

English Department Program Review Prompts

<p>Describe the successes and challenges your unit has faced since the last comprehensive review.</p>	<p>Our biggest challenge has been the retirement of several tenured, senior faculty members. Since Spring 2019, four tenured faculty members have retired; in the three years previous to that, we had at least three others retire. While we remain one of the largest departments (22 contract faculty members as of this writing), we still need to increase our host of tenure-track faculty members in order to ensure the continuity of our offerings.</p> <p>Another significant challenge is the status of our English Acquisition (ELAC) course offerings. The pandemic took its toll across all disciplines, obviously, but the ELAC discipline has yet to recover even a fraction of its robustness. Add to this the impact of AB1705 on enrollments in transfer-level coursework, which would appear – on the surface – to negatively affect enrollments in courses that students may perceive to be superfluous... like ELAC courses. More data and research – as well as guidance from the statewide chancellor’s office – is needed before we can begin to truly assess how the decline in the ELAC course offerings has impacted the department as a whole.</p> <p>Our success have come mostly in the area of staying nimble enough to be ahead of legislative impulses such as AB1705. The type of work required by this now-law had been departmentally institutionalized for a number of years, so that its actuality is now a matter of routine scheduling and planning.</p>
<p>If applicable, describe any major curricular or service changes your unit has engaged in and the impact of those changes since the last comprehensive review.</p>	<p>As mentioned, above, the transition from “basic skills” to corequisite composition pedagogy and curriculum was a major shift. But, previous planning softened a blow that may have otherwise taken us by surprise.</p>
<p>If applicable, describe the</p>	<p>We need more full-time faculty. Is this what the question is asking?</p>

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<p>impact of any new resources (human, fiscal, etc.) on the unit and/or action plan implementation.</p>	
<p>Please confirm that the department has reviewed the Course Learning Outcomes listed in CurricuNet for each course and verify accuracy.</p>	<p>Confirmed, but for the pre-transfer level courses that we are attempting to purge from all departmental record-keeping. Delays at the district level have slowed this work down. As noted, below, we have recently revised the program learning outcomes.</p>
<p>Describe the trends you see in your program/service area's data.</p>	<p>Without a doubt, the introduction of the corequisite course (English 101X) has improved student success and retention rates across virtually every demographic.</p>
<p>Describe any equity gaps you see in these data. Are there differences and/or patterns observed by demographics (e.g. race/ethnicity, gender, age, etc.)?</p>	<p>Please see FHP responses.</p>
<p>Describe the discussion(s) that took place about the unit's learning</p>	<p>After reviewing our assessments across the board, the department agreed to go back and revise our Program Learning Outcomes to better reflect trends in pedagogy and statewide legislation.</p>

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outcomes assessment data.	
Describe current practices your unit has engaged in that you believe impact the above data trends and equity gaps.	Our development and adoption of a corequisite support course (ENGL 031) has had a dramatic effect on student success and retention.
What other factors (internal or external) might also impact the above data trends and equity gaps?	Various noncognitive factors impact student success; the college has done well in addressing many of these, and the department has responded in kind, via announcements in course syllabi, Canvas class home pages, etc.
Unit Goals	Hiring more (3-5) full-time, tenure-track contract faculty members who have as their focus student success and equity.
Mesa2030 Roadmap Strategic Objective (SO) Alignment	It's easy to write such a thing, but the English Department does indeed appear to be uniquely positioned to complement and enhance the efforts drawn up in the Mesa2030 Roadmap. For example, the department's trailblazing curriculum (ENGL101X) positions all incoming students to complete transfer-level English well within the first year of their matriculation, clearly involved in Mesa2030's "Completion" and "Equity" agendas.
Identify specific actions your program/service area will engage in to accomplish this goal.	In the past, the department has looked at outcomes data and equity gaps to create a "profile" of sorts of the type of faculty members we need to address said gaps.



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Lead writer Name(s)	Chris Sullivan
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Manager Name	Linda Hensley
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FHP Responses:

1 - English is a graying department, having seen the retirement of 5 contract faculty members since 2019 (Gregg, Cooper, Lorence, Starbuck, Pickford), in addition to several others in the timeframe preceding the pandemic. While reduced to a still robust 22 contract faculty members, the fact is undeniable: more people are leaving the department than are being recruited and hired on a full-time basis. Staffing trends over the last five years show comparative fill rates of 92 (adjunct) and 90 percent (contract), FTEF of 15.4 (adj.) and 16 (cont.), and 11.9 (adj.) and 12.4 (cont.) of the sacred productivity rate. While great for the students, there is no denying that a cadre of full-time faculty have a greater *long-term* impact on the student experience.

2 - The unit goal is quality instruction with an equity lens. Recruiting - and hiring - a diverse and well-rounded group of junior, contract faculty members can only positively contribute to this effort.

3 - The need in English remains as it has been for quite some time: the mythical 75:25 balance. The preponderance of staffing in the department has continually reversed this desired ratio, and while its achievement may be unrealistic in the long-run, the fact remains that the English

Department runs on part-time labor. The College can do better in its striving toward becoming the leading college of equity and excellence by hiring a diverse cadre of tenure-track junior faculty in the English department. As far back as 2006, the ASCCC was sounding a warning against relying on part-time faculty. Citing traditional elements of the "10+1" that typically fall on the shoulders of contract faculty, the ASCCC suggests that relying on adjunct faculty erodes the ability of an institution to develop a lasting and meaningful culture.

In the period between 2019-2022, adjunct faculty accounted for an average of 16.12% of the department's FTEF, compared to 17.62% for contract faculty. That translates into adjuncts teaching 81 sections (45%) and contract teaching 98 sections (55%) of the department's offerings. As cited above, contract faculty productivity outpaces adjunct faculty productivity. If -- as it seems to be -- "productivity" is to be the benchmark metric in institutional decision making, hiring more contract faculty members would seem to be a logical conclusion.

4. - Mesa data show that over a five-year period (2017 - 2022), overall success in all English courses in any modality stood at 69%.

Looking a little more closely, statewide data show that, over a ten year period (2011 - 2021), steady gains were made in all student groups, most notable in the group classified by the state as "Asian." This group saw success rates move from 22% in 2011 to 82% in 2021. Likewise, gains in "African American" and "Hispanic" students moved from 40 -> 65% and 30 -> 65%, respectively. The upward trend corresponds with the department's development and adoption of, first, accelerated curriculum (ENGL 47A), and then the corequisite course (ENGL 031, which, when combined with ENGL 101, becomes 101X). As pointed out earlier, curriculum development remains the purview of contract faculty, for the most part. The English department at Mesa college has always anticipated curricular trends and responded appropriately with an equity lens. More contract faculty are needed to ensure that this nimbleness is maintained. It should also be mentioned here that the success rates for traditionally impacted student groups in English 101X match or exceed those in ENGL 101.

5. - The department record with regard to awards conferred to students is respectable, but it can be improved, particularly in some age groups and in some traditionally impacted groups. This is one domain in the FHP where the absence of a new cadre of diverse contract faculty members becomes glaring. A more diverse faculty body can respond to the needs of a more diverse student population.

There are disproportionate impacts for students who are between the ages of 30 and over 50, males, African American, Asian Pacific Islanders, Filipino, and Latinx with regard to awards conferred. A closer look reveals that, for African American students receiving the English AA or ADT, there are deficits in achievement for males between 18-24; for Latinx students, it is males between 18-49; for API students it is males between the ages of 25-29.

Of course, it would be misguided to attempt to create a profile of need from this data, but the groups impacted do make a case for more diverse hiring in the Department in order to maintain the excellence we have established amongst other student groups.

6. - The development and implementation of the Department's corequisite course exposed new areas of pedagogical freedom previously unexamined. Adding two units to a traditional class allows for what the rhetorical scholar Marilyn Sternglass called "time to know them." That is, the additional time in class allows for the development of the skills required by the course outline, and it provides an actual context from which the students can develop a perspective for self-advocacy. Faculty members use a variety of pedagogical approaches to the course; some use textbooks, some do not. Some pursue themes, some do not. Some allow the students to develop the topics for writing, some do not. The freedom of approach suits the departmental temperament.

Curriculum developed by contract faculty also includes a new course, ENGL 234 (Hip Hop Literature: A Poetry Class), which can be included in the major, as well as the refurbishing of ENGL 237 (Women in Literature). Again: the role of contract faculty members in sustaining innovation in an academic department can not be overstated.

7. - The English Department is a campus leader with regard to Open Educational Resources (OER), and a number of the department's classrooms are entirely "paperless."

The department's degree is among those recently featured in a district publication as exemplary in its use of OER.