

Introduction

The students, faculty, and staff in the Department of English and Theatre can look back on a very productive year, one in which we made a difference in the lives of hundreds of students as we taught them in class, tutored and advised them in one-on-one conferences, and interacted with them in plays, poetry readings, social events, scholarly symposia, and other venues. Along the way, we contributed to the scholarship of our various disciplines in scores of essays and books and presentations, enriched audiences with our original poems and performances, and served the university with our work on countless committees. This report summarizes some of the most significant achievements over the past year.

Teaching

While no one can measure intellectual growth in any precise manner, we know that hundreds of UNCP students left our classrooms more effective writers, more attentive readers, and more careful thinkers than they were when they entered them, thanks to the sound, innovative, and personal educational experiences we provided in the more than 300 courses we offered in composition, creative writing, English education, linguistics, literature, speech, and theatre.

Over the past year, we designed lessons and assignments, led class discussions, conducted hundreds of student conferences, and read thousands of drafts—work that is never glamorous, but vital and effective. On top of this work, we managed to pile a number of achievements that merit special recognition:

- Thanks to our successful “Plus One” program, hundreds of composition students had the opportunity to work closely with their instructors and classmates in small workshops throughout the fall and spring semesters. We secured funding from Academic Affairs to continue offering the same number of “Plus One” sections in 2010-2011.
- We offered several themed sections of composition, where students could study critical thinking and writing while also immersing themselves in subjects ranging from the American dream to popular culture to civic engagement to gender communication to the Titanic to growing up in the South.
- For the first time, composition instructors had the opportunity to meet weekly with their students in computer classrooms and, for part of the spring, to check out laptops for student use in regular classrooms.
- Thanks to a number of creative assignments and activities, students in our courses produced literary magazines modeled on those of the Harlem Renaissance, staged public poetry

readings, wrote life narratives and prefaces, heard local musicians perform labor songs, met with renowned linguist Walt Wolfram, and engaged in various forms of service-learning.

- We continued our efforts to improve our already strong teaching by coming together in several Composition Colloquia, as well as a composition retreat.
- Building on our previous success in study abroad, we revised our course offerings in this area to encourage more of this special brand of education and offered the department's first study-abroad experience in Rome.
- We sponsored a trip to the American Shakespeare's Center's Blackfriars Playhouse in Staunton, Virginia, where our students attended performances and a workshop.
- We increased our offerings in online literature and began developing an online version of ENG 1060 to offer in the fall.
- We provided substantial, conscientious advising to more than 100 students in our College Opportunity, English, English education, and graduate programs, as well as students enrolled in Freshman Seminar.
- We wrote untold numbers of letters of recommendations for our current and former students, at least two of whom have been accepted into graduate schools.

Scholarship and Creative Work

Sometimes working with students or colleagues and other times working independently, we contributed to our various disciplines with an impressive body of books, essays, presentations, poems, and performances.

- Six of our books have been published or accepted for publication.
- Members of our faculty published or placed more than two dozen essays and poems in a variety of academic journals, books, and other publications, including *Activism and Rhetoric*, *America and the Black Body*, *American Realism and Naturalism*, *Apocalyptic Shakespeare*, *Arizona Quarterly*, *Critical Approaches to American Working-Class Literature*, *The Eighteenth-Century Book*, *The Mississippi Quarterly*, *The Modern Language Journal*, *Pinyon*, *Solo Café*, *Southern Discourse*, *The Southern Quarterly*, *Victorian Poetry*, *Writing (and) the Digital Generation*, and *Writing Lab Newsletter*.
- We gave more than two dozen presentations at numerous venues, including the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the Louisville Conference on Literature and Culture Since 1900, the Medieval-Renaissance Conference, the Popular Culture of the South Conference, the Southwest/Texas Popular Culture Conference, and the International Congress on Medieval Studies, as well as conferences sponsored by the College Language Association, East Central American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Literature Film Association, Modernist Studies Association, Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association, Poe Studies Association, and Society for the Study of Multi-Ethnic Literature of the U.S.

- Members of our faculty have served as external reviewers for *Literature/Film Quarterly*, *The Edgar Allan Poe Review*, and other academic journals.
- The 42nd volume of *Pembroke Magazine*, a nationally recognized annual of poetry and fiction, is scheduled for publication.
- We published new issues of *ReVisions*, *Aurochs*, and the *Indianbead* yearbook, showcasing the outstanding academic and creative work of several students. The 2009 *Aurochs* took “Best of Show, Literary Magazine” at the North Carolina College Media Association Conference, and the 2009 *Indianbead* was honored with two national awards: First Place with Special Merit from the Scholastic Press Association and a Silver Medalist Certificate from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.
- We staged several campus performances of three shows—*The Laramie Project*, *Steel Magnolias*, and *Gyps and Dolls*—and took *Steel Magnolias* on the road to Roanoke Island Festival Park, where it was warmly received by general audiences.
- We guided more than a dozen undergraduate and graduate students in research projects, which some presented at the Pembroke Undergraduate Research and Creativity Symposium, the Graduate Research Poster Presentation, and the Southeastern Writing Centers Association Conference. Three of these students were honored with first-place or honorable-mention recognition at the PURC Symposium.

Service

In our department, on campus, in our professional organizations, and in our communities, we have been hard at work serving our students, our colleagues, and the public.

- As advisers to student organizations, such as the English Club and the Alpha Chi and Sigma Tau Delta honorary societies, members of our faculty worked with students to stage film showings, community service, and an “open mic” night featuring students’ performances of their original poetry.
- Responding to state mandates, we aligned our Undergraduate English Education and MAT programs with requirements for the “Revisioning” process.
- With input from General Administration, members of our faculty revamped some portions of the College Opportunity Program, eliminating the reading course and the summer courses in an effort to reduce costs for students and expedite time to graduation.
- Our Assessment and Planning Committee launched a series of deliberations designed to lead to a set of bylaws for our department’s proceedings.

- Our Awards Committee chose scholarship recipients, named the department's "Outstanding Graduate," and organized a banquet for graduating seniors.
- Our Composition Committee worked on a revision of the composition sequence and outcomes statements, proposed a new attendance policy, staged activities related to the National Day on Writing at UNCP, rendered a judgment on the university's policy on CLEP tests for composition credit, and responded to inquiries regarding transfer credit.
- Our English Committee drafted a three-year schedule of upper-division literature offerings, developed a degree pathway for the English major, compiled a list of faculty interests regarding 2000-level literature offerings, and responded to numerous inquiries about transfer credit.
- Our English Education Committee developed rubrics for electronic evidences in response to the "Revisioning" program and developed a survey and "Concerns Policy" designed to help English education majors.
- Our Graduate Committee revised the MAT program, outlined revisions for the MA program, evaluated four capstone portfolios and presentations, and had the pleasure of seeing the students behind them graduate successfully from our master's program.
- Our Student Engagement Committee spearheaded the creation of a new study-abroad course, represented the department at university open houses, began planning a proposal for a professional seminar for English students, and sponsored the Faculty Colloquia series, which featured talks and panel discussions led by ten faculty members from our department, as well as other departments.
- With numerous contributions from many of us, our Publicity Committee published two new issues of the *Beacon*, our department newsletter, and revised the department Web site, adding announcements and photographs of students and faculty to the front page, an updated list of composition sections and descriptions, new program descriptions, and links to degree pathways and catalog descriptions.
- Our Theatre Committee chose the recipients of the Outstanding Theatre Student, Outstanding New Talent, and University Theatre awards.
- Our Welfare Committee sponsored a fall social, as well as a retirement reception for Nancy Barrineau and Bonnie Kelley.
- After a careful and deliberative process involving a review of nearly 200 applications, as well as numerous interviews, research presentations, and teaching demonstrations, we hired four tenure-track scholar/teachers in the areas of composition and English education.
- Several of us collaborated to create "A Brief Guide to English and Theatre," a resource for new and veteran faculty, and we welcomed incoming faculty members with an informal reception at a local coffeehouse.
- We made extensive use of Blackboard to post resources and share information.

- We provided the Office of Institutional Effectiveness and other campus offices with timely responses to requests for information on reassigned time, diversity courses, course codings, degree progress, and other matters.
- Continuing a tradition of extensive service to the university, members of our faculty served on Faculty Senate, Graduate Council, Awards Committee, Student Success Steering Committee, SACS Compliance Certification Committee, Strategic Planning and Resources Council, G.I. Bill Task Force, University Residency Appeals Committee, University Student Appeals Committee, University Students with Disabilities Grievance Committee, Sophomore Advisory Committee, Financial Aid Review Appeals Committee, Teacher Education Committee, Appeals Subcommittee on the Teacher Education Committee, Promotion and Tenure Review Committee, Academic Affairs Committee, Student Affairs and Campus Life Committee, Student Publications Board, Richmond Community College Transfer Advisory Committee, Graduate School Appeals Committee, Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies Advisory Committee, and Givens Performing Arts Center Advisory Board, as well as various task forces and ad hoc committees charged with improving online instruction, establishing policies for non-tenure-track faculty, exploring a laptop requirement for students, and improving collaboration between UNCP and local high schools.
- Members of our department contributed to the Quality Enhancement Plan, either by serving as active members of the steering committee or by meeting with SACS representatives. The SACS team not only approved the QEP without recommendations, but also praised it as an ambitious plan that could serve as a model for universities across the nation.
- Members of our faculty served as UNCP's delegate to the UNC Faculty Assembly, editor of the UNCP catalog, parliamentary procedure adviser for the Faculty Senate, and coordinator of the \$250,000 NC Quest grant.
- We gave campus workshops and presentations on the Praxis tests, writing across the curriculum, reading in therapy, distance education, and the first White House library.
- We made significant contributions to summer orientation, sponsoring orientation sessions for College Opportunity Program students and parents, helping other students to register for their classes, and promoting our "Plus One" program.
- In the area of external and community service, members of our faculty served on boards and committees associated with the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, Bibliographical Society of America, Delta Kappa Gamma, First Book Literacy Advisory Board, Friends of Robeson County Public Library, Gilbert Theatre, National Popular Culture Association, North Carolina College Media Association, North Carolina Symphony Board in Moore County, Paul Green Foundation Board of Trustees, Southeastern Writing Center Association, Thomas Wolfe Society, and Working Class Studies Association.
- In our various communities, we volunteered at churches and schools, tutored students at Purnell Swett High School, judged entries in the Moore County Writers' Competition, gave workshops on therapeutic writing, and performed poetry and music in nursing homes.