Director of the Writing Fellows Program.** Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .2 per semester.

5.14. **Director of the Center for Literary Arts.** Reports directly to the Dean of the College of Humanities and the Arts. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .4 per semester.

5.15. **Director of the Martha Cox Steinbeck Center.** Reports directly to the Dean of the College of Humanities and the Arts. Currently, the Assigned Time reduction for this position is .4 per semester.

6. FACULTY EVALUATION

6.1. **Student Evaluations:** University policy mandates that all faculty are to administer standardized Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness surveys (SOTEs) in accordance with current CSU contract.

6.2. **Peer Evaluations:** University policy mandates that the Department shall conduct peer evaluations:

6.2.1. for every faculty member under review for retention and tenure, peer reviews should occur a minimum of one course each school year, with a full range of courses taught represented by these peer evaluations. Departmental policy requires that all probationary faculty must be evaluated by a tenured faculty member in one course *per semester* for the first two years of a probationary faculty's member contract. In

years 3-5 of their contract, probationary faculty must be evaluated by a tenured faculty member in one course *per year*. Any faculty member may request additional peer evaluations before any departmental RTP review.

6.2.2. for tenured, associate professors, at least two courses need to be peer reviewed before coming up for promotion. Department policy will require a minimum of three peer reviews before standing for promotion to full professor; the faculty member may request additional peer reviews. The amount of time in rank, the SOTES, and the faculty member's range of teaching responsibilities while serving in the rank of associate professor should be considered in determining the ideal number of peer reviews for any particular candidate. Candidates for promotion should consult with the department chair and the chair of the RTP committee about the appropriate number of peer reviews necessary for the promotion file.

6.2.3. for tenured full professors, University policy does not mandate that the Department shall conduct peer evaluations. It is recommended, but not required, that a peer review be conducted at post-tenure review. The department recommends that a faculty member be evaluated every five years post tenure.

6.2.4 Lecturers: College policy requires annual evaluations of lecturers without three-year contracts, and because the Department regards peer evaluation as a necessary complement, bearing the same weight as statistical data gathered with SOTEs, all those without three-year appointments shall have one course evaluated by a member of the tenured or probationary faculty each academic year. Lecturers with three-year contracts are evaluated every three years, ideally in their second year. Any lecturer may request additional evaluations before any departmental RTP review. In all classes, the evaluator shall follow the Department's form and procedures for course evaluations.

6.3 Procedure. Only the Associate Chair in consultation with the Chair assigns evaluators to Department faculty to be evaluated.

6.3.1. All peer evaluations shall be conducted on the department's most current form and all peer evaluators shall submit comments *three weeks* after the class visit to the Associate Chair for Personnel. The Associate Chair will then distribute all evaluations to faculty. The faculty member has the right to respond to a peer evaluation.

6.4. Post-tenure review

While University Policy does not call for for review of every tenured faculty

member at least once in every five years, the department recommends this practice.

7. COURSE MATERIALS AND STUDENT GRADES

It shall be the policy of the Department to guarantee (a) consistent application of clearly announced requirements appropriate to each English course; (b) the student's right to know, within a reasonable time, academic progress in the course; (c) the student's right to an explanation of how course grades were determined. Further, the Department shall *not* allow (a) the belated imposing of requirements not originally made clear; (b) assignment of marks based on criteria other than academic performance in the course; (c) grading criteria that do not provide a dependable method of evaluating student progress. In all English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

7.1. Course Guidelines: The Department may create and maintain guidelines for some of its course offerings. These shall be reviewed periodically by the Curriculum Committee.

7.2 Greensheets: A "greensheet" or list of instructions for the course shall be prepared for each class during the first week of the term and an electronic copy filed with the Department office. The greensheet shall include:

7.2.1. The course number and title as well as the instructor's name, phone extension, email address, office location, and a list of days and times during which the instructor is available for consultation. Faculty will hold **office hours in concurrence with University policy.**

7.2.2. A course description that briefly states the nature and scope of the course.

7.2.3. A statement about prerequisite courses and skills in accordance with current online catalogue.

7.2.4. A detailed description of course requirements, including the nature and length of required assignments, quizzes, tests, class participation, final examination, and the nature and amount of writing. The format of essays and tests need not be described on the greensheet; however, it is suggested that the instructor indicate how students will be informed about such requirements.

7.2.5. A detailed explanation of the way in which final grades will be determined. Consideration should be given to: (a) various weights accorded to graded assignments, (b) other required activities, such as class

participation, (c) penalties exacted for late or missing assignments, (d) policy on incompletes. University policy notes that student attendance is essential to the educational process. "Attendance per se, however, shall not be used as a criterion for grading." The greensheet may, nonetheless, list "participation" as a criterion for course grades. The Department mandates that all greensheets shall include the following statement: "The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined in the SJSU *Catalog* ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A= *excellent*; B= *above average*; C= *average*; D= *below average*; F= *failure*. Courses graded according to the A, B, C, No Credit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC shall replace D or F. In such cases, NC shall also substitute for W (or Withdrawal) because neither grade (NC or W) affects students' GPA."

7.2.6. Required University Statements.

7.2.6.a. The greensheet will include the online link to the University Senate's current policy on academic dishonesty and the range of penalties the instructor may impose for violating this policy.

7.2.6.b. The greensheet will include the online link to the university's current statement on accommodations for students who have registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC).

7.2.6.c. The greensheet will include Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) coordinated with each assignment.

7.2.7. A list of all required and suggested texts and other materials, including any requirements to purchase duplicated materials.

7.2.8. A tentative schedule of due dates for graded assignments and examinations.

7.2.9 A statement that the instructor reserves the right to revise the requirements and to notify students of such revision in a timely manner, e.g., "subject to change, announced at least one class meeting in advance."

7.3 **Work Expectations:** Students enrolled in English classes at SJSU may expect a minimum of three hours of study and preparation time for every 1 hour of class time. Upper division courses shall require at least 5000 words of graded writing over the course of the semester.

7.4. **Grades:** The University grading system and its symbols are described in the Undergraduate Catalog. University policy requires that grades be based solely on a student's performance in the course. Accordingly, it is the instructor's responsibility not only to employ dependable methods of evaluating student performance, but to award different grades for different levels of performance. The grade distributions for all courses in the

Department shall be reviewed by the Chair and Associate Chair for Personnel when they are made available by the University, and any instructor whose grade distributions differ consistently and markedly from the Department norms may be asked to explain this difference in writing.

7.5. **Incompletes:** When filing a grade of “Incomplete,” the instructor must comply with University policy on incompletes.

7.6. **Examinations:** Instructors will determine the number and forms of their exams and will be responsible for proctoring those exams. Literature courses should require essay examinations. By University policy, final exams or final projects must not be given in the last week of instruction and must occur during the week set aside for examinations. If a student has three final exams scheduled on one day, s/he has the right to reschedule one of them.

8. SCHEDULING

8.1 **General Guidelines:** Scheduling of courses will follow the order of work policies established in the CFA contract. All tenure line and FERP faculty will be scheduled first, followed by graduate students, followed by lecturers. Faculty shall be regularly asked to fill out course and time preference questionnaires. These shall be reviewed and analyzed by the Department Chair and Associate Chair in creating schedules. While faculty preferences for courses will be considered, all teaching assignments must respond to curricular and programmatic needs.

In assigning instructors to teach courses, the Chair and Associate Chair will give consideration to the original appointment of the faculty member. For faculty who have not taught a course before, their original appointment, based upon their academic training, and any professional activity (publications, additional training) will be considered; SOTES and peer evaluations for other courses will also weigh in the decision. For faculty who have taught the course before, successful performance in the class will be the most significant issue considered in reassigning this course. When multiple faculty are requesting a specific course or to teach in a particular area in the curriculum, priority will be determined based on this order of qualifications (1) a record of successful teaching in the field (2) publication in the field (3) graduate study in the field. Rank and seniority will be considered if all other factors are equivalent, in keeping with the contractual order of work.

Faculty members are encouraged to consult colleagues to establish rotations in specific sub-areas of the curriculum. The department chair will have the final determination of the assignment of specific courses.

8.2 **Composition Courses:** All faculty may be assigned to teach composition courses, but these courses will be taught primarily by Lecturers with M.A. or M.F.A. degrees and by Teaching Associates.

8.3 **Independent Study Courses**

8.3.1 Any English 180, 184, or 298 class proposal submitted to a professor must include a detailed description of the work planned, specific works to be read and written assignments to be completed. All 180, 184, or 298 proposals will be due to the Department on the Monday of the last week of the previous semester to be reviewed and signed off on by the Department Chair or Associate Chair.

9. FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

9.1 **Graduate Assistants:** All graduate assistants shall be assigned to faculty by the Chair in consultation with the Associate Chair and the Graduate Coordinator.

9.1.1 Eligibility: Consideration will be given to faculty with the heaviest teaching load and/or most demanding departmental responsibilities.

9.1.2 G.A. responsibilities: Graduate assistants may not be employed as research assistants for the faculty. Graduate assistant responsibilities include: grading, presentations in class, and office hours.

9.2 **Travel:** Travel funds shall be made available by the Chair in consultation with the Policy committee for recruitment, expenses, and for officially sponsored California State University activities, such as the meetings of the CSU English Council. When possible, the Department shall pay 100% of the travel costs for individuals attending to official business.

9.2.1 Professional Conferences: Travel requests shall be submitted to the Chair and when possible reviewed by the Policy Committee, and a determination shall be made on the level of funding that can be provided. Factors that will be considered in awarding travel monies include: rank, with probationary faculty given priority if they have not been able to receive funding from other sources; requirement of travel to satisfy job responsibilities; salaries of the faculty applying for financial support for conference attendance; the significance of the venue where professional work will be presented. The Chair shall notify the individuals of the level of support they have been awarded.

10. ACCESS TO RECORDS

10.1. **Students:** A student's file is available on My SJSU and can be accessed by authorized faculty and staff in the department. Student information cannot be released to persons outside the Department or the university.

10.2. **Staff:** A staff member's personnel file is available on demand to that staff member, to the Department Chair, and to the Associate Chair. Any further release must be authorized by the Department Chair or Associate Chair as well as the staff member.

10.3. **Faculty:** A faculty member's personnel file is available on demand to that faculty member, to the Department Chair and Associate Chair, and to personnel committees evaluating that faculty member. Release of information under any other circumstances or to any other party must have the approval of the Department Chair or Associate Chair for Personnel as well as the faculty member.

11. VISITING SCHOLARS AND FACULTY

11.1 Visiting Scholars: In rare circumstances, scholars may apply to the department for the status of "Visiting Scholar." Such an appointment will be entirely nominal, for the purposes of granting the scholar a temporary academic affiliation. To apply for this status, the scholar submits a vita and a cover letter describing his or her proposed activities to the Chair, who shall act in consultation with the Policy Committee. The number of visiting scholars sponsored by the Department shall be extremely limited due to the time demands on the Department staff and on other resources to provide such sponsorship.

11.2 Visiting Faculty: Teaching faculty on exchange programs or appointed to fulfill a specific duty (e.g., the Lurie Professor). Arrangements for any exchanges or temporary appointments must be made in consultation with the Chair and appropriate committees.

12. STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH CSU CONTRACT

All policies described in this manual are subject to agreement with current CSU contract.

APPENDIX A

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT POLICY ON EMPLOYMENT OF TEACHING ASSOCIATES AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

Graduate students who are performing at the highest levels of their programs in English may gain supervised teaching experience related to their advanced study. The following guidelines are consistent with University policy and shall be distributed to all graduate students and supervising faculty members and made known to all faculty in the English Department.

Graduate Assistant: Job Description

A Graduate Assistant may be assigned by the English Department Chair to provide instructional or other support to faculty. GAs assist faculty in instructional duties in support of a specific course, such as grading student work, creating teaching aids and course materials, and meeting with students from the course for discussions or tutoring. Graduate Assistants shall not be responsible for faculty research, for selection of student assistants, for planning examinations, or for determining the final course grades of students; nor shall they be assigned responsibility for instructing the entire course, or for providing the entire instruction of a group of students enrolled in a course. A GA may, on occasion, teach a class or part of a class under the direction of the instructor of record.

Teaching Associate: Job Description

A Teaching Associate under faculty supervision is the instructor of record, normally for English 1A or 1B. Faculty supervision shall include periodic meetings with each TA over the course of a semester, in addition to at least two classroom visitations.

Eligibility for Employment

Graduate students shall be enrolled under classified status for a minimum of three units of course or thesis work per semester during the time of their employment. Teaching Associates must successfully complete English 259, "Seminar in Composition Studies" before or concurrent with their first semester of employment. Appointment as a TA shall be limited to a total of four semesters.

Application Process

Graduate Students apply for positions as GA or TA by submitting an application to the Coordinator of the Graduate Program. Applications must include transcripts, letters of recommendation, and any other documentation required by the University's employment regulations. Candidates will be selected and interviewed by the Graduate Coordinator as well as the WPA in consultation

with the English Department Chair and Associate Chair.. Decisions to employ candidates will be based upon their academic record, recommendations, relevant experience, performance in interviews, and other evidence of ability to perform instructional tasks.

Terms of Employment.

The maximum TA assignment will be two sections of a three-unit course, or six weighted teaching units (WTUs) each semester. The classroom performance of TAs shall be evaluated annually in writing by the supervising faculty member, as well as by the students in each section taught, using the university's standard "Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness" (SOTE) surveys.

A GA shall be employed for no more than twenty hours per week. The performance of the GA shall be evaluated in writing by the supervising faculty member.

All GAs and TAs shall be subject to regular review by the Graduate and Teaching Associate Coordinators in consultation with the Chair. At the recommendation of the coordinators in consultation with any supervising faculty, the Chair may terminate GA or TA appointments for failure to perform clearly delineated tasks or for other causes as stipulated in the University's policies on employment of faculty and staff.

Revised September 2012

APPENDIX B

**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT POLICY
ON *REED* LITERARY MAGAZINE**

It shall be the responsibility of the Instructor of record to assign positions and instruct staff members.

Reed shall be published at least once each year.

APPENDIX C

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT POLICY ON HONORS PROGRAM

Upper-division students with a minimum grade point average of 3.0 overall and 3.5 in the major are eligible for Departmental Honors. Honors students complete the Honors Colloquium (Engl 190). Where scheduling problems arise, and at the Honors Coordinator's discretion, a rigorous independent study culminating in a twenty-page research paper may be substituted for the colloquium. Application to the honors program should be made to the Honors Coordinator. The Curriculum committee makes an open call to tenure-line faculty for proposals to teach English 190. Faculty are eligible to teach the course once every three years.