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Academic Program(s) Review SELF-STUDY

In responding to the following items, please review all information and data for each degree program participating in the self-study. Please use the SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) technique to describe each area of the program.

Summary

Department of Language and Communication, Majors: English B.A. (221 A&B), (529 A,B,C); Minors: English, Communication, and Foreign Language

Department Head: Dr. Lisa Abney; Director of Graduate Studies: Dr. Allen Bauman; Director of First-Year Writing: Dr. James D. Cruise

Date of approval of degree:

First degree awarded:

Objectives of Academic Program

Relationship to existing University mission:

The members of the Department of Language and Communication are committed to implementing the goals and objectives set forth by the University mission statement through the Department's academic programs and its members' support of recruitment and retention activities. The University mission states that the University provides a student-centered environment; one of the strengths of the Department of Language and Communication is that its faculty and staff work diligently to serve students through delivery of courses, academic advising, and mentoring, all of which provide students with the skills and knowledge necessary for them to succeed in their future endeavors. Every course in the Department requires students to read, write, and think critically. A number of courses in the Department are assessed regularly to ensure that these skills play an integral role in class assignments. In an effort to deliver the most current research and information to students, members of the Department are expected to conduct research and to present and publish articles, books, and write grants to fund research—and do, as the Departmental Faculty Activity Reports attest. While the professors and instructors actively conduct research, they also pursue excellence in teaching; routinely students cite this in Departmental teaching evaluations each semester. Finally, the Department works diligently to produce students who will be productive and responsible citizens, who are prepared to enhance the economic

and cultural life of the region. As part of the University Mission of service to the community, the Department has established a series of workshops that are geared toward local and regional businesses to provide professional development for staff members.

Creating a student-centered environment through teaching is a particular strength in the Department. While research is important to faculty members, teaching comprises a major portion of their workload. Professors and Instructors spend significant hours each day preparing for and teaching classes and many, many hours over the course of semester in reading and evaluating students' written work. Faculty members go above and beyond their expected duties many times to help students succeed. New faculty members have been hired in literature—one temporary, Mr. Gary Bodie, and one permanent, Dr. Sarah McFarland and in Spanish, Mr. Jim Crawford; these new members of the Department have eagerly embraced their teaching activities and have begun developing new courses to assist us in the expansion of major and minors. In addition to hiring of new faculty members, Dr. Helaine Razovsky, Dr. Lisa Abney, and Dr. Allen Bauman received a Board of Regents Enhancement Grant to fund tablet laptops and projectors to be used exclusively for teaching. Faculty members continue to seek grants to support equipment purchases which assist in instruction. Having this new technology available has made working with technology much easier than in past years.

In addition to teaching, faculty conduct research regularly, and many times, students—both graduate and undergraduate—assist with this work. At present, Dr. J. Rocky Colavito serves as editor of the Louisiana Council of Teachers of English (LCTE), *English Journal* and Dr. Lisa Abney edits the *Louisiana Folklife Journal*. Dr. Allen Bauman continues to work on Victorian-era literature and its connection to medicine while Drs. Helaine Razovsky and James Cruise continue research on texts from the Renaissance and Eighteenth Century. Dr. Sarah McFarland conducts research on the eco-criticism and eco-feminism in relation to American literature texts. Dr. Julie Kane has published numerous articles and books of poetry; Dr. Lisa Abney continues work with the Linguistic Survey of North Louisiana and the Folklife Survey of North Louisiana. Instructors, Amy Callahan, Heather Salter, and Laura Carroll, present research at conferences regularly.

Another focus of the University Mission statement is to promote economic and cultural development in the region. The Department of Language and Communication strives to enhance the cultural and economic life of the region through its work with the NSU Writing Project, internships, and the Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival. The Department has just submitted a Board of Regents ITRS grant to fund workshops for local and regional businesses; additionally, we have formulated a workshop list for Spring 2007 and have begun to forge partnerships with companies, such as Weyerhaeuser, Pilgrim's Pride, and the Natchitoches Chamber of Commerce, in order to offer workshops which will provide the Department with the opportunity to raise funds for travel and other projects and to assist with economic development within the region.

Weaknesses and Threats:

While Departmental faculty members strive to meet the goals set forth in the mission statement, weaknesses exist in the Department's ability to meet these goals, and these also serve as threats to success. Departmental teaching is adversely affected by physical environment—classrooms are overcrowded, dreary, and dirty. Lack of funding for research and travel and low salaries are weaknesses for faculty recruitment and retention. Low numbers of tenure-line faculty threaten the success of programs and the Department, as well as the Department's ability to improve and/or participate in economic development efforts in the region.

A weakness cited in the Departmental Self-Study in 2000 was faculty workload. The Departmental response was to gradually lower course enrollments in first-year writing from thirty to nineteen which is the recommended maximum number by Administrators of Departments of English (ADE) and the Modern Language Association (MLA). The ADE and MLA state that writing courses should contain fifteen students as an optimal number. The Department Head has gradually reduced the enrollment numbers in these courses and has offered more sections in order to accommodate student need. With changes in the University core, the

demand for sophomore literature has lessened slightly; hence, these courses are no longer offered in large sections—forty or more students per class—instead, these sections generally number about twenty-five to thirty students. Overcrowded first-year writing courses have adversely affected students in past years; many students stopped attending and expressed their dislike of having so many students in a writing class. Since students often lack strong writing skills and cannot get the specialized attention they deserve in a class of more than fifteen to nineteen students; further, classrooms which contain computers are limited to only twenty-five per classroom. Not having the appropriate number of computers for students often creates frustration for them and for the instructor. The reduced class numbers will no doubt illustrate an increase in student retention and success since instructors will be able to effectively assist the students who most need assistance.

Another threat/weakness to student retention is that Kyser Hall classrooms contain uncomfortable desks, dreary paint-color schemes, and are often very dirty; students do not feel motivated to learn or to be creative in this environment. Because of the building design, there are no public lobbies or waiting areas, so hallways are often loud and crowded with students waiting for classes. This noise negatively affects classes in progress. Classrooms are generally crowded, and temperatures may range from thirty degrees to 105 within the same week because of the centralized thermostat controls. Students can hardly take pride in their University when such problems exist within their learning environment.

Another weakness noted in the 2000 Self-Study was that faculty who teach writing intensive courses are assigned four courses per semester, and foreign language and communication faculty teach five courses as a regular load. Faculty members, however, are sometimes asked to teach more courses as paid overloads. Since 2000, several faculty members have departed NSU, and the Department has struggled to attract replacement faculty since salaries in the Department are lower than those of other universities. In the previous Self-Study, this issue was cited as problematic, and the Department has been able to do little to increase salaries for new faculty.

The Department is currently short a number of positions that must be filled; in Fall 2006, the Department conducted a search for two assistant professors in English. One position has been filled; the other, in rhetoric-composition, remains open since the top candidate rejected our offer because, as he indicated, the salary was too low and the out-of-pocket cost of benefits in our system is too high. A second candidate who came to campus in March also stated that the salary was too low. We are in the process of filling this position with a Visiting Assistant Professor, Sharon Robideaux for the 2007-2008 year. Additional positions are needed in the areas of linguistics, rhetoric-composition, technical writing, fiction writing, and folklore.

In addition to the new positions in English, there is a need for additional faculty members in communication and potentially another Spanish/French professor to assist Dr. Rubino, Ms. Wiggins, and Mr. Crawford. At present, the Department lacks a faculty member in communication at Ft. Polk, and the Communication faculty members have taken on overloads in order to assist students with their progress in degree programs. The Department Head has requested one more tenure-line faculty member in Communication, and the Department is in the process of advertising for an instructor in Communication. In foreign language, the addition of Mr. Jim Crawford has helped ease the burden of our Spanish program; however, to sustain the growth of our minor in foreign language, an additional faculty member who could assist both Mr. Crawford and Dr. Rubino would be a welcome addition.

A weakness in and a threat to our Department are the low number of tenure-line faculty members, including those already identified in Spanish and Communication, and the comparatively low salaries our faculty are paid. Our effectiveness in teaching as a Department would be much greater if we had at least the same number of tenure-line faculty as during our last self-study period. At present, all our Graduate Faculty serve on numerous thesis committees and teach four or more classes or have equivalent re-assigned time. Non-graduate faculty members, too, remain overwhelmed with grading, preparing for classes, and teaching. That being said, faculty members have continued to serve our students amazingly well, but without more faculty, existing faculty will

face issues related to burn-out, and this is not conducive to good teaching. An opportunity to lessen this burden will arise if permission to hire new faculty members continues to be given in a timely manner. We are grateful to Dr. Hanson and Mr. Jones for assisting us with the hiring of our new faculty for last year and the coming year and look forward to being able to bring new faculty members on board.

Another weakness in the Departmental ability to fulfill the University mission is that the Department has very few resources with which to fund faculty travel to conferences. Since the last self-study in 2000, this problem has only grown worse. We are currently planning to conduct a fundraising drive, and alumni and community partners will be asked to contribute to our NSU Foundation Account, which may enable us to fund student-faculty research and bolster faculty research support; however, travel should be funded through the University at a rate commensurate with the size of our Department and similar to that of other Departments. Last year, in 2006-2007, our Department was initially given \$300.00 for travel. In January, when funds were returned, faculty members were given another small amount for travel. Within budget categories 2000 to 7000 little money existed for budget revisions in order to fund faculty travel. During the 2006-2007 fiscal year, Dr. Hanson has funded much of our faculty travel via University enhancement accounts, and this has been a tremendous help during this year.

Finally, progress in our economic development project has slowed because of the limited number of faculty members who can assist with the project, to ensure its success. Despite this difficulty, the Department has committed to this plan, and we are looking forward to working with the local and regional businesses. Visiting Assistant Professor, Sharon Robideaux, has expressed an interest in assisting with the implementation of this project.

Opportunities:

In Language and Communication, many opportunities for personal and professional fulfillment exist. The Department Head encourages faculty members to write NSU Enhancement Fund Grants (NEF) and other grants to fund research, and she works to provide professional development for interested faculty via colloquia, workshops, and meetings. If faculty members request a schedule which allows them more time for writing and research, all attempts are made to meet this request. Another opportunity within the Department is the development of new programs and courses to expand student interest in our major, minors, and courses. Our faculty members cite program and course development as a reason for coming to and staying at NSU. Further, our professors and instructors enjoy the flexibility of teaching in the on-line environment, and many see this opportunity as a way to expand our course offerings and to reach more students. Several faculty members have expressed a desire to be a part of the new Board of Regents initiative to recruit non-traditional students. Finally, many members of the Department have expressed willingness and interest in our new economic development initiative.

Enrollment Management

As in all departments, Language and Communication faculty members work diligently to recruit and to retain undergraduate and graduate students in our program. Currently, the Department employs a number of approaches for recruiting. The Department Head and faculty members conduct STAR calling, participate in all University-sponsored recruitment events, and further, the faculty members showcase NSU's many strengths through work with K-12 teachers who are involved in the National Writing Project. The Department Head along with Lisa Rougeou and Mariann Wilson visit high schools to promote our On-line Writing Center. Additionally, faculty members attend the Louisiana Festival of the Book in Baton Rouge, where generally twelve to fifteen prospects for recruitment meet with the Director of Graduate Studies and other faculty who attend the event. Further, at the Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival, the Department hosts a booth at which recruitment materials are displayed since the Festival and Louisiana Folklife Center support the MA in English,

Folklife-Southern Culture Track. Recruitment materials are available at the Information Table, and the Department often attracts much interest at this event. Faculty and current students assist with the Festival of the Book and Folk Festival efforts. The strength of our approach to recruiting is that we use a variety of activities to attract students to NSU. The weakness is that we are limited in the number of personal contacts we can make, and we believe this limitation compromises our recruitment efforts. Meeting regularly with the University Recruiters to find ways to enhance our recruitment practices does help, however, in our efforts; Dr. Bauman, Director of Graduate Studies, and Dr. Abney, Head, continue to maintain close working relationships with University recruiters to make sure that we are doing all that we can to attract and retain students.

Retention/Persistence Strategies

Departmental retention efforts are multi-layered. Faculty work closely with advisees, who major and minor in English, Foreign Language, or Communication, and they develop strong relationships with the students throughout their time at the university. The Department Head has formed an Academic Advising Committee in the Department and has specified an English Education Advisor, as well as five other tenured/tenure-line faculty members to advise students. In order to assist with communication between the Department and its majors and minors, a Blackboard site has been established which parallels the Departmental site and allows us to communicate with our majors and minors. Our majors have formed The Society of English Scholars, which is a student group that sponsors a number of significant events, including public readings of creative pieces, banned book readings, and writing groups; this group meets in conjunction with Sigma Tau Delta, the English Honor Society. Faculty members participate with the students in these events. In the fall, the Society held an event, "Celebrate Freedom: Read a Banned Book," and at the event, five faculty members and ten students read from books which have been banned at various times in history. This event had a substantial number of attendees. During Fall 2007, the Department will host a "Meet the Majors Day" event on campus to share information about our program with potential majors and minors. The Department and the Society of English Scholars also sponsors colloquia for students to provide them with the opportunity to discuss a variety of topics with faculty and other students. The Department participates in the Liberal Arts Banquet, which is held each April to honor four to six English students for their outstanding work. At the Ft. Polk Campus, Dr. Paralee Norman continues her work with the annual essay contest, which draws much attention within and support from the Fort Polk community. On the Natchitoches Campus, the Society of English Scholars sponsored an essay contest, and two winners were selected and given awards at the Liberal Arts Banquet. Dr. Jon Croghan and Ms. Tammy Croghan have assisted interested students in forming a Debate Club; the club members have already participated in two tournaments and competed well. The aforementioned activities are strengths of and opportunities for the Department. A weakness is that the faculty and Department Head have many obligations, and it is sometimes quite difficult to schedule as many events with students as we would like; the lack of time, as indicated, poses one of the greatest threats to the potential of our program. Faculty members diligently work to retain students and the number of majors over the past five years has grown.

Enrollment and Graduation Trends and Projections

Our Department has illustrated growth in the numbers of major and minors over the past five years. At present, seventy-nine students have selected English as a major, and thirty-six are English Education majors. The Department currently lists forty-eight graduate students. Minors in English, Foreign Language, and Communication have increased over the past five years, too.

We continue to attempt to build a database of majors and minors, but because of coding issues involving the new minor code for Communication, Communication faculty and the Department Head are working to ascertain a verifiable list of Communication minors. With the addition of new faculty, exciting programming for our majors, and other activities related to retention, the Department hopes to recruit new students into the Departmental major and minors. The proposed BA in Communication will also attract new majors once it is approved.

Expected Learning Outcomes (if both graduate and undergraduate programs are being reviewed, please differentiate between degrees)

Please see SACS-CIP/ELO for this information, or see Appendix E

- Use the Expected Learning Outcomes as presented in the University Profile System. The following link <http://sacs.nsula.edu/display/cipelofdefault.aspx>

Program Curriculum

- Degree Plan as presented in associated University Catalog

English Majors: Literature Track Total Semester Hours for Degree: 122

Semester 1			Freshman		
	Hours	Grade		Hours	Grade
English 1010	3				
Health and Personal Fitness ¹	2				
History 1010 or 2010	3				
Mathematics ¹	3				
Orientation 1010	1				
Science ¹	3				
Total: 15 hours					
GPA:					

	Hours	Grade
English 3100 ⁵	3	
English 3160 ⁵	3	
English 4420 ⁵	3	
Elective ²	3	
Foreign Language ⁴	3	
Sequence 3		
Total: 15 hours		
GPA:		

Semester 2			Freshman		
	Hours	Grade		Hours	Grade
English 1020	3				
Social Science ¹	3				
Health and Personal Fitness ¹	2				
History 1020 or 2020	3				
Mathematics ¹	3				
Science ¹	3				
Total: 17 hours					
GPA:					

Semester 6			Junior		
	Hours	Grade		Hours	Grade
English 3150 ⁵	3				
English 3170 ⁵	3				
Elective ²	3				
Foreign Language ⁴	3				
Sequence 4					
Philosophy	3				
Total: 15 hours					
GPA:					

Semester 3			Sophomore		
	Hours	Grade		Hours	Grade
English 2070 ³	3				
Elective ²	3				
Foreign Language ⁴	3				
Sequence 1					
Fine Arts 1040	3				
Science ¹	3				
Total: 15 hours					
GPA:					

Semester 7			Senior		
	Hours	Grade		Hours	Grade
English 3*** or 4*** ⁵	3				
English 3*** or 4*** ⁵	3				
English 3200, 4000, 4100, 4110 or 4600 ⁶	3				
Elective ²	3				
Elective ²	3				
Total: 15 hours					
GPA:					

Semester 4			Sophomore		
	Hours	Grade		Hours	Grade
English 2080 ³	3				
Elective ²	3				
Elective ²	3				
Foreign Language ⁴	3				
Sequence 2					
Social Science ¹	3				
Total: 15 hours					
GPA:					

Semester 8			Senior		
	Hours	Grade		Hours	Grade
English 3*** or 4*** ⁵	3				
English 3*** or 4*** ⁵	3				
English 4050	3				
Elective ²	3				
Elective ²	3				
Total: 15 hours					
GPA:					

Semester 5			Junior		
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Notes:

- ¹ Refer to University Core Requirements
² Electives must be chosen to complete a minor as defined by the department concerned
³ Students in the professional writing concentrations may take 2050 and 2060 instead of 2070 and 2080
⁴ All twelve semester hours **must** be in the **same foreign language**
⁵ Students in the literature concentration will take 12 hours of advanced literature courses
⁶ Student only have to choose **one** of the classes listed.

English Majors: Professional Writing Track*Total Semester Hours for Degree: 122***Semester 1****Freshman**

	Hours	Grade
English 1010	3	
Foreign Language ³ Sequence 1	3	
History 1010 or 2010	3	
Mathematics ¹	3	
Science ¹	3	
Orientation 1010	1	

Total: 16 hours

GPA:

Semester 2**Freshman**

	Hours	Grade
English 1020	3	
Foreign Language ³ Sequence 2	3	
History 1020 or 2020	3	
Mathematics ¹	3	
Science ¹	3	

Total: 15 hours

GPA:

Semester 3**Sophomore**

	Hours	Grade
English 2050 and 2060 or 2070 and 2080 ⁵	3	
Foreign Language ³ Sequence 3	3	
Social Science ¹	3	
Science ¹	3	
Fine Arts 1040	3	
Health and Personal Fitness ¹	1	

Total: 16 hours

GPA:

Semester 4**Sophomore**

	Hours	Grade
English 2050 and 2060 or 2070 and 2080 ⁵	3	
English 2100, 2510, 2610, or 2090 ⁵	3	
Elective ² Course:	3	
Foreign Language ³ Sequence 4	3	
Social Science ¹	3	
Health and Personal Fitness ¹		

Total: 16 hours

GPA:

Semester 5 **Junior**

	Hours	Grade
English 3200 or 4660 ⁵	3	
English 2100, 2510, 2610, or 2090 ⁵	3	
Elective ² Course:	3	
Elective ² Course:	3	
Philosophy	3	
Health and Personal Fitness	1	

Total: 16 hours

GPA:

Semester 6 **Junior**

	Hours	Grade
English 4000, 4100, or 4110 ⁵	3	
English 3*** or 4*** ⁴	3	
Elective ² Course:	3	
Elective ² Course:	3	
Health and Personal Fitness	1	

Total: 13 hours

GPA:

Semester 7 **Senior**

	Hours	Grade
English 3*** or 4*** ⁴	3	
English 3*** or 4*** ⁴	3	
English 3*** or 4*** ⁴	3	
English 3*** or 4*** ⁴	3	
Elective ² Course:	3	

Total: 15 hours

GPA:

Semester 8 **Senior**

	Hours	Grade
English 4080	3	
English 3*** or 4*** ⁴	3	
Elective ² Course:	3	
Elective ² Course:	3	
Elective ² Course:	3	

Total: 15 hours

GPA:

Notes:¹ Refer to University Core Requirements² Electives must be chosen to complete a minor as defined by the department concerned³ All twelve semester hours **must** be in the **same foreign language**⁴ Students in the professional writing concentration will take 18 hours of advanced writing courses⁵ Student only have to choose **one** of the classes listed.

- Provide rationale for required courses

In the Undergraduate Degree program, two concentration areas—one in Professional Writing and one in Literature—are offered. At the graduate level, students can select from three tracks: Literature, Folklife-Southern Culture, and Writing and Linguistics. The courses for each of these tracks have been chosen in order to provide students with the best preparation for entrance into the workforce and graduate programs in English. The literature track for the BA allows students to enroll in both American and British literature courses and also to take related theory classes so that they fully engage themselves with a variety of writers—both canonical and non-canonical. They complete six survey courses in order to gain a broad knowledge of British, American, and world literature. In the process, they learn the literary works of many representative writers, as well as the historical and cultural influences that inform these works. When students leave this program, they are prepared to teach, continue graduate study, or to enter the world of work.

The Professional Writing track prepares students to embark upon careers in writing. They take a variety of courses ranging from technical and grant writing to creative writing. They are encouraged to participate in internships with private companies and with journals housed at NSU. Additionally, these students learn that writing is a marketable product they can showcase when they enter the workforce. They obtain real-world experiences through their internships, and with the addition of new faculty members in this area, the program will continue to strengthen and to serve our students as they become teachers, graduate students, or employees.

Within both tracks of the BA, our students have opportunities for research with faculty members, for publication of work, and for presentation of research at the NSU Research Day and other local/regional conferences. Many students have had success in a variety of endeavors, and they repeatedly indicate, after graduation, that they feel that they are well prepared to enter the workforce.

Our Graduate Program, too, focuses upon important issues of each track. The literature track allows students to enroll in both American and British literature courses and to find the best focus for their interests. The Folklife-Southern Culture track of the MA provides students with pragmatic experience in working within the field of public folklore and/or literature of the American South. Students in this track are encouraged to conduct fieldwork and to learn best practices regarding the documentation of traditional culture. The Writing and Linguistics track affords students the opportunity to pursue interests in fieldwork-based research and pedagogical concerns relating to writing pedagogy and the study of rhetoric as well as in creative writing.

- Provide rationale for sequence of courses

Departmental faculty members believe that students must have exposure to appropriate courses at the correct time in their academic careers. We encourage our BA students to enroll in and complete their University core requirements first and then to proceed with their major courses. Depending upon their track, they will complete courses in an appropriate rotation so that they can complete their degree within four years. For this reason, we offer required courses at regular and planned intervals and also make substitutions as needed to assist them in graduating on time. Students in the Graduate Program in English are

encouraged to complete Engl 5800: Bibliography and Research and Engl 5280: Composition Theory (if they are teaching assistants) within their first semester of enrollment. Thereafter, they may enroll in any course they wish as long as it applies to their selected track. Advising at both levels is crucial to successful completion of the degree.

- Indicate particular areas where the program may be unique, exceptionally strong, or weak compared to other programs of its kind

Both the BA and MA courses of study in English offer unique programs for our students. Over the past fifteen years, the faculty of the Department have honed and developed courses that make our programs unique. The BA in English—Professional Writing Track prepares students to enter the world of work by providing them with courses that will equip them with the skills necessary for success in the business world. At present, the number one criticism that employers level at new graduates, nationwide, is that students cannot communicate well in either written or spoken forms. Graduates in the writing track leave this program with the skills they need to attain success. The literature degree offers students traditional preparation for English studies. This track is also important since it prepares many of our future teachers in their content area. At the MA level, the Department offers three unique areas of concentration—a Literature track, the Folklife-Southern Culture track, and the Writing and Linguistics Track. In the 1980s, when the Board of Supervisors examined English MA programs statewide, ours was the only program which was not threatened because it offered such an array of concentrations and unique, unduplicated programs. Currently, we are planning to expand the creative writing and professional writing components of the program and to enhance our Folklife-Southern Culture curriculum through the addition of Dr. Andy Crank to our program. We will continue to grow all three areas of our MA.

A threat to the graduate program and to the undergraduate program is the inability to offer graduate only courses. In past years, faculty have taught courses as cross-listed, and in the 2000 Self-Study, this dual enrollment was seen as problematic by the evaluator, Dr. Maurice Scharton. In 2002, the Department began to separate these courses based upon Dr. Scharton's advice, the Departmental response to the study, and the then-upcoming SACS visit. Faculty have worked to successfully split all but a few courses listed in the catalog; however, many times, faculty members continue to be asked to teach these as dually enrolled courses. This poses a threat to our graduate program because students rarely wish to enroll in a graduate course of study if they will be taught the same courses that they took at the undergraduate level when attending NSU to earn the BA.

- Discussion of assessment program – How do you assess the quality of your program? We continually assess our programs through methods addressed in our Expected Learning Outcomes (ELO) in our Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP). We survey students regularly via a number of methods to ensure that they have an opportunity to provide feedback about our programs. We currently assess Engl 1020 for our core competencies, and we are about to embark upon a new study of first-year writing involving the Compass essay exam program to examine the placement of students into courses via ACT scores. We assess all courses and programs regularly via student surveys, examinations, and assignment grades.

Courses and Descriptions

Core Items

1. To include findings and commendations of last review (please include date):

In Spring 2000, the Department underwent its last review, and the Department, with the input from Dr. Maurice Scharton, the outside evaluator, made suggestions regarding the following areas: Curriculum, Service Courses, Enrollment in First-Year Writing Courses, Distance Learning, Courses for Majors and Minors, Faculty support for research, Faculty Salary, Office Space for Faculty, Recruitment for Graduate Program, and Retention-Recruitment of students. The Departmental response to Dr. Scharton's visit focused upon the following: course enrollment, faculty load, compensation for adjuncts and full-time faculty, graduate student retention and recruitment, faculty travel and research support, course releases for graduate faculty members, departmental technology support, enhancement of Writing Center resources, and recruitment of majors and minors. Since 2000, the Department has made headway on many of the issues addressed in the Self-Study.

Dr. Scharton encouraged the Department to examine its role as a purveyor of service courses and its ability to serve its majors, minors, and graduate students. Faculty members enjoy teaching many of these service courses; however, they also see the need to balance service courses with courses which are within their discipline and research areas. Finding this balance is often difficult for the Department since the need for service courses within the University is great. The Department Head and faculty continue to work to provide the best arrangement of courses for each semester.

In the 2000 Self-Study, the evaluator and the Departmental faculty members expressed concern over the high numbers of students in first-year writing courses. As part of the Departmental response to the Self-Study, numbers in these courses have gradually been lowered. At present, nineteen is the maximum number listed per Engl 1010 and 1020 course. In order to achieve this goal, only six sections of English 1010 were added, and not all of these will be filled to capacity. Courses will be consolidated as needed to ensure the most efficient use of resources and the best delivery of courses to students.

Dr. Scharton wrote in the 2000 review that he felt that writing courses were not suited to an on-line environment. The Departmental faculty understands, however, that Core courses must be provided to assist on-line degree program students. Faculty members who teach on-line writing courses remain vigilant and work very hard to ensure that students are writing, reading, and thinking critically, just as they would in a face to face course.

Faculty support for research is an issue which Dr. Scharton cited in his report and is an element of the Departmental response. Support for faculty research and travel continue to be problematic for the Department. As is discussed in Part 1 of the current self-study, the Department needs sustained and recurring support for travel allocated as it is in other departments on campus. Without the help of Dr. Hanson and the NSU Foundation, few faculty would have been able to travel this academic year.

In the 2000 Self-Study, Dr. Scharton maintained that NSU faculty salaries were lower than the SREB average, and as can be seen in the current self-study, salaries for full-time and adjunct employees continue to be lower than at other universities. Dr. Colavito included this in his response to the Self-Study, and though Dr. Colavito and Dr. Abney have both worked to increase salaries, they remain lower than the Southern average.

Dr. Scharton's response included a discussion of office space and facilities for faculty; at present, Departmental instructors often share an office which is no larger than an 8'x 10' space. Tenure-line faculty members have private offices, yet these, too, are often very small. All offices are poorly ventilated and poorly lit. Faculty members often paint or redecorate in an attempt to make their environs more comfortable, yet little can be done with these small spaces. The furniture in the offices is of poor quality, and many faculty members have purchased desk chairs out of their own funds in order to have a comfortable place to sit. Unfortunately, our Department does not have funds with which to buy faculty computers nor furniture, so faculty often times must use computers from student labs which have been replaced with more current ones.

Dr. Scharton encouraged the Department to enhance recruitment for Graduate Program, and this has been accomplished. The Graduate Program has grown to forty-eight students. Graduate students, thanks to the efforts of Dr. Horton and Dr. Hanson, now receive higher amounts of funding via assistantships, and no longer are they asked to teach Engl 0920 without support. Dr. Cruise, Director of First Year Writing, works with the graduate students to assist them with their teaching, and they are also assigned a graduate student mentor and a faculty mentor who can also assist them. Further, Dr. Scharton encouraged the Department to revitalize the National Writing Project Program. This was done in 2004, and the work of the NSUWP continues to support teachers and students in northwestern Louisiana.

In Dr. Scharton's review, he addressed the need for elimination of the dual-enrolled course and for the need for an enhanced strategy for recruitment of students. In response to this, then-Department Head, Dr. Colavito asked the faculty to assist with the revision of recruitment materials. This was done in 2002, and each year, recruitment materials continue to be updated and revised. Further, Dr. Scharton remarked upon the dirty and unpleasant classrooms on the Natchitoches Campus, and he praised the Ft. Polk Campus for its clean and well constructed classrooms. Unfortunately, the Department can do little to improve classroom cleanliness or attractiveness in rooms that are not controlled by the Department. In the computer classrooms on the third floor, new furniture has been purchased and computers are upgraded regularly. Further, the Department bears most of the responsibility for the cleaning and vacuuming of these rooms since these classrooms are in use when Red River Sanitators generally comes to collect trash and to clean. Dr. Scharton encouraged the faculty to discontinue offering dually enrolled courses, and the Department has attempted to move toward this; however, in some cases, professors would rather teach fifteen or more students in a cross-listed course rather than only a few in a graduate-only course. The Department Head and faculty work together to find an appropriate balance for these courses.

The Department has enhanced the Writing Center and its resources, has developed an On-line Writing Center, has developed the Oral Communication Center, and has strengthened the Foreign Language Center. All of these facilities can be used by all students and by members of

the community who need assistance as part of our outreach and service to the surrounding and supporting community.

2. Advising Practices: The Department of Language and Communication has established an advising committee to set the practices and standards of academic advising for the Department. This committee has been established in order to share information with advisors regarding advisees, and to provide training for faculty members on the SIS system and Web for Faculty system. A strength of our advising system is that we have a very dedicated group of advisors who enjoy working with students and who assist them as both advisors and mentors as these students move through their degree plans. A weakness of our system is that we have difficulty obtaining complete and current lists of advisees. We are working toward remedying this issue which will provide the opportunity to enhance communication between the advisees and the Department. Additionally, we have established a 99Z section for our majors and minors so that we can send them e-mail and information regarding advising, registration, and upcoming events. A threat to our advising system is that it requires sustained attention, and often, the Departmental secretaries and Department Head do not have the time to devote to keeping information current. One way to overcome this challenge would be to appoint an undergraduate coordinator, who, along with Dr. Bauman, the Director of Graduate Studies, could oversee and assist with these lists and the assigning of advisors. Advisor training often happens one-on-one with one faculty member training another on the use of the SIS system. In fact, we need long-term and repeated training about use of the SIS system and advisor training.

3. Resources:

a. Equipment: A strength in the Department is that students have access to the most current technology—lab fee funds are used to upgrade and maintain e-classrooms. A weakness and threat to the Department is that, at present, most faculty members' computers are barely functional, and since the Departmental budget is limited, funds are unavailable to purchase new computers for them. The Departmental procedure has been to replace lab computers with new ones and to give faculty members the older computers from the lab. Few professors and instructors have individual printers in their offices—again, this issue stems from insufficient allocations to the Department. As a consequence, the primary Departmental printer becomes overtaxed as it serves approximately fifty people. There is an opportunity for technology upgrades for our student equipment via grant opportunities; however, this funding cannot be used for faculty computers.

For use in teaching, the Department has ten laptop computers and seven in-focus projectors. A substantial portion of this equipment has been funded via the Board of Regents. The Department has five televisions and DVD or VCR players, and a 52" screen television. The Department has a scan-tron grading machine, three computer classrooms, a Writing Center, an On-line Writing Center, a Foreign Language Center, and a newly constructed Communication Center. Students and faculty also have access to audio and video recording equipment at the Louisiana Folklife Center (LFC); staff at the LFC check out the tape recorders and transcription machines available to students and faculty members via check-out.

Weaknesses: At present, our new Board of Regents carts make teaching with technology much easier, but before these were purchased, all instructors spent substantial amounts of time connecting laptop computers and projectors at the beginning of class—time better spent in

instruction. Though we currently have three of these new stations, there is a need more of them, and instructors who teach outside of Kyser or on other floors often face the difficulty of moving equipment upstairs when elevators are not working, or of moving it to other buildings.

Another weakness for our Department is that our Computer Center on campus does not assist us with technology needs in a timely fashion. No one in our Department is able to maintain and upgrade equipment because of onerous network restrictions. Even if network access were granted to the Department, we have no one to undertake this work. In the 2000 Departmental Response, Dr. Colavito asked for a technical support position, and due to budget constraints, he was unable to fill this position. Using student workers for this task has proven to be an inconsistent and a poor solution as these students graduate or change jobs, which means that the Department is left with no consistent support. Further, due to the Computer Center's restriction of access to the server, neither students nor contract workers can assist with our technological needs. We have asked many times for access to the server so that contract workers may assist us with e-upgrades since Information Systems is unable to meet our needs. Each time, we have met with resistance.

Faculty members also cite limited access to training. While the Department of Electronic and Continuing Education does hold workshops regularly, often, our faculty state that they need one-on-one attention and sustained professional development.

Another weakness we face is the lack of room for storage of equipment. We currently have only one storage room for all our equipment—the room which was formerly our lounge. At present, it must function as storage room/lounge, which is at best an inconvenient arrangement. We hope to move our lounge area to room 339 soon, but the physical plant will need to install a sink for our Lounge before the move is complete.

An opportunity for us is to partner with the NSU Writing Project in order to provide professional development for our faculty. We, additionally, hope that our new faculty members, who have web design experience, can assist our faculty with learning how to use the appropriate technology and to implement it in teaching. We also intend to write grants to help support the use of technology in the classroom.

b) Facilities: Currently, the Department operates a Foreign Language Center, a Writing Center with both on-line and face-to-face components and a Writing Center outpost in the Watson Library. Room 337 is currently undergoing renovation in preparation of the Communication Center, which will be a state of the art facility for students, faculty, and community members who wish to improve their oral communication skills. Rooms 331, 329, 327 are computer classrooms primarily designated for composition classes. While the Department is able to purchase computers for labs and smart classrooms with lab fees assessed from students, the Department itself—an infrastructure of offices, public spaces, and other classrooms—can do little to alter the woeful state of its work environment. Classrooms and offices used by the Department suffer from the lack of maintenance and present a physical and visual nightmare to faculty members and students alike. Faculty office furniture is in poor repair; faculty members regularly complain that their chairs are uncomfortable and are not ergonomically designed—some of these chairs date from the 1960s and 1970s and have long since seen better days. At present, we have no funds to purchase new ones. The aforementioned concerns at once constitute

weaknesses and threats. A strength of faculty members is that they are both patient and understanding, and they willing to make due until funds are found to purchase new office chairs and furniture.

c) Library Holdings: A strength of the library is that it now gives faculty access to many on-line sources—though many of these sources do not necessarily support our discipline. Further, the interlibrary loan department does an excellent job in searching for and locating articles and books faculty members need for teaching and research. A weakness of our library is that it is poorly funded, and it is limited in the numbers of journals and books which can be ordered to support research. Reports such as this one, however, may set into motion the mechanisms needed to obtain greater funding for the library. A threat to our Department is that faculty members who leave the university often cite the inadequacies of the library as the principal reason for their leaving the University.

d) Student Support Services (Job Placement, Counseling, etc.) Our students report that they use the student support services provided by the University via the Career Planning and Placement Office; within the Department, career counseling and advising take place during the mentoring and advising process. Additionally, The Department holds colloquia for students so that they can learn more about careers open to students who hold B.A. degrees in English. Faculty members guide these students as they move toward graduate school and/or professional school. A weakness within this process is that faculty members are unable to reach all students, for some are commuter students who have little time/desire to be active in organizations such as the Society for English Scholars or to attend the colloquia or other meetings. An opportunity for the Department to grow in this area is our partnerships with companies such as Weyerhaeuser and other entities with whom we can place students in internships or other activities. A threat to our success in this area is the lack of faculty/staff to assist with this activity.

e) Organization: See chart in Appendix D

f) Other Resources:

4. Collaborations/Relationships

a) Internal Academic Units: Currently, the Department does not have any formal partnerships with other academic units; it does, however, support the on-line programs in Psychology and Criminal Justice and all traditional programs within the University through the University core classes which we teach. Additionally, Freshman Interest Group (FIG) courses are provided for a number of disciplines on campus for Engl 1010 and 1020. For instance, the Department offers FIGS for Journalism and English, Social Sciences, Psychology and Social Work, and Education. The Writing Center, which provides both on-line and face-to-face services, and Oral Communication Center serves the needs of other Departments when faculty from them request assistance with student tutoring or support. The College of Education and the Department of Language and Communication work closely to ensure that the courses needed for English Education majors are offered regularly, and recently, the Department Head in Language and Communication traveled with the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Dean of the College of Education and other education faculty members to assess a possible fellowship opportunity with Chungnam Province and with Kongju University in Dajon, Korea. Such collaborative activities strengthen the ties between Language and Communication and other Departments on campus.

b) Internal Non-Academic Units: The faculty in the Department of Language and Communication and the faculty and staff of the Louisiana Folklife Center work together on many projects to support work in linguistics and folklife/folklore. This partnership supports the unique program of the Folklife-Southern Culture track of the MA in English and the Writing and

Linguistics track. The strength of this partnership is that the LFC holds more than 5000 hours of audio recordings, thousands of still images, and a specialized print library. There are few weaknesses to this partnership. The opportunities for research abound because of the depth and richness of LFC's holdings. Few threats exist to this partnership.

c) External to the University – include community service (refer to University Goal #4). Faculty members have long been dedicated to the pursuit of community service. Many are active in local youth sports, churches, historic foundations, and arts groups. The Department has, within the last semester, begun formulating partnerships with industry through workshops geared to training Louisiana's workforce in writing. Additionally, through the outreach efforts of the On-line Writing Center, these corporate entities can now enjoy the services the Department provides. Faculty members conduct service activities through a variety of outlets ranging from coaching in the Natchitoches Youth Soccer League to serving on Boards of Directors for organizations such as the Natchitoches Historic Foundation. The strength of our community partnerships lies in the volunteerism of the faculty members. A weakness to community support is that our faculty members are very busy, and they cannot volunteer for as many activities as they might like. An opportunity for us is that we make many connections to community members who might be able to support our Department financially. A threat to these partnerships is again the limitation caused by the number of faculty members who can participate in service activities.

d) Administrative Support: Over the past two years, the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, the Provost, and the President of the University have supported the Department with a number of initiatives. Because the Department Head and members of the Department feel that they can share their opinions and needs with the administration, communication between administrators and faculty is strong. Drs. Hatley, Hanson, and Webb understand the struggles that Department of Language and Communication faculty members face, and they support initiatives to increase funding through workshops and fundraising, and through funding of faculty travel through the Provost's enhancement and NSU Foundation funds.

5. Student Occupations/Opportunities

a) Graduating Student Survey: A strength of this survey is that it provides an exit response so that we can know about what faculty members and the Department Head are doing well or not doing well. A weakness of the survey is that students often complete them in haste.

Nevertheless, even a hastily completed survey presents the Department with an opportunity to see what it does well and what still needs improvement. A threat to this process is the students' level of commitment to the process.

b) Alumni Information/Survey: At present, due to budget constraints, the Department does not have an alumni survey in place. Because Departmental faculty maintains close relationships to its graduates, faculty members tend to stay in contact with our graduates and continue to offer assistance to them as they proceed in their careers or as they pursue their PhDs or other advanced degrees.

c) Job Placement/Counseling: Students are encouraged to take advantage of the University Career Planning and Placement services; however, the Department does not offer this service within the Department.

d) Internships/Special Projects: Our Department currently offers internships within the Department working with the Louisiana Folklife Center, *the Louisiana Folklife Journal*, *The Louisiana English Journal*, and *H_GM_N*. The Department plans to expand internship opportunities to include more partnerships with employers and to appoint an internship coordinator who will oversee the work of students who take on internships in the business world.

e) Graduate School: Dr. Bauman and Dr. Abney continue to strengthen our graduate program and to work with the Graduate School in order to regularize admission standards and guidelines for theses and other University documents.

f) Employer Survey: We will, in Fall 2007, undertake a survey of employers to ascertain what needs they have. The Industrial Ties Research Grant which was submitted last year will be re-submitted this year in order to enhance our efforts to strengthen our partnerships with local and regional businesses.

g) Workforce Information (demands, competition): The Department is in the process of formulating a survey for local and regional companies to ascertain needs of companies in terms of training of prospective employees.

6. Students

a) Assessment System – In what ways do you assess student performance? A strength that the Department has is that we assess multiple courses ranging from Engl 0920 to graduate-level courses. With the preparation of our SACS CIP initiatives, faculty members have committed themselves to assessing our programs and outcomes in order to serve our students in the best possible way. The strength of this program is that the Department will be able to collect data in order to measure effectiveness. Weaknesses to our assessment lie only in maintaining and compiling appropriate data and assessments. These data provide us with the opportunity to enhance our programs, and pose no or few discernible threats to this system of assessment.

b) Remediation: Currently, the Department offers only one remedial course, Engl 0920. The strength of this remediation is that the course prepares students for Engl 1010 and 1020; the weakness is that one course cannot always remediate a lifetime of low literacy skills. The Department realized an opportunity to assist students with bringing their skills up to level in Engl 0920 via the On-line and face-to-face Writing Center. The threat to these students is that they may not be able to attain college-level skills in a single semester.

c) Demographics and Comparisons:

Full demographic data can be seen in Appendix B. Students enrolled in the English major are more often than not female, 72%, and Euro-American, 67%; African-Americans compose the largest minority population at 23%. Most students are between 21 and 24 at the time the survey is administered, 42%; however, the next highest population of majors are 25 and above at 31%

d) Financial Support: Most NSU students rely upon financial aid to complete their degrees. Many students work more than twenty hours weekly, and this burden creates much stress for them as they try to balance the demands of both school and work. Advisors are encouraged to ask students about their workloads before helping them to select courses.

e) Student Contributions/Awards/Achievements: Each year, students excel in a number of ways in our Department. They work with *The Argus*, the student literary magazine, which has been named number three in the nation by the Associated College Press organization. Additionally, the Department sponsors two undergraduate and three graduate awards at the Liberal Arts Banquet, held annually in the Spring.

f) Satisfaction with Program

- Use data from Student Evaluation of Instruction, Student Opinion Survey, and Graduating Senior Survey.

Students repeatedly express satisfaction with the programs offered in Language and Communication. They frequently cite faculty responsiveness and caring along with the rigor of the program in their praise for the programs which they have completed. Since 2005, the Graduating Senior Survey has shown that students feel that they have been well educated at

NSU and that they will be competitive in the realm of graduate school or in the business world. For full data, please see Appendix A.

7. Faculty (include roster)

Name	e-mail address	Tenure Status	Office Room #	Office Phone #
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Dr. Hatley (Dean)	hatley@nsula.edu	FP, tenured	149	4330
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Dr. Lisa Abney (Dep't Head)	abney@nsula.edu	Assoc. P, tenured	318-B	6166
Dr. Allen Bauman	baumana@nsula.edu	Asst.P, non-tenured	314-F	5615
Dr. Gary Bodie	bodieg@nsula.edu	V.Asst.P., non-tenured	316-K	5614
Amy Callahan	callahana@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-C	5588
Laura Carroll	carrollla@nsula.edu	Instructor	314-I	5586
Dr. Joseph Colavito	colavito@nsula.edu	FP, tenured	316-M	6504
Robert Comeaux	comeauxr@nsula.edu	Instructor	314-C	5593
Jim Crawford	crawfordj@nsula.edu	Asst.P, non-tenured	314-G	5585

Dr. Andrew Crank (Andy)	cranka@nsula.edu	Asst.P, non-tenured		
Dr. Jon Croghan	croghanj@nsula.edu	Asst.P, non-tenured		
Tammy Croghan	croghant@nsula.edu	Instructor		
Dr. Jim Cruise	cruisej@nsula.edu	Assoc. P, tenured	316-R	5670
Jerry Erath	erathj@nsula.edu	Instructor	314-D	5589
Dr. John Foster	foster@nsula.edu	Asst.P, non-tenured	314-K	5666
Dr. Julie Kane	kanej@nsula.edu	Assoc. P, tenured	316-N	5663
Susie Kuilan	kuilans@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-F	5506
Lori LeBlanc	leblancl@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-B	6931
W. Charlene LeBrun	lebrunw@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-E	4203
Dr. Sarah McFarland	mcfarlands@nsula.edu	Asst.P, non-tenured	316-O	6929
Heidi Norwood	norwoodh@nsula.edu	Instructor	314-E	6930
Michelle Pichon	pichonm@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-H	6142
John Pickett	pickettj@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-D	5572
Ramey Prince	princer@nsula.edu	Instructor	314-E	5590
Dr. Nate Pritts	prittsn@nsula.edu	Asst.P, non-tenured	314-H	5574
Dr. Helaine Razovsky	razovsky@nsula.edu	FP, tenured	314-J	6473
Thomas Reynolds	reynoldst@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-H	6142
Sheila Richmond	richmonds@nsula.edu	Instructor	213	4332
Lisa Rougeou	rougeoul@nsula.edu	Instructor	314-L	5327
Dr. Elizabeth Rubino	rubinoe@nsula.edu	FP, tenured	316-L	5651
Heather Salter	salterh@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-B	6168
Elizabeth Sims	simse@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-A	5017
Cynthia Wiggins	wiggins@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-Q	6608
Mariann Wilson	wilsonm@nsula.edu	Instructor	316-C	6926

<u>Leesville - Fort Polk</u>				337-392-3100
Dr. Paralee Norman	normanp@nsula.edu nparalee@bellsouth.net	FP, tenured		337-392-3118
Kerryl Lynne Henderson	hendersonk@nsula.edu klhendersony@juno.com	Instructor		
Fred Taulbee	taulbeef@nsula.edu	Instructor		
Dr. Lynda Boren	Adjunct	Instructor		
Mr. Angel Negron	Adjunct	Instructor		
<u>Shreveport Campus</u>				
				318-677-3105
Rita House	Adjunct	Instructor		

a) Degrees/Credentials/Tenured Status – use Faculty Credential System: All faculty meet SACS criteria for credentialing. The above list indicates tenure line or non-tenure line status. For more information, please see the SACS Faculty Activity Report Section.

b) Research: All faculty members publish and present research regularly, and this is a strength of this Department. Weaknesses and threats to success stem from the lack of travel funding available for faculty. An opportunity for faculty is the internal grant for research funding—the NEF grant; however, only one faculty member per unit can receive this grant in a semester.

c) Activities (publication and grants)

- Utilize SACS Faculty Productivity Report - <https://sacs.nsula.edu/faculty/facultyapp/>

d) Teaching: A strength in the Department is that all faculty enjoy teaching and working with students. They repeatedly earn high praise in course evaluations from students, and classroom visits by the Department Head attest to the same. A weakness is that classes are often overloaded and that our classrooms are not maintained. The learning environment is an issue for many students and faculty.

e) Service—See Faculty Credential System. All conduct service appropriately.

f) Graduate Faculty Expectations: Graduate faculty must apply for graduate faculty status every five years or two years depending upon their level of membership. Graduate faculty members conduct research, publish their work, deliver presentations, and sustain high-quality work with graduate students.

g) Professional Development: Our Departmental faculty members engage in a number of professional development activities both independently at professional conferences and via University initiatives such as CALL/CAEL and other on-campus training. During the next academic year, the NSU Writing Project will sponsor a Professional Writing Retreat in which K-12 and Higher Education Faculty can participate in a weekend-long retreat that will enable them to write and peer-review their pieces if they so choose. Additionally, other professional development initiatives frequently arise at the University level.

h) Tenure Policy, Practices & Procedures (as described in the Faculty handbook) See Faculty Handbook and attached Departmental policy.

The following information forms the Department of Language and Communication: Promotion and Tenure Guidelines. The policy has been replicated in total below.

To the Candidate: These represent criteria used by the department's promotion and tenure committee in evaluating candidates for continuation, promotion, and tenure. We have aimed to be as comprehensive and inclusive as possible. Please open discussions with the department head if there is an area that is not mentioned here that merits inclusion.

All candidates, whose areas of specialization is in an area in which there is a graduate program within the Department, must attain and maintain, at minimum, **Associate** Graduate Faculty status in order to be considered for promotion and tenure. This criterion is per vote of the faculty. Probationary candidates (i.e. faculty in their first two years at NSU) are hired with this criterion in mind (i.e. ability to obtain immediate graduate faculty status is one of the assessment tools in determining viable candidates for appointment).

Areas of Assessment

The Department's Continuation, Promotion and Tenure committee evaluates candidates in three areas: Professional Activity, Teaching, and Service. We weigh each item as **one-third** of the candidate's overall performance. We realize that there are two distinct sets of faculty within the department (those eligible for graduate faculty status and those not). We still maintain that all tenure-eligible candidates should have credentials in all three areas, while fully realizing that the bulk of their (non-graduate faculty) duties will be taken up with teaching. Each area is broad enough that any candidate should be able to develop and follow a viable plan to achieve in each area.

What follows here is a breakdown of different sorts of activities used to assess each area. It should be noted that the committee does not expect candidates to compete all these activities; they are a list of activities that, if completed over a period time, can show the candidate to be doing the sorts of things necessary to achieve continuation, promotion, and tenure.

Research

When we assess the Research component, we are essentially asking the following question: **What has the candidate accomplished in this academic year to develop and maintain a sustained pattern of scholarly inquiry into issues relevant to his or her chosen academic discipline?**

Activities that are evidence of scholarly activity follow; these appear in no particular order of importance:

Scholarly Publications (with all due acknowledgement given to the existing “grades” of publications [single authored books, refereed national journal articles, et al.]).

Conference Presentations (again, “grades” are acknowledged [international, national, regional, etc.]).

Grants (whether successful or not).

Creative Writing (this can be equated with scholarly publications in the case of Creative Writing appointees).

Progress made on large scope projects (e.g. books), but this must be clearly documented in ensuing years (i.e. if the candidate is using progress on a book in this area, then the stages of completion must be included in the notebook each time it is submitted).

Editing of Scholarly/Creative Journals or Newsletters.

Manuscript reviews for publishers

We also recognize on-line publications in recognized academic or popular venues. We do not, however, encourage the submission of self-published materials.

Teaching

In this area, the committee is seeking the answer to the following question: **what has the candidate done to develop and improve as a teacher?**

Here, the committee looks at the following:

Teaching evaluations from students

Classroom visit evaluations from department head

Syllabi and course materials

New courses proposed and designed

Efforts at expanding teaching repertoire (e.g. courses in Blackboard or on-line teaching, taking on a new prep, experimental approaches in a current prep, etc.)

Evidence of effective advising (evaluations, number of advisees)

Participation in thesis committees

Guest lectures on areas of expertise in other classes

Service

In this final area, the committee is seeking an answer to the following: **what has the candidate done to participate in the development of the department's and the university's aims, both on campus and/or in the community?**

Participation in departmental and university service is required; community service is not mandatory, but our experience has shown that Natchitoches is the sort of community that fosters participation in diverse service activities, and that the institution's agendas often include work with our community.

Departmental service includes the following:

Committee work

Recruiting and retention

Interdisciplinary projects with colleagues

Program development

Development and maintenance of promotional materials (information resources, web site, etc.)

Invited presentations in candidate's area of expertise to community groups

Support for departmental activities (e.g. Folklife Festival)

University service includes:

Membership on University level committees, task forces, councils

Outreach work in schools and community organizations under the umbrella of NSU projects

Volunteer support for non-departmental university activities (theatre, athletics, spirit groups)

Advising university groups or organizations (Argus, clubs, etc.)

Volunteer consultancies (unpaid) in areas of expertise

Professional/Public service includes:

Holding offices in professional organizations

Participation in relevant activities associated with professional organizations

Community projects and volunteer work (broadly considered)

8. Staff – provide number and position description.

Peggy Cedars	Secretary 1	Answers Departmental phone number, fields questions from faculty and students, handles Departmental/personnel files, oversees faculty timesheet collection and copying, oversees student workers, assists Department Head with scheduling of appointments, and tracks inventory and equipment.
Ada Hippler	Clerk for NSU Writing Project	Handles all clerical matters relating to NSUWP. Schedules in-services, maintains records and files, handles correspondence, works with Dr. Abney and Ms. Rougeou to schedule appointments, book travel arrangements, etc.
Bobbie Jackson	Secretary 2	Assists Dr. Abney with permits for registration, assists with creation of schedule and tracking of schedule changes and copying of schedule, assists with purchasing system and enters purchases for approval, handles travel requests and files these both in hard copy and on-line, works with students to assist them with their schedules.
Sharon Sweeters	Secretary 2: Louisiana Folklife Center	Oversees Natchitoches-NSU Folk Festival contracts, purchasing for NSU Folk Festival, LFC, and LRFP, oversees student workers,

		assists Dr. Abney in collection of time sheets for unit and with timekeeping for wages workers. Performs receptionist and clerical duties.
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9. Financial Information

a) University funded support: Currently, the Department is funded at a relatively low level in comparison to other Departments. The Department of Language and Communication generates the highest number of Semester Credit Hours yet is funded at one of the lowest Departmental rates. The 2006-2007 budget breakdown is attached.

A strength in the Departmental budget is that we are able to cover the costs of instructor positions, both in continuing and temporary positions. Additionally, we have been able to hire new faculty in American literature and Spanish—both areas in critical need of additional faculty members. A weakness for our Department is that salaries for present and potential employees are below the Southern Regional Average. In some cases, we have been unable to hire faculty members because of our salary range. Generally, candidates who accept positions in the fields of rhetoric and composition and communication receive salaries of \$45,000.00 or more. Our positions are generally funded at \$37,000.00 to \$40,000.00. This constraint limits our ability to attract new faculty in fields in which we need expertise.

Another pronounced weakness is that our Department, relative to other departments of the university, receives only a small amount of funding for travel. During the current fiscal year, for example, Language and Communication has only received \$300.00 for travel to be shared by thirty faculty members. We are grateful that most travel requests have been funded by the Provost’s office and the NSU Foundation; however, this funding needs to occur at the Departmental level. In the meantime, it is difficult to explain to faculty members in the Department why other Departments in the University are funded a much higher rate. While travel and salary money is not allocated a sufficient rate, neither is capital outlay money. We have virtually no funds with which to replace faculty computers, nor do we have money to supply our faculty with office furniture, as already indicated. Many of our faculty members have taken the extraordinary step of purchasing desk chairs with their own money.

b) External grants: Department members have, over the last five years, received more than a million dollars in external funding via programming within the Department and in the Louisiana Folklife Center. Dr. Lisa Abney has submitted proposals which were funded for approximately \$800,000.00; Ms. Sheila Richmond has submitted proposals which have been funded at nearly \$50,000.00. Dr. Helaine Razovsky, in the past ten years, has been awarded funding for over \$70,000.00. Dr. Allen Bauman has served as co-PI on a Board of Regents Grant which was funded at \$10,000.00. Ms. Lisa Rougeou serves as co-PI on the National Writing Project grant with Dr. Abney; the total for this grant is \$120,000.00.

c) Endowed chairs: None currently

d) Endowed professorships: None currently

- e) Other external funds: The Department has recently re-established its NSU Foundation Account and will conduct a fund-raising drive in the spring in order to fund travel, research, and important purchases of equipment.
- f) Scholarships: The Department will dedicate funds raised for the NSU Foundation account for scholarships.
- g) Salary Costs
- h) Operating Expenses: See attached
- i) Capital Expenses: See attached
- j) Professional Development Expenses: The Departmental travel budget has been exceedingly limited for several years. For the most part, faculty members must fund their own travel to conferences, and little reimbursement for expenses is available.
- k) Projections of expenses and revenues: See attached.

Future Plans (address plans for improvement)

1. New Programs: The Department has already submitted a letter of intent for a major in Communication at the undergraduate level. Additionally, we are working on a proposal for an undergraduate concentration area in folklore-folklife. Faculty would also like to formulate a Professional Writing track at the graduate level.
2. Deleted or Changed Programs: None to report since last self-study
3. New Courses: The Department will be adding new courses in Communication, Folklore-Folklife, and Professional Writing.
4. Deleted or Changed Courses: The Department is moving away from cross-listing courses in . A cross-listed course threatens the program because of SACS guidelines concerning these courses. We will be rewriting syllabi for all courses which are cross-listed at the 4000-level.
5. Staff & Faculty Changes: The Department needs two to three additional rhetoric-composition specialists, technical writing faculty, and/or a linguist to teach courses in syntax and grammar. Faculty in Foreign language and in Communication are also needed. This has been addressed in an earlier section. A fiction writer and/or a screen writer would also be good additions to the faculty.
6. Other Proposed Changes – include resources, equipment, facilities, etc. The Department needs to follow up on assessment of equipment needs and facilities in order to document what is already evident: faculty computers need to be upgraded, staff computers need to be upgraded, and facilities need significant and meaningful rehabilitation. In addition, new classrooms need to be created so that the equipment the Department does have may be used easily and efficiently. Finally, because space continues to get tighter and tighter, the Department no longer has a lounge space for the faculty, which diminishes collegiality. The ongoing renovations to room 339 will allow for a lounge by day which can be used as a small seminar room at night.

Appendix A: Graduating Senior Surveys

Appendix B: Derived Demographic Information

Appendix C: Budget for Department

Appendix D: Organizational Chart

Appendix E: SACS-CIP Expected Learning Outcomes for
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