



Date: February 21, 2020

To: John Stalvey, Interim Provost

From: John Petraitis, Interim Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Cc: David Bowie, Professor; Chair, Department of English
Jackie Cason, Professor
Jared Griffin, Associate Professor
Trish Jenkins, Associate Professor
Emily Madsen, Assistant Professor

Re: AY20 Expedited Program Review Findings

Program/s in this review: English BA

Specialized accrediting agency (if applicable): None

Campuses where the program is delivered: Anchorage

Members of the program review committee:

David Bowie, Professor and Department Chair
Jackie Cason, Professor
Jared Griffin, Associate Professor
Trish Jenkins, Associate Professor
Emily Madsen, Assistant Professor

Centrality of Program Mission and Supporting Role

UAA's mission is to discover and disseminate knowledge through teaching, research, engagement and creative expression. UAA is committed to serving the higher education needs of the state, its communities and its diverse peoples. It is also committed to instruction at multiple academic levels, success of all students regardless of their higher education goals, and service to the diverse peoples and communities of the state. UAA's core themes are (1) Teaching and Learning, (2) Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity, (3) Student Success, (4) UAA Community, and (5) Public Square. UAA values international and intercultural education, diversity of experiences and perspectives, and the diversity of our unique location in Southcentral Alaska that comes from the Alaska Native peoples of this area.

The College of Arts and Sciences contributes to UAA's mission with a suite of programs that provide, among other things,

1. general education courses for undergraduates in CAS and other Colleges,
2. opportunities for undergraduates to pursue majors in the humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and the arts, and
3. opportunities for faculty and students to pursue research and creative activities in CAS's academic disciplines,
4. graduate programs for advanced studies.

Given decreased enrollments across UAA and significant budget cuts to CAS, the challenge is to serve UAA's and CAS's missions with only 75% of the funds it had in 2018-2019. CAS's shrinking budget is especially challenging for programs that rely on state financial appropriations through CAS because the programs have a gap between (a) the total costs of everything the program does and needs, and (b) the tuition CAS receives to cover those costs. This describes most programs in CAS: most rely on state appropriations and CAS has 30% less than it had two years ago.

CAS's Department of English BA contributes to CAS's and UAA's mission by contributing multiple options for Tier 2 general education courses. It contributes multiple courses that are required by students in the Community and Technical College, the College of Engineering, and CAS. Finally, it provides students the opportunity to major in the discipline, and for faculty and students to do research in the field of English.

Program Demand (including service to other programs), Efficiency, and Productivity

The program has strong demand. With an average of 19 first-year students picking English as their initial major, it is the fourth most popular major in CAS, following only Biology, Psychology and Art. With 167 majors in 2019 and an average of 36 awards per year, the program more than doubles the median number of majors (76) and median number of awards (16) in CAS's baccalaureate programs. Additionally, many other departments depend on upper-division courses in English. In fact, in 2019 72% of the student credit hours were from non-English majors, considerably above the CAS average of 58%. Despite this, the tuition CAS receives to run the program does not cover the instructional costs. Further, when the costs for everything faculty do (namely, teaching, research, and service) are considered, the Department as a whole operates at a substantial deficit that requires support from legislative appropriations.

Program Quality, Improvement and Student Success

Recently, faculty redesigned the program by eliminating tracks that, while attractive to students, produced bottlenecks for graduation. Faculty are offering more online courses, and there is a growing focus on diversity and international perspectives.

Program Duplication / Distinctiveness

UAF and UAS also offer a BA in English. Of the 44 English BA's offered in the UA system in 2019, 28 (64%) were from UAA.

Commendations and Recommendations

Program faculty are commended for simplifying the curriculum and adding more focus on diversity and international perspectives. The faculty should also be commended for the hard work they put into their expedited program review submission.

Decision

Continued review. The English Department as a whole does not serve enough students to meet its costs, requiring considerable help from legislative appropriations. If the Board of Regents approves deletion of

the English MA, then the long-term sustainability of the BA is likely improved. This should be monitored and addressed in a future program review. The program should report on its progress by Spring 2021.