

# Final Assessment Report

## English Language and Literature

### Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

(reviewed 2024/25)

#### A. Summary

1. The Department's Self-Study was considered and approved by the Senate Academic Review Committee December 19, 2024.
2. The Review Committee consisted of two external reviewers: Peter Sinnema (University of Alberta) and Douglas Ivison (Lakehead University), and one internal reviewer, Christina Phillips (Brock University).
3. The site visit occurred February 10-11, 2025.
4. The Reviewers' Report was received March 12, 2025.
5. The Senate Graduate Studies Committee response was received March 21, 2025.
6. The Department response was received April 10, 2025.
7. The Senate Undergraduate Program Committee response was received April 15, 2025.
8. The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs response was received April 29, 2025.
9. The Dean, Faculty of Humanities, response was received May 8, 2025.
10. Annual Implementation Reports will be submitted from 2026-2029.
11. The next Cyclical Academic Review is scheduled to take place in 2032/2033.

The Self-Study was prepared under the conditions of the Codicil with the Review and responses conducted under the terms and conditions of the June 2023 IQAP.

## Program Outcome Categories:

Based on their knowledge of the discipline, the content of the Self-Study and the interviews conducted during the site visit, the Review Committee gave the programs the following Outcome Categories:

Program(s)	Excellent Quality	Good Quality	Good Quality with Concerns	Non-Viable
MA in English		X*		
BA (Honours) in English Language and Literature (ENGL)	X			
BA (Honours) English and Creative Writing (ENCW)		X		
BA (Honours) in English and Writing, Rhetoric and Discourse Studies (WRDS)		X		
BA (Pass) English Language and Literature	X			
BA (Pass) in Writing, Rhetoric and Discourse Studies		X		
<i>If you have chosen 'Good Quality with Concerns', please summarize the specific concern(s) briefly below. If you have chosen 'Non-Viable', please summarize the specific reason(s) below.</i>				
* The reviewers were not able to meet with candidates in the M.A. program because intake was put on hold for the current academic year due to budgetary constraints, as outlined in the Self-Study. The M.A. has been redesigned to add a two-year thesis-only structure commencing in 2025-26. That said, the reviewers came away from the site visit with a very favorable impression of the quality and relevance of graduate studies in English at Brock.				

## Executive Summary:

### The Reviewers wrote:

The external reviewers, Dr. Douglas Ivison and Dr. Peter Sinnema, conclude that the Department of English Language and Literature at Brock University:

- is composed of a well-governed, highly collegial, future-oriented faculty complement, united in the pursuit of research and teaching excellence, and collaborative in its approach to service. A vibrant culture prevails and will help the Department confront uncertainties about its long-term viability in the face of upcoming retirements and considerable, ongoing budgetary stresses.
- is well served by a small team of dedicated and competent support staff, adequate (if also modest and somewhat isolated) physical space (offices and meeting/classrooms), empathetic and knowledgeable senior administrators, professional librarians, and capable advisors.
- is genuinely esteemed by an enthusiastic cohort of undergraduate students, who feel they are receiving an excellent education and are meaningfully supported in their academic, professional, and personal lives by an engaged and sympathetic faculty. The Department is by all measures an outstanding teaching unit.
- is producing and disseminating high-quality research and creative work at an impressive rate and volume—all faculty members are engaged in regular publication and presentation of their research, in national and international venues, and many faculty hold external (i.e. SSHRC) and internal grants and fellowships. The Department punches well above its weight and size in research productivity.

- is actively engaged in sustaining and evolving an integrated and effective—if also somewhat complex (three-stream)—undergraduate curriculum that is producing satisfied students and meeting stated learning outcomes. The Department’s curriculum is well-organized and rational.

## **B. Program Strengths**

**The reviewers noted the following strengths:**

**1. The Department of English Language and Literature has actively cultivated an *esprit de corps* that unites it in a common enterprise of teaching, research, and service.**

The Department of English Language and Literature is characterized by an environment of genuine collegiality. In their first of two meetings with Chair Dr. Tim Conley, the reviewers were told of the Department’s vibrancy, its “well-published” faculty fully committed to teaching, and its freedom from factionalism, despite ongoing budgetary constraints and stretched resources. Dr. Conley’s opening observations were ratified in subsequent meetings with members of the Department and senior administrators. Over the course of the site visit the reviewers heard, repeatedly and from members of all constituencies (faculty, students, and staff), that the Department nourishes and cherishes a respectful, amicable social and scholarly ethos. Junior faculty felt fully supported and well mentored by their senior colleagues, protected from onerous service in their early career years and free to design inventive courses. By all appearances the Department functions as a true collective, united by a shared—although also diverse and often innovative—academic enterprise that is uniformly student focused while also fostering heterogenous faculty research interests.

Although the reviewers heard occasional dissenting opinions about certain aspects of program structure and governance—Creative Writing “lacks identity” and coherence and suffers from overly-large class sizes, especially in the third year; a prospective wave of retirements in the next five to seven years without the prospect of sufficient replacement hires will seriously affect the Department’s capacity to sustain a comprehensive curriculum and effective self-governance; the Department could be more democratic/transparent in how it makes decisions about sabbaticals and the constitution of MRP committees—the site visit ultimately convinced Drs. Ivison and Sinnema that the Department is in a singular position of strength when it comes to commonality of experience and aspiration. This cohesion is the foundation on which the Department’s numerous, demonstrable strengths as a pedagogical and research unit rest, and is a rare example of departmental solidarity that, with prescience and the right incentives, can be nurtured into a bright future.

The Department hosts an accomplished and deeply committed faculty cohort, and punches above its weight in teaching and research excellence and in its dedication to service at the Department, Faculty, and University levels. The reviewers were impressed with faculty members’ high levels of satisfaction with their colleagues and Department (verbatim quotes from Dr. Sinnema’s notes: “I’m delighted with my job,” “the Department is working really well,” “I love working in the Department,” “we have freedom” in terms of course development, the Department is “incredibly strong,” etc.) and with their gratitude for “fantastic” students and strong research support from the Office of Research Services.

**2. The Department of English Language and Literature is a robust teaching unit with growing enrollment that employs rigorous and creative pedagogies to meet its students’ learning needs and its stated learning outcomes.**

The Department is an energetic and popular pedagogical unit venerated by undergraduate students who showered the reviewers with kudos such as (more verbatim quotes from Dr. Sinnema’s notes): “they’re just so amazing,” “I admire and appreciate all my professors,” “I don’t have anything close to a bad prof,” “all my courses connect to each other,” professors are “uniformly wonderful,” “so insanely helpful,” and the Department “has been a blessing.” Students enthusiastically substantiated the Self-Study’s claim that the Department is successfully providing them with “the opportunity to hone writing, presentation, and research skills in order to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, critical arguments and creative ideas,” and that the undergraduate program “makes use of student-centered learning, acknowledging the need to create interactive and participatory learning spaces.”

Some students praised the “diverse experience” they enjoyed as undergraduates in a department that continuously presses against the boundaries of the literary canon and offers multiple program streams, including Creative Writing, Writing Rhetoric & Discourse Studies, and “traditional” English. Others spoke to the “decent variety” of course offerings, noting that they’d like the option of further study in certain as-yet undeveloped or under-developed areas—journalism, applied writing (how to draft a CV, apply for a grant, get a paper published, etc.), and professionalization (what can one do with an English degree?), in particular. One student also commented on the ever-present risks associated with the Department’s “insularity”: given its internal accord, it might settle into self-satisfaction and neglect initiating important conversations about its own disciplinary vulnerabilities and challenges (as one student put it, “what is and isn’t English”) or with other departments and programs (for example, Business) with which it might forge fruitful interdisciplinary alliances. Over all, however, the Department’s students confirmed what is already evident in Appendix B of the Self-Study, which includes outlines and syllabi for courses recently and currently offered by the Department: the wide range of reading lists, assignment designs, expectations, methodologies, and teaching styles employed by instructors represents an exceptionally rich diversity of critical approaches that nevertheless results in a student learning experience that is integrated and coherent. A steady—and atypical for most humanities programs both nationally and globally—growth in student enrollments since 2021 (see Tables 4.2a, b, & c in the Self-Study’s Volume II) after a temporary, relatively minor decrease in registrations during and immediately following the pandemic, would suggest that the Department’s reputation as a strong teaching department is being rewarded where it matters most. Students want to take English courses.

### **3. The Department of English Language and Literature is a highly productive research unit that exceeds research standards and expectations for Canadian English departments of its size.**

A brief perusal of faculty CVs in Appendix E of the Self-Study presents a striking image of the Department as a research powerhouse. All twenty faculty members are regularly publishing and actively disseminating their scholarly and creative work in reputable—in some cases in international, highly prestigious—venues, both print and oral (national and international conference presentations). Peer-reviewed scholarly articles, poems, short stories, novels, reviews, and scholarly volumes (single-authored studies, collaborative and co-authored studies, edited volumes and collections) appear in strikingly high numbers in the abbreviated CVs included with the self-study. Departmental publications have recently (post-2017) appeared with such presses as Routledge, New York, Delaware, West Virginia, Minnesota, Wiley-Blackwell, Palgrave-Macmillan, Toronto, Alberta, Oxford, McGill-Queen’s, Bloomsbury, Ohio State, Ohio, SUNY, Rutgers, Wesleyan, Fordham, Bucknell, Duquesne, Michigan, Brill, Cambridge, Edinburgh, House of Anansi, Coach House, Johns Hopkins, Notre Dame, Penn State, and Manchester, and in such journals as *Canadian Literature*, *ESC*, *Literature Compass*,

*Romanticism, The Minnesota Review, Joyce Studies Annual, American Studies, Literature and Medicine, Victorian Review, Victorian Studies, Journal of Neo-Victorian Studies, The Fiddlehead, Men and Masculinities, Literary Geographies, Studies in Medievalism, Journal of Early Modern Cultural Studies, Early American Literature, The Ben Jonson Journal, Renaissance and Reformation, Stasis, Topia, Milton Studies, Sixteenth-Century Journal, Studies in the Novel, Mississippi Quarterly, and Canadian Review of American Studies.* The Department's research is making its way in a steady stream into recognized scholarly venues representing the best of academic and creative fields.

Since the last unit review eight years ago (2017), six faculty members (representing 30% of the current faculty cohort) have held major SSHRC grants as primary or co-applicants, and twelve (60% of cohort) have been awarded internal grants or contracts in the same period (see Self-Study Volume II, Tables 6.7 & 8). These numbers tell a convincing story about a department actively engaged in securing funds to seed, develop, and see through to completion research projects that span an impressive breadth of scholarly fields and areas.

**4. The Department of English Language and Literature contributes more than its share of leadership expertise to all levels of the university and to the broader academic and professional community, demonstrating a robust commitment to service within and beyond the institution.**

Again, faculty CVs speak to department members' abundant service to the Department, the Faculty, and the wider University. Department committees are readily staffed and chaired through assignment and volunteerism, and by all accounts function efficiently and harmoniously. The Department has long been able to produce accomplished and well-regarded chairs from within its own ranks and appears to have little difficulty in identifying directors for its Writing, Rhetoric and Discourse Studies and Creative Writing streams or for its undergraduate and graduate programs.

English faculty sit as members on bodies and committees in such extradepartmental programs and services as the M.A. in Social Justice and Equity Studies, the PhD Program in Interdisciplinary Humanities, the Canadian Caribbean Institute, the Centre for Canadian Studies, the Sexual Assault Prevention Centre, the Graduate Council, the Arts and Culture Research Centre, the Space Evaluation Committee, as well as on BUFA's Joint Committee on Employment Equity and on the Bargaining Committee. Faculty members have also served or are currently serving in senior administrative and governance roles: Associate Dean, Undergraduate Student Affairs; Member, Brock University Senate; and Member, Senate's Academic Review Committee. This is a partial list only, but still suggestive of a highly engaged faculty complement committed to the equitable and efficient operations of its own unit and those of a large, complex institution.

Department faculty are also well represented outside of Brock. They have served, for example, as President of the Association of Canadian College and University Teachers of English, President of the International Association for Literary Journalism Studies, President of the Canadian Association of Chairs of English, and as Member of the Awards to Scholarly Publications Program, Federation of Humanities and Social Sciences. They have reviewed countless monographs for scholarly presses and essays for scholarly journals and undertaken innumerable program reviews at universities across Canada.

High service loads outside of the Department, especially in multi-year decanal positions, pose some localized risk. When English faculty are seconded to serve as Associate Deans, for example, and the Department is not automatically compensated (i.e. through financial coverage of replacement

teaching costs), the “loss” of departmental leadership, service, and teaching capacity is of real concern. The continued healthy functioning of the smaller unit is compromised by the fact that it has produced a promising leadership candidate for the bigger unit. This is a matter of which the Department is cognizant; as Dr. Conley noted to the reviewers, it’s a matter of “balancing success against demand.” Equity is always a concern, even in a department so competently run.

### C. Opportunities for Improvement and Enhancement

<b>Recommendation #1: That the Department engages more directly and routinely with its alumni to enhance its professionalization efforts and strengthen its external relations.</b>
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<i>Supporting/clarifying text: The reviewers met (virtually) with three alumni—two now working in technical/professional writing careers, one enrolled in a PhD program—all of whom expressed an interest in returning to Brock on invitation to share their real-world experiences post-graduation with current students in English. The reviewers recommend that the Department invite three or four alumni annually to campus—expenses may be onerous, so virtual meetings might be the most feasible path forward—to share their work or academic experiences post-graduation with students currently enrolled in the English program. Such consultations might be incorporated into senior-level courses or limited-term seminars dealing specifically with applied and professional matters relating to the English degree and would go a long way in addressing the concerns students expressed to the reviewers about the applicability of the degree in the “real world” after graduation. Alumni can offer extremely valuable information and advice about academic and non-academic career paths open to English graduates, and can help the Department as a whole think through questions about what jobs an English degree can lead to, how to apply for grants or jobs, how to talk to literary agents and publishers, how to write a convincing CV, etc.</i>
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#### **The Department responded:**

The Department recognizes the importance of alumni engagement. In the past, the Department has invited alumni to present in English 5F01 (Professional Skills and Development), a required course in our MA program. We also have supported the efforts of the ESA to host career evenings. The Department is committed to reenergizing these efforts. It also looks forward to exploring how we might integrate alumni outreach into the core committee process; committee structure is reviewed on an annual basis and this topic will be added to our next discussion of Policies & Procedures. We also will consider inviting alumni to ENGL 2P01 (Critical Reading, Writing, and Research).

We look forward to addressing this recommendation relatively quickly, within a year.

#### **The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:**

This recommendation focuses on alumni relations, and as such is an issue for the program to consider. It was unclear if this recommendation related to graduate or undergraduate coursework or both. SGSC encourages all programs to consider ways to enhance connections with alumni and other resources geared towards exposing students to the “real world” applicability of their degrees.

#### **The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Dean agrees with the recommendation and recognizes that the Department already makes good efforts in this direction. Collaboration with the Office of Alumni Relations and the Dean’s Office will also help with these activities.

Timeline: effort is ongoing

**The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs responded:**

FGSPA supports this recommendation and understands the importance of alumni engagement. We are available to work with the MA program to support these efforts. We envision an alumni engagement plan can be in place as a short-term goal.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee encourages the Department to utilize the resources mentioned by the Deans to determine appropriate strategies to strengthen its alumni engagement.

<b>Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

<b>Recommendation #2: That the Department considers the mandatory introduction of Indigenous literatures and/or cultures into its curriculum.</b>
<i>Supporting/clarifying text: Although the Department's current Lists emphasize historical (period) coverage and numerous faculty members teach courses in postcolonial, decolonial, Indigenous, and racialized literatures, students may progress through the degree without encountering any of these literatures. Faculty members on the whole are strongly committed to incorporating a diverse array of texts and authors into their courses, but the current curriculum is not structured in such a way as to ensure that all students taking courses in English Language and Literature are introduced to at least one substantial work by a North American Indigenous author or poet. In the interests of responding meaningfully to the TRC, the reviewers recommend that the Department adopt a policy that all first-year courses include at least one Indigenous North American text on their syllabi.</i>

**The Department responded:**

The Department fully recognizes the importance of this recommendation. Our most recent hire is a specialist in Indigenous literatures, and we now have in the Calendar two new courses focused on Indigenous literatures (a 2<sup>nd</sup> year survey and a more specialized course at the 3<sup>rd</sup> year level) which we plan to offer regularly.

We will survey faculty members to get a full picture of which courses incorporate Indigenous literatures and suggest that these courses identify this as one of the explicit learning outcomes. We will explore collaborations with other units in the Humanities and the Vice-Provost Indigenous Engagement and the Faculty of Education, Indigenous Educational Studies. Furthermore, we will explore a mandatory half-credit credit or team-taught course.

Addressing this recommendation will likely need 2 years to ensure full departmental and cross-unit discussion.

**The Undergraduate Programs Committee responded:**

The UPC Committee noted that Recommendations 2 and 7 may include adding/modifying courses or streams. This work will come to the UPC Committee.

**The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:**

This recommendation is a pedagogical issue for the program to consider. While it appears that this recommendation is related to first year undergraduate coursework, SGSC encourages all graduate programs to make demonstrable efforts relating to TRC recommendations, decolonization and Indigenization within the academy consistent with strategic and academic plans.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

Like the Department, the Dean recognizes the importance of this recommendation. Especially in programmes with significant Concurrent Education student populations, incorporating Indigenous perspectives into the curriculum can be a legacy project for Brock. Collaboration with other units in Humanities and across Brock will be key to the success of such an endeavour.

Timeline: 2027

**The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs responded:**

It is unclear whether this recommendation is for both the undergraduate and graduate programs, however, FGSPA supports the recommendation and the Department’s response. A medium-term timeline would be appropriate to implement this recommendation.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee expects that the Department will undertake consultations and is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to further introduce Indigenous literatures/cultures into its curriculum.

<b>Implementation Plan (2<sup>nd</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2026-27.

**Recommendation #3: That the Department works collaboratively with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs to identify internal sources of additional funding for M.A. students.**

*Supporting/clarifying text: A truly exceptional and competitive two-year English M.A. degree in the Niagara region requires ongoing, secure funding comparable to that offered by other English departments of a similar size and reputation in Ontario. Guaranteed two-year funding for a small cohort of M.A. students, i.e. with an annual admission rate of 5-7 students, would ensure that the Department can maintain its high selection standards and boost the reputation of its graduate program, and would not represent an extraordinarily onerous financial commitment on the part of the Faculty or the University.*

**The Department responded:**

We support this recommendation and will pursue this on an ongoing basis.

**The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:**

This recommendation relates to graduate funding for the MA program, specifically urging the Department to advocate for competitive funding for the full two years of the Master’s Program. SGSC notes that the specific value of graduate fellowships is influenced by the budget approval process falling under the purviews of the Board of Directors, Provost, and Vice-Provost & Dean Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs. SGSC feels that it is important to bring funding related issues to the attention of Senior Administration and more broadly to Senate.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Dean agrees with this recommendation and supports the Department’s efforts to identify different sources of funding for graduate students. We must also acknowledge, of course, that internal funding is in short supply at the moment.

Timeline: 2027

**The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs responded:**

Funding from FGSPA is available to all graduate students who are in programs that are research-focused for the duration of their program. Additional support is available through employment, internal awards, and support from supervisors (optional). FGSPA encourages the program to explore creative ways to supplement the funds available to students beyond the FGS Fellowship. That said, this is a budget issue that is beyond the purview of this report.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC acknowledges that the recommendation to identify additional sources of funding for M.A. students is worth consideration; however, the allocation of resources lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee. ARC expects that the Department will continue to advocate through available channels.

**No Implementation Plan required.**

Note: The Department is still encouraged to report on any activity annually.

**Recommendation #4: That the Department enlists the support of the Dean of Humanities to advocate for a more substantial and appropriate discretionary budget.**

*Supporting/clarifying text: A number of faculty members spoke to a decline in Departmentally sponsored research events and student-centered activities and initiatives since the pandemic and apparently related to a concomitant decline in discretionary funding. Although the reviewers are cognizant of the fact that university budgets are stretched across the province and indeed the country, they are also concerned that the intellectual and social vibrancy that characterizes the Department of English is threatened by its increasingly limited capacity to sponsor internal research and teaching events. Even a small increase in investment in the Department’s discretionary budget could go a long way to ensuring that faculty and students continue to enjoy an energetic and stimulating scholarly environment.*

**The Department responded:**

We fully recognize the importance of this recommendation to support and protect the vibrancy of our research, creative, pedagogic, and social culture. In addition, the budgetary demands associated with embodied pedagogies (for example, in-person exams requiring the purchase of booklets) need to be taken into account. This will require ongoing collaboration with the Dean of Humanities.

**The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:**

This recommendation relates to the departmental budget and is outside of the purview of SGSC. Specifically, the reviewers note that, *“the intellectual and social vibrancy that characterizes the Department of English is threatened by its increasingly limited capacity to sponsor internal research and teaching events.”* SGSC feels that it is important to bring such resource needs to the attention of Senior Administration and more broadly to Senate.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Dean’s role includes advocating for the needs of all academic units within the Faculty.

**The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs responded:**

This is a recommendation regarding budgetary issues that fall within the Dean of Humanities purview.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation worthy of consideration, but the allocation of resources lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee. ARC expects that the Department will continue to advocate through available channels.

**No Implementation Plan required.**

Note: The Department is still encouraged to report on any activity annually.

**Recommendation #5: That the Department works with the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities to identify and forge closer alliances with other departments and programs at Brock that have disciplinary synergies with English.**

*Supporting/clarifying text: The Dean of Humanities told the reviewers that the Department is running smoothly and that very little needs to change, but that more collaboration between English and other units—Classics and Dramatic Arts, in particular—would be of mutual benefit to both programs. Conversations about such alliances appear to already be happening at the Department and Faculty levels. Cross-listing of senior-level courses may be one way to open up traditional boundaries that too frequently militate against this sort of thing. Strategies for interdisciplinary cross-fertilization should be developed in consultation with all affected parties.*

**The Department responded:**

We recognize the crucial role of collaboration with other departments and programs. As noted by reviewers, “The Self-Study ... describes the Department’s collaborations with other units at Brock, including the Centre for Digital Humanities. Notable is the Department’s contributions to collaborative programs like the GAME and Interactive Arts and Science programs. In an era when Humanities programs often struggle to demonstrate their relevance, such collaborations are crucial.” We look forward to strengthening these connections and we have started to reach out to other units (such as Dramatic Arts and History).

**The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:**

This recommendation is a pedagogical issue for the program to consider relating to their curricula and collaborations. It was unclear if this recommendation related solely to undergraduate coursework or might also relate to graduate programs. SGSC encourages all programs to consider synergies with other

departments for both curricular enhancement and resource management to support ongoing sustainability.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Dean enthusiastically supports collaborative efforts among the difference programmes in the Faculty of Humanities.

Timeline: Ongoing

**The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs responded:**

It is unclear whether this recommendation is for the undergraduate or graduate program. However, identifying synergies and opportunities for graduate students to engage with other programs is encouraged. There may also be synergies beyond the Faculty of Humanities. I would imagine that this would be a short-to-medium-term goal.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted, although it is to a certain extent already current practice. The Committee expects the Department, in collaboration with the Dean’s office, will continue their efforts to expand collaboration with other departments and programs.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

**Recommendation #6: That when future opportunities for new faculty lines in English Language and Literature open up, the Department prioritize hires that diversify its faculty complement and enable it to grow its offerings in the Creative Writing and/or WRDS programs.**

*Supporting/clarifying text: Ideally these hiring priorities could be met with one or two strategic hires that cover both areas, i.e. an Indigenous poet or novelist or a Global Anglophone specialist with expertise (published work) in creative writing. The reviewers heard very clearly from numerous faculty members and students that the Department as currently constituted is “very white” and that the creative writing stream, while popular and a future growth area, is understaffed and hence limited in its ability to offer the array of courses, especially at the third-year level, that would allow it to expand to meet student interest. The WRDS program would also benefit from an increase in faculty complement to allow it to provide fuller coverage in some of the program’s fields (e.g. technical writing).*

**The Department responded:**

We agree with this recommendation. We will need to think very carefully about flexible teaching and research areas, being mindful of upcoming retirements and the sustainability of our programs. We plan to hold a department meeting to set hiring priorities within the next 2 years that will address the reviewers’ recommendations.

**The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:**

This recommendation relates to faculty hiring within the Department and is outside of the purview of SGSC. Decisions regarding the academic foci for allocated Faculty Positions rest within the Department as stipulated in the BUFA Collective Agreement. That said, SGSC encourages programs to consider diversity in hiring, Indigenization, and alignment of hiring priorities to meet enrollment demands.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Dean encourages departments to put careful thought into the make-up of their faculty complements to support and strengthen their programme offerings. As position requests are solicited from the departments, the support for current and future programming should be a major consideration.

Timeline: 2027

**The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs responded:**

This recommendation is beyond FGSPA’s purview.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. Although the allocation of resources lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee, ARC expects that the Department will continue to advocate through available channels for positions to support and strengthen their programme offerings.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

**Recommendation #7: That the Department considers restructuring its undergraduate programs from three programs to one program with three streams.**

*Supporting/clarifying text: In the current budgetary and political environment, low-enrolment programs are at risk. Given that the three existing programs (ENGL, ENCW, and WRDS) and already tightly integrated programs, it would be relatively straightforward to calendar them as one program with three streams (with no change to program requirements for each stream). In exploring this possibility, the Department should consider any potential negative implications for students or recruitment resulting from the erasure of distinct ENCW and WRDS degrees.*

**The Department responded:**

We are grateful for the reviewers’ recognition of the risks that smaller programs face in budgetary crises,

and we agree to monitor the environment and how our programs might best adapt to it. We note that the integration of our programs already protects (to a certain extent) the smaller programs. To fold the programs back into one (the situation we had up until about a decade ago), really would be a step backward and not forward; it would erase the visibility of the different streams from students, administrators, and potential employers of students, and thus imperil the programs more.

**The Undergraduate Programs Committee responded:**

The committee discussed recommendation #7 (That the Department considers restructuring its undergraduate programs from three programs to one program with three streams), noting that “stream” is not a formally defined designation, but is an effective way to communicate with students about patterns of courses. The committee does not see an issue with this recommendation.

**The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:**

This recommendation falls under the purview of UPC as it relates specifically to the undergraduate program offerings.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

While there is some logic to the suggestion that the three programmes be merged, the Dean agrees with the Departmental assessment that such a move would erase a great deal of good work that has been done over the past few years. The Dean suggests careful consideration of any possible overlaps among the programmes, as well as possibilities of confusion for students if all three programmes remain intact.

**The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs responded:**

This recommendation is beyond FGSPA’s purview as it relates to the undergraduate program.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee believes the Department is best positioned to assess potential restructuring strategies.

<b>Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

**Recommendation #8: That the Department continues to pursue the creation of a Writer-in-Residence position.**

*Supporting/clarifying text: The Creative Writing program would be greatly strengthened by the presence of a Writer-in-Residence. Not only would it enrich the learning experience of students in the program, but it would also increase the visibility of the Creative Writing program and support recruitment. The program should explore various options for introducing a Writer-in-Residence. Given limited resources, at first it might be a short-term position (one or two weeks). The Department might also explore partnerships with the local public library and other potential community partners to help to fund this position.*

**The Department responded:**

We agree with this recommendation. Indeed, our self-study lists a Writer-in-Residence position as an area for improvement. We do want to note that finding a stable source of external funding requires consistent work, and we will need time to think through the complexities. We will explore Writer-in-Residence positions at comparable universities, investigate matching funds, and build further connections with other units (such as Dramatic Arts).

We suggest a 2-year time frame to address this recommendation.

**The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:**

This recommendation relates to human resources and funding within the Department, Faculty, and University and is outside of the purview of SGSC. That said, SGSC feels that it is important to bring such resource needs to the attention of Senior Administration and more broadly to Senate.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Dean strongly supports this recommendation and has raised the matter of support for a Writer/Artist in Residence program with Development and Donor Relations several times.

Timeline: 2027

**The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs responded:**

While FGSPA sees value in this recommendation, this is a resource issue that falls outside of our purview.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee expects that the Department will work through available channels of advocacy to advance a Writer/Artist in Residence program.

**Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)**

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

**Recommendation #9: That the Department continues its ongoing discussions about the implications of Artificial Intelligence, and not just through the lens of academic integrity.**

*Supporting/clarifying text: Generative AI is obviously a significant concern for all English Departments, particularly in relation to concerns about academic integrity. Its impact extends far beyond such concerns, however, and we encourage the Department to consider exploring AI's implications for what and how it teaches. In addition to forcing English professors to reconsider assignments and evaluation, the arrival of AI forces us to consider the place of writing in the university, how to prepare our graduates for a workplace in which they will likely be expected to make effective and appropriate use of AI, how to incorporate (or not) AI in the classroom, and the implications of AI for the producers and consumers of literature and other texts. Such considerations are particularly important for the WRDS program, given the impact of AI on technical writing and other writing-related careers.*

**The Department responded:**

The Department recognizes the rapidly evolving AI environment.

Our department has close ties with the Department of Digital Humanities and already has organized joint events focusing on AI in research and pedagogy. Further, it is part of our regular department process to have an annual report from the Academic Integrity Officer.

The reviewers note that Generative AI is particularly relevant to the WRDS program. Courses in that program are already addressing AI: the technical writing course and the journalism course have in the past two or three years included assignments that asked students to use AI as well as showing them the potential problems of AI use.

We will continue to engage in these efforts on an ongoing basis.

**The Senate Graduate Studies Committee responded:**

This recommendation is a pedagogical issue for the program to consider relating to the implications of AI on their curriculum. It was unclear if this recommendation related solely to undergraduate coursework or might also relate to graduate programs. SGSC encourages all programs to discuss the impact and influence of generative AI on their field(s) of study and future careers for their graduates and determine approaches to disseminate this information to their students.

**The Dean of Humanities responded:**

The Dean strongly encourages all members of the Department to take advantage of the ongoing conversations happening at Brock about all aspects of Artificial Intelligence. There is a lot to learn, and many experts at Brock offer workshops and seminars about the Generative AI in the academic setting.  
Timeline: Ongoing

**The Vice-Provost and Dean, Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs responded:**

It is important that all programs consider the role of AI and its implications beyond academic integrity. There are resources available regarding its use in theses through the Ontario Council on Graduate Studies. FGSPA can help support the efforts that fall outside of pedagogy. Given the rapid nature of AI changes, this might be considered an ongoing effort.

**ARC Disposition of the Recommendation**

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that the Department is already engaging in activities associated with the implications of Artificial Intelligence.

<b>Implementation Plan (1<sup>st</sup> Priority)</b>	
Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

**D. Summary of Recommendations:**

First Priority:

Recommendations: 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9

Second Priority:

Recommendations: 2

Outside ARC's jurisdiction:

Recommendations: 3, 4