

*Institutional Effectiveness Report  
Academic Year 2007-2008*

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*Mission and Goals*

The major in English introduces students to their literary and linguistic heritage and acquaints them with a variety of genres, periods, themes, critical approaches, and individual writers ranging from ancient to modern. Courses in creative and expository writing, composition theory, the history of the language, modern theories of grammar, and literary criticism are also offered. Students may pursue the English degree through the Liberal Arts Option, the Professional Writing Option, or the Teacher Certification Option. Students may also earn either a minor or a collateral in English. Three writing minors are offered including creative writing, professional writing, and writing and language.

Program goals:

- A) Teach students to read texts critically
- B) Teach students to read texts contextually
- C) Teach students to synthesize external materials in documented writing
- D) Teach students to demonstrate that literary texts communicate perspectives of cultural and historical significance
- E) Provide students with an engaging, challenging and rewarding academic experience.

*Assessment Activities*

Senior Paper Scoring: Papers from 14 graduating seniors were assessed in order to evaluate success in achieving program goals A, B, C, and D.

Exit Interviews: During the fall and spring semesters, sixteen students completing English 496 participated in exit interviews and completed questionnaires. The results from these procedures have been used to evaluate success in achieving goal E.

### *Results and Evaluation*

#### Senior Paper Scoring

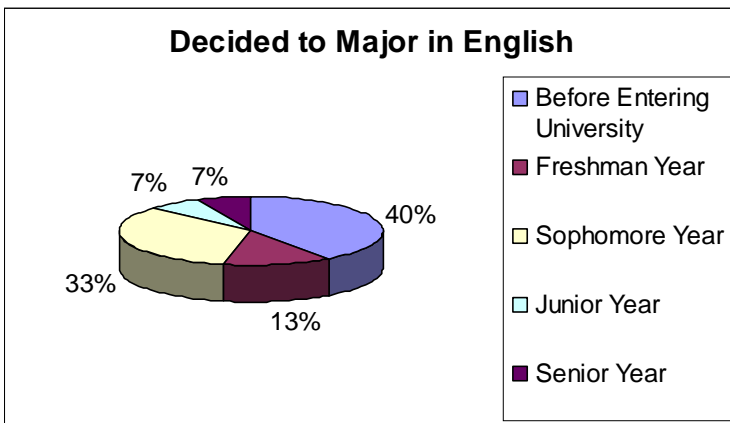
The chart below shows this year's results compared to the results of the past six years.

Goal Area	97-98	98-99	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	Benchmark
A) Read texts critically	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.4	2.5	2.8	2.9	3.25	2.7	2.89	3.07	2.5
B) Interpret texts contextually	2.25	2.4	3.05	2.6	3.1	2.9	3.133	3.03	3.23	3.21	3.32	2.5
C) Synthesize external materials in documented writing	1.75	2.0	2.85	2.6	2.8	2.75	2.85	2.77	2.9	2.84	3.6	2.5
D) Demonstrate knowledge of cultural and historical significance.	2.8	2.8	2.65	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.66	3.34	3.78	3.6	2.5

The results of the senior paper scoring demonstrate that the department's benchmarks have been met for each goal. The greatest improvement is in Goal C, which is consistent with the program's increased emphasis on use of external sources.

### Exit Interviews

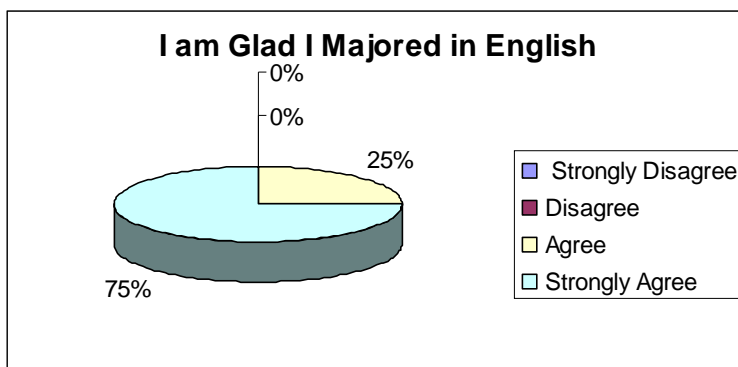
Sixteen graduating seniors completed exit interviews. Each student responded to a questionnaire and scheduled a meeting with the department chair to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the program. As in past years, the results of the interviews demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the work of the English faculty.



40% of the students indicated that they decided to major in English before entering the university. The majority of the other students decided to major in English during the freshman and sophomore

years while completing general education requirements and, in many cases, after they had started to work within other majors. When asked why they chose English, most students indicated a desire to learn more about literature and writing. Several of the students who chose the major after the freshman year expressed an initial interest in teaching.

Consistent with past years, students reported interests in creative and technical writing and indicated that the quality and dedication of the faculty had encouraged them to major in English.

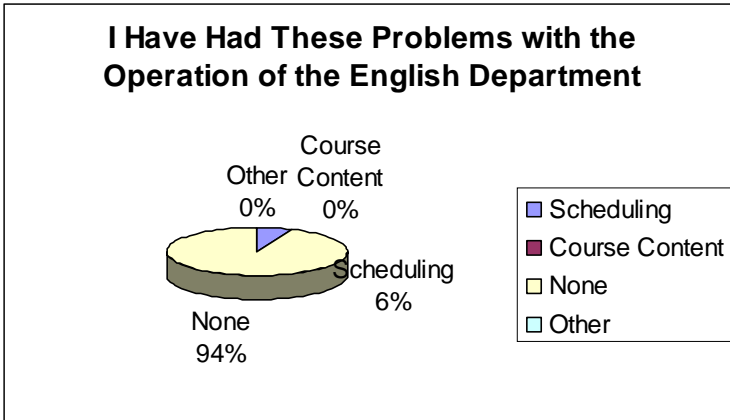


100% of the graduating seniors indicated that they were satisfied with the

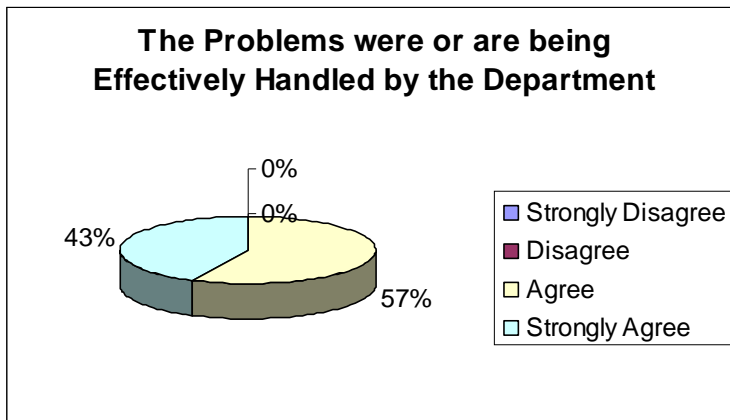
decision to major in English.

A strong majority of the students reported having no problems with the operation of the English program.

One student reported problems with scheduling. As in years past, the scheduling

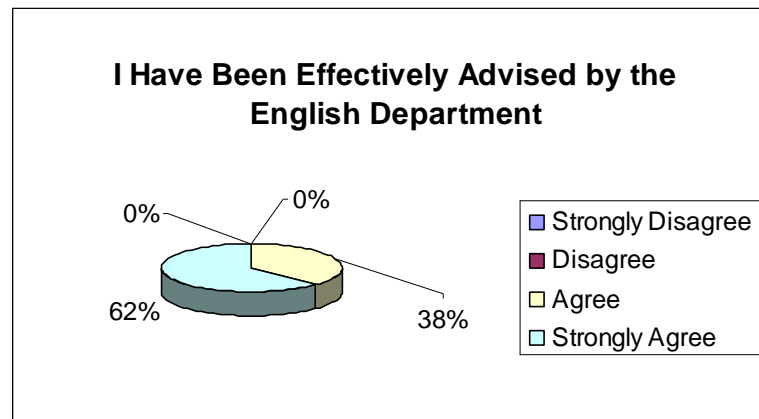


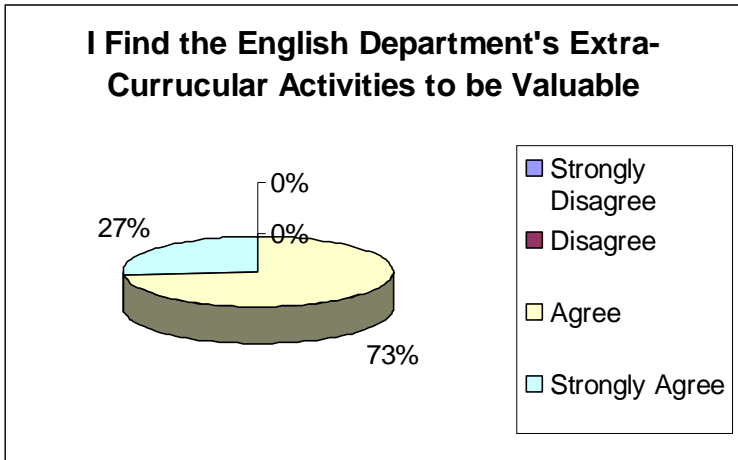
program was related to the education courses, especially those offered in block format. The student also indicated that it would be helpful to have a single designated advisor for teacher certification students.



All of the students reported that problems were effectively addressed by the department.

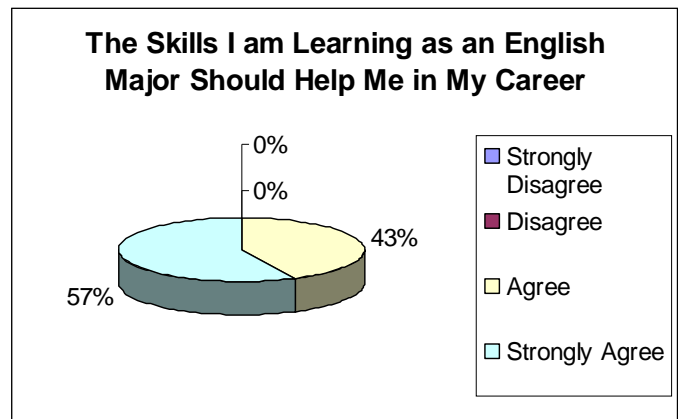
All of the students indicated that the department has provided effective advising.

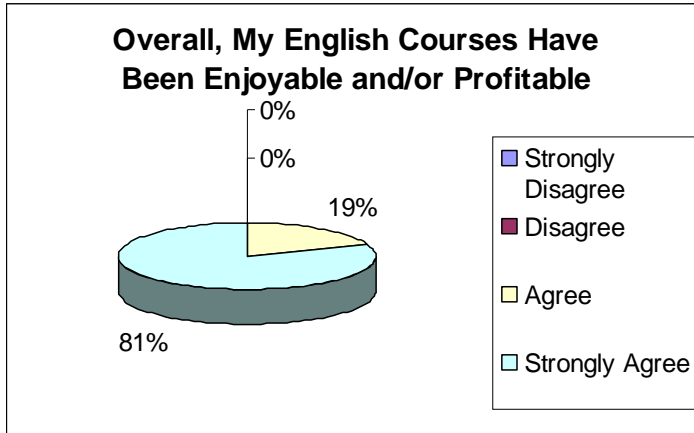




100% of those students who participated in extra-curricular activities found those activities to be valuable. Students called specific attention to the Hunter Series readings, the Pee Dee Fiction and Poetry Festival, *The Snow-Island Review*, and the Writing Center. Several students also spoke favorably about their experiences with Sigma Tau Delta.

All of the graduating seniors reported that the English major provided skills that should help with future careers. As in years past, students completing the Professional Writing Option were particularly optimistic. They found the internship experience to be especially valuable and praised both the collaborative assignments in English 405 and the emphasis on technology in English 305 and 318.





96% of the graduating seniors found the English courses they had completed to be enjoyable and profitable. As in years past, these students indicated particular satisfaction with the work of the faculty.

*Improvements in Place*

Listed below are the actions taken to address the planned improvements from the 2006-2007 report.

- Hire qualified replacements for vacant and soon-to-be vacant positions. The department advertised for several tenure-eligible positions and was able to fill one. As in years past, the department had difficulty hiring rhetoric and composition specialists, but was able to hire the department’s first choice for a children’s literature position.
- Work with School of Education to determine future of secondary certification program. During the past academic year, the department worked closely with the School of Education to revise substantially the teacher certification program. The new program has been approved and is included in the 2008-2009 Catalog. Initial reaction indicates that this program will help attract more qualified students.
- Continue to invest in technological upgrades. The department secured funding for one additional smart classroom. Because of operational budget restraints, the department was unable to complete additional technological upgrades.
- Investigate the feasibility of an exchange program with an Irish university. Dr. Rebecca Flannagan has identified the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, as a strong potential partner for an exchange agreement. This past spring, university officials traveled to Maynooth.

<i>Issues of Concern</i>	<i>Actions Taken</i>
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<p><u>Upper-division curriculum in need of revision.</u> During the fall semester, the Curriculum Committee identified potential weaknesses within the upper-division curriculum.</p>	<p>The Curriculum Committee began a detailed study of the upper-division curriculum and will report its findings and recommendations when complete.</p>
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