

IUPUI GAC Reviewer Form

Documents Reviewed: Request for a New Graduate Certificate in Teaching Literature.

Summary of Proposal:

Last year an Ad Hoc Committee on the Master's degree in English convened by the Association of Departments of English reported that the English MA serves as a credential for teaching in higher education, secondary schools, and elementary schools, but added that "it is not at all clear that most programs structure course offerings and requirements that are explicitly directed to prospective teachers. The English Department states that "this certificate seeks to address and close this gap."

The new certificate will require students to complete a minimum of five (4 credit) courses satisfactorily. The curriculum will include two core courses (Teaching Literature and Practicum in Teaching Literature) as well as three elective courses in the following areas: theories of literary analysis; methods of literary research and study; surveys of American and British literature, as well as adolescent and children's literature, multicultural literature, colonial and postcolonial literature, and women's literature.

1. Are the goals clear and achievable?

A goal of the program is to make the English Department one of the "strongest teaching-oriented graduate English programs in the state." It would accomplish this when the proposed certificate is coupled with its current certificates in Teaching Writing and Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages. This goal does seem achievable.

Also, the student outcomes for the program seem to be clear and achievable. They are:

- understand and apply recent theories and approaches to teaching literature;
- understand the nature of reading and literary analysis and how these can be taught effectively;
- understand literary contexts and traditions as they inform the teaching of literature;
- develop strategies for facilitating student engagement of literary texts;
- develop and articulate a critically aware philosophy of teaching literature;
- create effective assignments in the study of literature
- demonstrate leadership as a reader and scholar of literature as well as a creator of curricula related to the study of literature at the middle school, high

school, and college levels.

2. Is the program academically sound?

Yes. The students should be well prepared for the program. Admission to the certificate program requires one of the following:

- (1) State certification in middle or high school teaching;
- (2) Current enrollment as a graduate student at IUPUI;
- (3) Successful completion of an M.A. degree or higher at an accredited university;
- (4) Successful completion of a B.A. with a minimum GPA of 3.0 (on a scale of 4.0) or the equivalent from an accredited institution.

The requirements for the program seem appropriate for the student outcomes, and the plan for assessment of the program, included here, should indicate whether the program is meeting its goals.

"The assessment will consist of three parts: (1) the Graduate Certificate faculty adviser will consult with program participants about their progress and the range and quality of their learning experiences, (2) samples of students' work in different courses will be reviewed to ensure that the aims of the program are being met, and (3) graduates of the program will be contacted for follow-up reports on their progress as writing teachers, the effectiveness of the program, and suggestions for improvement. A committee of writing faculty will meet annually with the Graduate Certificate adviser to review assessment data and to recommend changes for program improvement."

3. Are faculty resources available to offer this certificate without undercutting other key missions of the unit?

The proposal says the new certificate will not require the hiring of additional faculty, and that there is enough administrative and support staff to handle the program.

4. Is there overlap, either real or potential, with any other unit that could harm the program or be exploited to help the program?

Students may come from the school of education and the MA in Teaching Spanish program, but English currently has strong ties to the School of Education, and English Education majors currently take a number of English courses as part of their degree.

There is no overlap between the graduate certificate in teaching writing and the new one teaching literature. Credit earned in the certificates may be applied to the MA in English, so the new certificate may act as feeder into that program.

5. My recommendation, comments/concerns regarding this proposal...

I recommend that the certificate be approved. It would strengthen the offerings in the English department. Also, as the proposal points out, it would provide an opportunity for area teachers to renew their licenses by enrolling "in a structured program and would enable the department to strengthen its professional mentorship of area teachers." The state requires teachers to renew their licenses by completing 6 semester hours of approved college courses every five years.