

**Memorial University of Newfoundland**  
**Department of English Language and Literature**  
**Academic Program Review: Departmental Self-Study**  
**November 2011**

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## 1.0 Introduction

We pride ourselves on providing the people of Newfoundland and Labrador with the opportunity of excelling in intellectual studies that will take them anywhere in their lives and anywhere in the world.

English was one of the disciplines taught at Memorial University College, founded in 1925. In 1950, months after Newfoundland joined Canada, Memorial University College was renamed Memorial University of Newfoundland and became a degree-granting institution. In 1956, the Department of English Language and Literature offered a two-year thesis-based Masters degree. Jim Devereaux and Everard King were awarded the first Memorial MAs in English in 1958. In 1965, two departments, Chemistry and English, began offering doctoral degrees. The first PhD in English was awarded to Leona Deorkson in 1970.

As part of an effort to provide remediation for students who had insufficient preparation for university level studies, the Junior division of the English Department was created in September 1967. The Department of English was thus divided into two distinct administrative units until 1984 when the two halves were integrated administratively. It was not until 1994, through the diplomatic efforts of Gordon Jones, that the Department was united physically in the Arts building. A recent Dean has called the English Department the flagship of the university and its centrality is obvious in its size and its history. We would like to maintain this centrality but we face challenges.

In February 2011 the Department formed an Academic Program Review Committee (Faith Balisch, then Interim Head of the Department, Donna Walsh, current Head of the Department, Danine Farquharson, Chair of the APR Committee, Jennifer Lokash, Andrew Loman, and Nancy Pedri). This team worked through the spring and early summer drafting the major academic program and administration sections of this self-study. In early September 2011, a draft document was circulated to all English Department faculty, and following an open forum for discussion as well as consideration of written commentary from faculty, the APR committee then drafted the Introduction, Conclusion, Research, and Community Outreach sections. A draft of the full self-study was again sent to all faculty for feedback and then revised for submission to the Dean of Arts. One fact made clear to the APR committee throughout this process is that our department has been in a continuous, organic self-study mode since the last APR in 2003.

The 2003 APR process resulted in many recommendations and suggestions (see Appendix A). Over the next several years, the Department of English worked on major changes to the Undergraduate Program and improved the Graduate Program. This work was accomplished through concerted departmental effort and will: there were several all day meetings to brainstorm about our programs, the standing committees worked on many revisions and changes, and individual faculty contributed new ideas and directions. Any 2003 recommendations that did not come to pass failed to do so largely because of a lack of administrative will at that time (mostly at the decanal level). The persistent issue that this Department has not resolved (not through a lack of trying) is the most effective

and efficient way to offer the first-year English courses given both the curricular demands and budgetary constraints of the University. The Department is open to new perspectives on that question.

At the time of writing, the Department is moving swiftly and congenially toward better defining ourselves on the web for purposes of graduate recruitment and public awareness of our activities. The Research Committee is doing the work of outlining clusters of research strength in the Department and in alignment with the University Research Plan. The Graduate Coordinator has held an open forum on many aspects of the Graduate Program and the Graduate Studies Committee is acting on the recommendations that came out of those consultations. The Undergraduate Committee continues the work of revising and updating the courses and program structure for our Honours students, majors, and minors.

Another fact made clear through this self-study process is the urgent need for faculty renewal. The 2003 APR Review Committee saw a need for either significant new hires or for the University administration to re-think the question of first-year English requirements. Neither of those needs have been addressed. Instead, our faculty numbers do not balance retirements with replacement positions. Declining faculty numbers has meant that each member must serve on more committees, teach a broader spectrum of courses, and assume many additional advisory and mentoring duties. Our decreasing faculty complement has also resulted in increased reliance on per-course instructors. A major issue for this current APR process continues to be faculty renewal.

Should the review committee need any additional information or clarification, the Department will be pleased to provide what is needed. We present the following self-study in the spirit of open consultation and discussion that has defined this Department over the last several years.

## **2.0 Departmental Objectives**

### **2.1 Preamble**

Over the past two years the university-wide community has been developing both a Research Plan and a Teaching and Learning Framework. Members of the English Department have been actively involved in both initiatives and the Department embraces their fundamental principles. The outcomes of these two initiatives can be found at the following websites:

University Research Plan: <http://www.mun.ca/research/vp/strategic.php>

Teaching and Learning Framework: [www.mun.ca/vpacademic/teach\\_learn.php](http://www.mun.ca/vpacademic/teach_learn.php)

### **2.2 Strategic Goals**

Our departmental website lists the objectives articulated in the 2003 APR ([www.mun.ca/english/undergrad/objectives\\_english.php](http://www.mun.ca/english/undergrad/objectives_english.php)). However, the Department has held several meetings over the last eight years to discuss the direction and objectives of our academic programs. As a result of those meetings, and given the unchanging objectives to maintain a high standard of teaching and to foster a high standard of intellectual development of faculty and students, the Department arrived at the following ten strategies:

- to undertake faculty renewal to re-invigorate our department;
- to foster the study of and research into the literature and culture of Newfoundland and Labrador at multiple levels;
- to develop two or more areas of research excellence, particularly at the graduate level;
- to develop new courses and areas within our Undergraduate Program;
- to encourage faculty to apply for external funding;
- to be dynamic in support of the arts through continuing development of specialized programs and community outreach;
- to stabilize funding for intellectual life and outreach activities;
- to increase the visibility of the Department and its programs within the University and the community;
- to increase student enrollment by varying course offerings and modes of delivery, including courses offered through DELT; and,
- to explore endowment funding for specific activities.

### **3.0 Graduate Studies Program**

#### **3.1 Preamble**

The graduate degrees offered by the Department have not changed since the 2003 APR: we continue to offer a PhD program and two MA programs (course work and thesis). Following the advice of the 2003 APR Review Panel, the Department has successfully worked to increase the number and the flexibility of graduate course offerings, and we periodically offer graduate student workshops on professional issues such as publishing, grant applications, and conference paper work.

Appendix B documents our graduate student enrollment since 2003, and while the total numbers appear consistent (35 students in 2003 and 35 students in 2010), the number of PhD students is lower (17 students in 2003 and 12 students in 2010). The lower number of PhD students is due in part to the Department's success in moving some candidates towards quicker completion of their degree, but PhD recruitment is an issue of concern, which the Department has begun to consider in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Department admitted three new PhD students in Fall 2010 and none in 2011. In October 2011, the current Graduate Coordinator facilitated two hour-long forums for department faculty to discuss the issue of recruitment and many other issues related to

our Graduate Program. (See Appendix B for calendar descriptions, program guidelines, course offerings, thesis titles, and other statistics.)

### **3.2 Strengths**

#### **PhD Program**

The PhD program has continued to add new students in the fields where the Department has its greatest numerical strengths: the literature of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canadian literature, and contemporary literature.

Graduates of the PhD program have had some success in landing permanent academic appointments, though there is obviously substantial room for improvement in this area.

#### **Teaching Fellowships for PhDs**

Our PhD program has a Teaching Fellow component. Following a semester working with a faculty mentor, PhD students are then eligible to teach first-year English (while abiding by the SGS policy on workload). This teaching experience is not an assistantship whereby the student helps a faculty member with a course. Our Teaching Fellows are entirely responsible for course planning, lectures, grading, and student advising. Such professional work experience supports our PhD students by enabling them to create a robust teaching portfolio complete with student evaluations, sample syllabi and assignments, as well as references from faculty who advise on and assess PhD teaching effectiveness. It must be noted that the number of PhD Teaching Fellows is now dictated by the LUMUN Agreement.

#### **MA Program**

One of the greatest strengths of our MA program is its flexibility. MA students have the option of a course work or a thesis route to their degrees. We have students engaged in both streams. In the course work route, students also have the added flexibility of completing English 6999, a directed and research-intensive course that allows students to pursue a research project but not at the length of a thesis. All graduate students have the option of completing a course in another department, and there is consistent willingness on the part of faculty to develop reading courses in addition to the regular course offerings in response to student needs. Reading courses are normally offered as extra teaching for such faculty. The Department has a history of successful co-supervisions at both the MA and PhD level and so students also have flexibility and diversity in faculty expertise and support.

Regular course offerings conform to recommendation #5 of the last APR, which suggested four courses each fall, four courses each winter, and two courses in spring and/or summer. In the past seven years the Department has seen faculty revitalization, with new members supporting existing strengths and bringing new specializations in cultural studies, theatre, film, visual poetics, creative writing, and interdisciplinary

postcolonialism. Such revitalization has contributed to varied graduate course content and delivery.

Our department has an outstanding track record in assisting MA students toward successful SSHRC grants. According to the School of Graduate Studies, MA applicants from the Department of English have the highest success rate in the University. Some of our MA applicants are, of course, senior undergraduates who may take that SSHRC grant elsewhere, but the Department has a proven record of SSHRC success at the MA level: for example, in 2008, four out of eight MA applications received funding, in 2009, three out of five MA applications were funded, and in 2010, five out of six MA applications were successful.

MA students have also been successful in winning other awards. For example, in 2007, Amanda Jernigan was awarded the prestigious NAGS (Northeastern Association of Graduate Schools) Award for her MA thesis entitled "Wholes and Parts (All Puns Intended): The Mereological Vision of Richard Outram's Poetic Sequences."

MA (thesis) students who have included creative writing components in their programs and have achieved notable successes. For example, David Andrews won the Newfoundland and Labrador Fresh Fish Award for Emerging Writers for *West Orange*, a collection of thematically linked short stories that formed part of his MA thesis.

### **Faculty advising and mentoring**

Faculty in the Department are dedicated advisors and mentors to graduate students. Assisting with all types of grant applications, offering brown bag seminars on publishing, writing conference paper proposals, delivering conference papers, and organizing SSHRC grant writing sessions are but some of the things faculty regularly do to assist graduate students. We are committed to the students in the graduate program and to ensuring a healthy and collaborative intellectual culture. Faculty members train and mentor students through research assistant employment on individual research projects supported through grants such as SSHRC.

## **3.3 Weaknesses**

### **Promotion and recruitment**

The reasons for success and failure in recruiting are multiple and complex. The small number of PhD applications we receive, and the small number of admissions to our PhD program, is a key concern, which the Department has already begun to address in consultation with the Dean of Graduate Studies and in recent departmental forums devoted to discussion of our graduate programs (see above). In its efforts to recruit doctoral students, the Department faces some basic challenges:



- Across Canada, a large number of graduate schools offering very similar PhD programs in English are avidly chasing a fairly small number of capable MA English graduates.
- Some schools are able to offer more lucrative compensation packages than we offer. Inadequate and unstable funding are significant hindrances to our recruitment efforts.

Recruiting an appropriate number of MA students is crucial to filling our graduate courses (the courses recommended in the Department's last APR). Recruiting strong MA students is a consistent and ongoing concern for us. In its recruitment efforts, the Department faces some basic abiding problems:

- Across Canada, a large number of graduate schools offering very similar MA programs in English are avidly chasing a fairly small number of capable Honours English graduates.
- Some schools are able to offer more lucrative compensation packages than we offer.

Recruitment efforts have also been hindered by an out-of-date website that does an inadequate job of showcasing the research profiles of our faculty members (and potential supervisors). Our calendar descriptions of courses do not reflect the variety and diversity of what is actually taught. In general, the image of our graduate program which the website projects lacks lustre. The effort of our new Research Committee to upgrade faculty webpages is a vital first step in rectifying this problem, but more needs to be done.

The Department has also not done enough to identify or to promote clearly defined areas of research strength. The identification and promotion of these areas would improve our chances of attracting strong applicants, particularly at the doctoral level.

### **Unstable administration of the Graduate Program**

The Department's graduate programs have suffered from instability in the Graduate Coordinator position and in the graduate secretary position. One Graduate Coordinator left early for maternity leave and another served for only two years. The position of graduate secretary has frequently been filled by temporary appointees. Greater stability in these positions would contribute to the areas of communication (e.g., the graduate portions of the departmental website) and the efficient handling of documents.

### **3.4 Threats**

The following factors most dramatically threaten the Department's ability to build on successes:

- decreasing and/or uncertain funding at the federal and university levels;

- the loss of potential applicants to other universities which advertise clear departmental areas of specialization, or clear interdisciplinary opportunities, better funding packages;
- delays in the processing of graduate applications. (In 2011, the School of Graduate Studies took five weeks to transmit completed graduate applications from its offices to ours. In response to this delay, the Department moved its deadline for applications from February 15 to February 1. The Department needs to be more prompt and efficient in its internal handling of applications.)

### **3.5 Opportunities**

The current Graduate Coordinator, Dr. Mark Cumming, organized two one-hour departmental forums, on October 14 and October 21, 2011, to discuss the challenges facing our graduate programs. The following goals reflect the concerns that were raised during those discussions and have been reinforced by this self-study process:

- to develop clear research clusters for faculty and use those for more effective promotion and recruitment;
- to update, streamline, and energize the website; to develop online faculty research profiles; to intensify our recruitment efforts, particularly in Atlantic Canada, with updated promotional materials;
- to capitalize on the opportunity and advantage that our location offers;
- to consider building the creative writing elements of the Graduate Program: regularize an MA in Creative Writing; debate a PhD in Creative Writing;
- to engage with and recruit through the Interdisciplinary PhD program; and,
- to develop a method for tracking and documenting students after completion of their graduate program.

As a result of those discussions, the Graduate Studies Committee is now engaged in all of these activities.

## **4.0 Undergraduate Studies Program**

### **4.1 Preamble**

In most respects we are pleased with the Undergraduate Program, which does not, to our eyes, need fundamental transformation (the First-year Program aside). This self-study has highlighted for us various weaknesses and opportunities, however, and we therefore welcome suggestions from the assessors for ways to improve our programs. (See Appendix C for enrollment statistics, calendar entries, promotional brochures, Honours essay titles, student awards, course change information.)

We currently offer four undergraduate programs (Major, Minor, Honours, and Joint Honours) and three Diploma programs (Creative Writing, Performance and

Communications Media, and Professional Writing). Since 2003, we have made a number of tangible changes to strengthen our programs:

- We brought our Major more in line with our Honours program.
- We added American and Canadian components.
- We developed a number of genre-related courses and redesigned some of our existing courses.
- We opened the Honours program to include two electives at the 4000 level, enabling students to count Harlow courses, Creative Writing courses, and other diploma courses such as Advanced Editing towards their programs.
- We lowered the enrollment cap from 50 to 35 for 3000-level courses.
- We eliminated English 2390 as a required course for all of our programs and replaced it with an additional required 3000-level English course.
- We developed two new Diploma Programs in Professional Writing and Creative Writing.

## **4.2 Strengths**

### **Faculty commitment to teaching excellence**

Faculty in the English Department take pride in undergraduate education, and invest a great deal of energy and enthusiasm teaching courses that students will find intellectually stimulating and engaging. Our commitment to our undergraduate students is the Department's greatest strength, and we are good at cultivating and celebrating undergraduate excellence and achievement. The report from our last APR noted that we have the largest proportion of majors in the Faculty of Arts, and that English students regularly make up 25% of all Arts Honours degrees and at least 25% of the places on the Dean's List. These statistics remain true, although, as the last APR report also concluded, without significant faculty renewal these numbers will be unsustainable for us.

### **Newfoundland and Labrador content**

As the only university in the province, Memorial University declares that it has a "special obligation" to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador; the Department of English fulfills that obligation not only by championing, nurturing, and studying the work of local writers, but also by situating the local culture in a global framework. We currently offer only one undergraduate course dedicated to the study of Newfoundland and Labrador literatures, though many other courses draw on this province's thriving literary tradition regularly. (Graduate courses on Newfoundland and Labrador literature and culture are offered regularly.) We also teach Newfoundland and Labrador authors in a wide range of courses in other contexts, helping to instill in our students a strong sense both of their local identities and also of the broader networks within which (and sometimes in opposition to which) Newfoundland defines itself. Our many courses in Creative Writing help to foster a new generation of writers, as does our hugely successful Writer-in-Residence program. Although many of our students come from this province, we have more and more students coming to us from the Atlantic region and elsewhere whose

English programs are enriched by our diverse faculty of scholars and creative writers and by our close ties with and access to the province's active arts community.

### **Innovative course development**

We have an increasingly diverse range of course offerings and are constantly developing new courses and new approaches to literary traditions. In 2003, the APR review panel noted that our courses were primarily organized along national and chronological lines, and encouraged us to diversify our offerings. In the years since, our course offerings have changed markedly, and although the core of the program remains based on nation and period, we now supplement it with courses organized around genres and themes, such as: The Gothic; Science Fiction; Literatures of the Apocalypse; Introductory Literary Theory; Poetics of the Image; and, the Graphic Novel (one of the first undergraduate courses on graphic narrative in North America). We have also undertaken to give some of our established courses a new emphasis and a more contemporary presentation. For instance, we have redesigned the Bibliography course and renamed it Book History and Print Culture, and we redesigned our courses in Postcolonialism and World Literatures.

Since 2003, our department has inaugurated two new courses in film. At least five of our faculty teach these courses, while many others routinely use film as a pedagogical tool in their literature courses. Two of the required courses for the Faculty of Arts' Film Studies Minor—which our department was instrumental in establishing—are English courses: English 2850: What is Film?; and English 2851: Introduction to Film Form and Film Theory. These core courses reflect the significant role the Department of English plays in the viability of the Film Studies Minor. Along with two other English courses, these popular film courses are also optional for students completing the interdisciplinary program in Communication Studies. In addition, English 2813: Poetics of the Image is currently being considered as a regular elective for the Film Studies Minor as well as the Major in Communication Studies.

Members of our department enthusiastically seize the opportunity to teach at the Harlow campus, typically with collaborators from other fields. Since 2003, we have offered at least five semesters at Harlow. For instance, Annette Staveley has led an interdisciplinary program on landscape and literature with geographer Michael Staveley; Don Nichol has taught courses on England's rich history of satire with Newfoundland and Labrador's esteemed humorist Mary Walsh; and Jamie Skidmore has taught courses on contemporary theatre with Governor General-Award winning playwright Robert Chafe. Such programs provide students with an experiential context and a wider framework of cultural and geographical reference. Without hyperbole one may say that the benefit of this program to students is incalculable. As one graduate of the Harlow program put it, "My life took a new direction, in terms of my increased self-awareness, independence, and global mindedness, after attending a Harlow program through the Department of English." We anticipate that our faculty will continue to be involved in Harlow programs in the coming years.

Our faculty are committed to pedagogy that spans disciplinary boundaries and appeals to a wide range of students. In addition to the interdisciplinary courses offered strictly within our own department, we offer six courses that are currently cross-listed with the Faculty of Music and the Departments of Folklore, History, Linguistics, Medieval Studies, Religious Studies, and Women's Studies. We have continued to work to get the Music and Drama major revised and revived, and as we have already mentioned, English courses in film are required for the Film Studies Minor and make up part of the roster for the Communications Studies Major. In general, we are fully committed to cooperating with other academic units in the support and delivery of interdisciplinary programs.

In terms of modes of delivery, our faculty have diverse pedagogical styles and are generally innovative and open to new ideas. From 2003-11, in concert with DELTS, we have developed nine online versions of our courses, with the ultimate goal of allowing students to complete the twelve-course Major online. Various members of the Department also use Desire2Learn, an online pedagogical resource, to complement their campus-based courses, and our faculty routinely use the Smartroom technology when it is available. It is also worth noting that we conduct our fourth-year courses as seminars, so that our advanced students benefit from the more collaborative and participatory discussion and presentation format.

### **Integrating students into intellectual life**

Our survey of the Department's intellectual life gives a comprehensive overview of our engagement with local, national, and international communities (see below); here it is worth emphasizing that our undergraduate students are the direct beneficiaries of this engagement. Annually the Department (under the auspices of the Office of the Dean of Arts) organizes and hosts the Pratt Lecture, a public lecture that brings an eminent critic to the St. John's campus; many of our undergraduate students attend, and the visiting scholar typically gives lectures to individual classes as well. In 2009, with the support of the Faculty of Arts, Mary Dalton founded the annual SPARKS Literary Festival, and many of our undergraduate students are able to attend the readings of local writers like Jessica Grant, Andy Jones, Kevin Major, Sam Martin, and Robin McGrath. Professor Dalton designs a deliberately inclusive program to showcase the work of emerging writers along with that of more established authors from Newfoundland and Labrador as well as the mainland. In each festival there is full participation by students writers.

### **Faculty advising and mentoring**

Our department celebrates our students' achievements. We generally support the Memorial English Students Society (MESS) and their initiatives. In particular, we have encouraged their For the Love of Literature conference, a one-day academic conference that MESS has organized in February for the past two years and hope to put on every year. Some of our faculty members have given papers at the conference, while others have attended the readings. This event provides students with a venue to share their research, and it gives them the experience of conference participation with a supportive audience. Our faculty and instructors who teach advanced creative writing courses

regularly organize end-of-term readings and support their students in the publication and launching of chapbooks. Our faculty also mentor our students in preparation for giving papers at conferences, including the Annual Atlantic Undergraduate English Conference (AAUEC), as well as through the arduous process of applying for major fellowships such as the Rhodes and the Rothermere (in 2010 two of our Honours students, Olivia Heaney and Zaren White, were shortlisted for the Rhodes and another, Nancy Martin, won the prestigious Rothermere). As we noted above, we have an excellent record of SSHRC Masters scholarships, a further testament to our faculty's commitment of time and energy to student mentoring.

### **Scholarships and awards**

In addition to our regular convocation prizes, we have a number of annual scholarships and awards that are available to our students at various stages of their programs. Since the last APR, we have added three new awards to this list: The Dick Buehler Award for Theatre, established by Professor Buehler and now administered with the support of his wife, Sharon; The Helen Jones Convocation Award for Excellence in English, established by Dr. Gordon Jones in memory of his wife and our colleague; and the English Department Faculty Award, which we are about to bestow for the first time upon a third-year student. We have recently been approached by two generous families, one wishing to endow an award to promote Newfoundland language or poetry in some way, and the other interested in financially supporting Department of English endeavours. We are currently working on how best to handle this good fortune.

### **Diploma programs**

Our three self-standing Diploma programs—in Performance and Communications Media, in Creative Writing, and in Professional Writing,—offer further ways for students to practice writing and to participate in the arts. Note that the latter two were created since that 2003 APR. Students need not be registered otherwise at the university to enroll in these programs, which is attractive to non-traditional students and those seeking experiential learning. Two of these programs have longstanding coordinators (Larry Mathews for Creative Writing and Jamie Skidmore for Performance and Communications Media), enjoy the support of the rest of the Department, attract a great deal of student interest, and have bright prospects. The third, Professional Writing, has been in transition; however, Jennifer Lokash has recently agreed to act as its coordinator, and there is accordingly every prospect of its renaissance. These diplomas are not boutique programs; rather, they have proven to create significant professional and educational opportunities for their graduates. One of our Diploma in Performance and Communications Media students (Matthew Downey) was accepted into the National Theatre School, two of our Diploma in Professional Writing graduates have been awarded coveted Gzowski internships (Samantha Smith and Catherine Burgess), and our Creative Writing Diploma graduates are successful in their applications to graduate programs in creative writing (most recently Jacob Arthur Mooney, a.k.a. Jake Rose, and Lynette Adams, for instance). Several students in the poetry and fiction streams of creative writing have published books shortly after completing their programs, some of them winning or being short-listed for national awards.

The Diploma in English as a Second Language (ESL), though historically a part of the English Department, is in the early stages of transition. The Diploma has never been a great success, and there is currently a movement toward transforming it into an interdisciplinary Minor. Doing so will appeal to a broader range of students and will allow departments involved to offer courses less frequently, as students will have more time in which to take them. Under the direction of the Dean of Arts, the Faculty of Education and the Departments of English and Linguistics are trying to formulate a Minor that will meet the needs of multiple student groups, such as those who want to teach abroad and those who want to teach ESL in local schools at various levels. This change is still in the planning stages.

### **4.3 Weaknesses**

#### **Program coherence**

A significant problem in the upper-year courses has been the comparatively low enrollment in third-year (3000-level) courses, though we have taken some steps to remedy this problem (see below). A further and doubtless related problem has been the unclear progress through the levels of the Program. To distinguish between second- and third-year courses, we decreased the third-year cap to 35 students, making possible more group and individual presentations and increasing student input and involvement. We also plan to work on discovering the reasons for the decreased enrollment in third-year courses.

#### **DELTS**

There is continuing student interest in online courses, but our online program has been slow to develop. Insofar as it is desirable for students to be able to complete an English degree without setting foot in a material classroom, the current state of our online course offerings constitutes a weakness in our undergraduate program. In order to properly develop these courses, it is necessary for the University administration to provide both time and money. Were there to be the necessary support both in terms of payment and release time, there would be renewed interest by members of the Department in moving ahead with the development of an online English literature degree.

### **4.4 Threats**

In Fall 2011, the equivalent of 18.5 full-time faculty are teaching in the Department, and it would be an understatement to say that we feel the strain. In particular, our standing committees are difficult to populate, with few faculty available to do the work at a time when much needs to be done.

The Undergraduate Program faces the same principal threat that our other programs do: we are in the midst of a wave of retirements, and badly need new appointments. William

Barker resigned in 2003; Helen Peters retired in 2004; George Casey and Stella Algoobaksh retired in 2005; Sandra Kromm and Helen Jones retired in 2007; Robert Hollett and Shane O'Dea retired in 2010; Gordon Jones retired in April 2011; and Pat Byrne is retiring in December 2011. In 2010, we lost Linda Vecchi to illness. Further retirements are imminent. In Fall 2010 and Winter 2011, the Department voted on hiring areas and prepared detailed rationales for three new tenure-track positions, but our application was rejected (see Appendix H). As a result our programs are already under pressure and will be under critical pressure by Fall 2012. Even if our application for new positions is successful in the next round (April 2012), at the earliest we will have new faculty members by July 1, 2013. This unfortunate circumstance means that our department will face a staffing crisis of at least two years: the situation is untenable.

#### 4.5 Opportunities

We can creatively respond to program weaknesses that are under our control. For example, because we no longer have an active language specialist on faculty, the Department determined that we can no longer support English 2390: Introduction to Modern English Structures as a requirement for our programs. Our solution to this situation begins to address the problem of low third-year enrollment by requiring an additional 3 credit hours at the 3000-level in place of English 2390. In the coming months and years, we will continue to experiment with ways to increase enrollment in third-year courses and we will discuss ways to make the differences between course levels clearer. In addition, our innovative and energetic faculty will continue to modify and improve course offerings, introducing new courses and experimenting with new ways to teach them (better exploiting digital media and the resources available in St. John's, for instance).

Work is ongoing to improve our website to provide fuller information about our research and our programs, and we are in the process of revamping the pamphlets we distribute to prospective students. With better advanced planning, we can enliven our annual fall Meet and Greet to make it more appealing and useful to students. We think we can do even more to celebrate the achievements of our current students; for example, at present we notify diploma program students of their successful completion only by mail, whereas we might consider establishing a more formal graduation ceremony. We also plan to keep better track of the progress of our graduates to more fully celebrate their accomplishments post-graduation, and this would help potential English majors understand the value of an English degree. There are several generations of graduates from the Department of English across the country, and we have only anecdotal information about most of them. Especially in the age of Facebook and other social media, we can easily improve in this respect.



## 5.0 First-Year Studies

### 5.1 Preamble

The Department of English Language and Literature continues to provide two first-year courses for almost all entering students. Engineering and Music require only English 1080: Critical Reading and Writing, the first semester course that is a pre-requisite to all other English courses. Students with appropriate scores from Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate programs are granted credit for English 1080 but do take either English 1101, 1102, 1103, or 1110.

In Fall 2010, 2397 students were enrolled in 58 sections of English 1080. This is nearly 20% of the total enrollment of the University for this semester. In Winter 2011, 1988 students were enrolled in 57 first-year sections. We also offer sections of first-year English by distance in every semester. Normally, six sections of first year are offered in the Spring semester. Most faculty members teach one section of first year as part of their annual course load. Theoretically, 20% of the teaching capacity of regular faculty in the English Department is devoted to first-year courses. However, this percentage will not reflect the number of faculty teaching first-year courses in 2011-12, given the small number of faculty available for teaching duty.

These courses aim to provide students with the ability to engage in close reading in multiple genres and to write essays that sustain a thesis. In the second-semester courses, the attention to critical thinking, reading, and writing continues and the fundamentals of research are introduced. The English Department has fought strenuously to maintain low enrollments in first-year courses. English 1080, 1101, 1102, 1103 have enrollment caps of 42, which is above the optimum size but manageable. English 1110 sections have enrollment caps of 30 because of the large amount of writing and consequent marking required. We have long maintained, and the recently adopted Teaching and Learning Framework confirms, that our policy of small classes and our practice of requiring the close reading of texts create the best conditions for student learning.

To judge by the CEQs of the Department, students are generally positive about their experiences in first-year English classes. Unsolicited feedback and the number of students who enroll in additional English courses also indicate strong student satisfaction.

The Department is very concerned about its first-year offerings and how to make them more effective. For over 25 years, we have spent days, even weeks, discussing first year as an essential base for what we do, and maintained the argument that these courses are essential for university students and that the program should be the same for all (for our future English students as well as for all other first-year students). Three round-table discussions focusing solely on the First-year Program have been held since the last APR report in 2003 and a series of professional development sessions are set up at the beginning of each term to provide information for new hires and all other interested faculty. (See Appendix D for all guidelines for first-year instructors.)

## 5.2 Weaknesses

To provide sections of English to nearly all entering students, the Faculty of Arts and the English Department make a very small number of contractual appointments and a large number of per-course appointments. The presence of many instructors with varying views of what the course should be and should accomplish often leads to inequitable experiences for the students. The Department attempted to address this weakness by organizing mentoring committees that included tenured and untenured faculty, graduate teaching fellows, and contract and per-course instructors. Meant as a forum for discussing any and all teaching issues and for moving toward greater consistency, this initiative fizzled due to lack of participation.

While a number of per-course instructors are highly experienced and provide excellent instruction, a significant number are inexperienced and not as prepared to teach as we might wish. Due to the hiring restraints of the LUMUN Collective Agreement, which place primary emphasis on teaching experience at Memorial University, the Department often must hire an instructor with an MA who has taught three courses over three semesters within a three year period at Memorial rather than hiring an individual with a PhD and possibly years of experience teaching at another university. Even full professors, recognized for their excellence in teaching, who have retired from Memorial University and wish to teach a single course, are ranked below the lowest ranked per-course instructor on the LUMUN seniority list.

When most of the incoming instructors were on teaching term contracts, when the Department had an agreed upon a text for use in courses such as English 1080 and, especially, when there was a common final examination, we felt we had a reasonable chance of establishing equitability and comparability among the many sections. Since the ratification of the LUMUN agreement, however, it has become increasingly difficult to balance the demand for commensurability, which is assumed to be an important aspect in a course required by nearly all entering students, with the need for academic freedom and with the disparate visions of what the courses should be. It is difficult to ensure that the courses are doing what the Department wants them to do when they are being taught primarily by an ever-changing body of per-course instructors.

It is also difficult for instructors to know where to aim the class so that all students benefit, since some students are under-prepared (indeed, some should be in the ESL program) while others have superlative preparation. For some students, the reading and writing demands are too heavy, while for others they are too light. Furthermore, some of the students come to university with the preconception that English is a necessary but useless evil, and they approach the courses with reluctance.

Satisfying these varied needs is a demanding, nearly impossible task, but even this is not the primary problem. The major problem for the instructor of first-year English courses is the heavy marking load. If these instructors are teaching two sections (the usual teaching load for LUMUN members), they read approximately 2500 pages of student writing, not including the two essays required on the final exams. If the instructor is teaching English

1110, the marking load is even heavier. Unfortunately, many (some might say most) of these pages require heavy correction and lengthy explanations. In addition, many of the individual problems surfacing in the papers can be handled only by means of personal consultations. Most of this burden falls on the per-course instructors. We know that some shortcuts are being taken, but for the most part the per-course instructors are doing, and doing well, a very difficult task.

Perhaps the greatest problem with the program as a whole is that it needs to be restructured and revitalized. English 1080, which is a variation of its predecessor English 1100, has existed in its current form since 1991 and should be re-evaluated. Possible means of revitalization are presented below.

### **5.3 Opportunities**

#### **Working toward equity**

The English Department has adopted a number of measures to ensure that per-course instructors are informed of the course structure and content and to make the multiple sections as equitable as possible:

- We have created booklets for each of the first-year courses detailing the appropriate contents and structure for the course, which are given to all instructors.
- A fuller, more detailed, manual is available on each course in the central office and in each office used by per-course instructors.
- Course outlines and examples of term assignments used in previous semesters are available as guidelines in the central office.
- Final examinations used in previous semesters are available as guidelines in the central office and a few are included in each manual.
- All per-course instructors and new contractual appointees are given an orientation at the beginning of each term and are provided with guidelines on the policies and practices of the courses.
- All course outlines must be approved by the Head or his/her delegate before they are distributed to the students. This year, for example, the course outlines must be submitted on September 1 so they can be reviewed and amended if need be before classes begin.
- All exams must be approved by the Head or his/her delegate.
- New instructors are assigned a mentor.
- Class visits may be conducted if requested or required.
- Earlier appointment of per-course instructors has led to more diverse and interesting courses.

#### **Revitalizing the Program**

The English Department believes that the upper administration must provide both financial and professional support if the Department is to continue to provide two first-

year English courses for the majority of incoming students. We cannot continue to provide two first-year English courses for the majority of entering students unless we have a strong commitment of budgetary support from the University. We also require additional office space to house the large number of per-course instructors. This fall, we have had to assign three per-course instructors to virtually every per-course office. To make this as palatable as possible, we have made every effort to match instructors with very different teaching schedules.

On April 5, 2007, the English Department held a roundtable in which we considered our status and goals. During that meeting, a session on first-year concerns was set up. At that session, held on April 24, it was moved “that the English Department offer only one three credit-hour course, in multiple, varied manifestations for all first-year students at Memorial and that a second course be offered for potential English majors and minors only.” (The reduction of the course requirement from two to one and the creation of a first-year course designed specifically for English majors and honours students were recommendations of the 2003 APR.) The motion was passed unanimously at the departmental conference on first-year courses and was later ratified at the April 26, 2007 regular departmental meeting. All members of the Department were invited to submit course proposals. All these courses would have in common an “emphasis on critical reading and writing: analyzing texts, framing and using questions, constructing essays, organizing paragraphs, quoting and documenting, revising and editing.”

We realized that the reduction of the general requirement from six credit hours to three credit hours of first-year English would be a long process since so many departments, faculties, and schools would be involved, but we hoped to implement this change within a year. The proposal, however, was halted at the Office of the Dean of Arts. We were not permitted to put this change into effect at that time. This change, however, remains as one solution to the Department’s heavy reliance on per-course instruction and the large financial commitment from the Faculty of Arts and the University as a whole. We had hoped that the varied nature of the courses, linked by the component of critical reading and writing, would enliven the First-year Program and heighten the engagement of faculty in first-year teaching.

If the former strategy is not possible, a smaller change would be to broaden the base of English 1080 to make it more readily distinguished from the high school courses with which our students are familiar. At the same time, we would like to redesign the second-semester English courses to provide more varied and challenging experiences for the students and to provide an opportunity for individual instructors to explore more personal approaches and material in their teaching of all first-year English courses. To this end, the Department has begun to collect course proposals for genre or topic courses. It is no surprise that the proposals collected thus far bear witness to the rich diversity of our faculty members. Members of the Department agree that such options may increase student interest in the courses and better distinguish first-year university English courses from high school offerings in English in addition to making the second semester courses more varied and exciting.

## 5.4 Threats

### Financial restraints and larger classes

In the 2003 Academic Program Review the first recommendation of the review committee was: “Institutional commitment requires institutional funding. If the University community is committed to improving the level of critical reading and writing among undergraduates, then the University must be willing to pay for it. The requirement applies across the University and the burden of meeting that requirement should not be shouldered by the Department of English alone. Funding must be increased to pay for at least eight to ten [emphasis mine] new full-time faculty positions in the Department. This would ensure that full-time faculty were involved in the first-year courses, as many have demanded, and also that the teaching responsibilities in the Departmental program are met.”

This did not happen. The Department has had new hires, but these have been replacement positions, not new, additional positions. We can only assume that this non-action is the result not of unwillingness to support the above-stated commitment “to improving the level of critical reading and writing among undergraduates” but rather the result of financial difficulties of the Faculty of Arts.

In this period of financial restraint, there are explicit and implicit demands for increased class sizes. In the interest of assessing the pedagogical value and practical logistics associated with alternate modes of English 1080 course delivery, the Department devised an English 1080 pilot project that was delivered in Fall 2007. This was the second such pilot project conducted by the department on the viability of presenting first-year English in large classes. The first, conducted in 1992, had results similar to those of the more recent one.

The 2007 pilot section of English 1080 had an enrollment of one hundred students. Fifty-minute lectures took place twice a week and were complemented with weekly 50-minute seminar discussions of 25 students. This format, with its large class size and mixed modes of delivery, was in response to constant pressure to consider increasing English 1080 class sizes.

Logistically, however, the English 1080 pilot project was not an attractive model for a number of reasons:

- The allocation of time slots and the booking of rooms for the full delivery of the course (2 lectures per week plus 4 seminar discussions of 25 students per week) were issues that caused much difficulty as indicated by the bulk of emails between the instructor and the two tutors that span three months.
- The current system of registration could not accommodate combined lecture/tutorial project, thus constraining the Department in its mode of delivery.

- For the English 1080 pilot course, the Department of English paid 3 instructors to teach the equivalent of 2.17 sections of English 1080 as they are currently being delivered.
- The organization and administration of the pilot course was cumbersome and time-consuming.

Pedagogically, there were also a number of difficulties:

- The tutorials generally had lower attendance than the lectures. This may be due to a number of different factors, none of which can be assessed with any degree of certainty.
- The three course instructors invested a large amount of time in consultation on issues of general course management, such as grading schemes, draft assignments, division of labor, class schedule, etc.
- The two tutors were responsible for all the readings, attended every lecture, conducted two tutorial sessions per week, and helped with the grading. Consequently, they invested much more time into the English 1080 pilot project than demanded of a per-course instructor of a regular English 1080 section.

Pedagogically, students were neither advantaged nor disadvantaged by the course changes. However, considering that little changed pedagogically with the English 1080 pilot project and that much was lost both logistically and economically, the project ultimately corroborates the Department's conviction that small class sizes are more beneficial to students, faculty, and the University at large. This belief has been confirmed overwhelmingly by the responses of both faculty and students in the sessions conducted in preparation for the Teaching and Learning Framework.

Another concern with the lecture/tutorial construct of this project was the potential impact it could have on our PhD Teaching-Fellow program.

### **Faculty disengagement**

There is a waning engagement of faculty with first-year courses. Nearly all course remissions are "cashed in" as first-year courses. This is not because faculty members fail to recognize the need for a solid block of courses at first year, nor that they fail to see that these courses can change reluctance to enthusiasm for English in first-year students. Rather, many faculty members find the courses, as they are currently constituted, too rigid and stultifying and would rather see them as opportunities to explore—with joy—their own interests, to share their enthusiasm with the students. They recognize that it is their responsibility not only to teach the rudiments of critical reading, thinking, and writing but also to allow the students to experience the joys of literature by offering different courses to different constituencies. The disinclination to teach these courses felt by some could easily be overcome if the program included more varied courses, linked by the component of critical reading and writing. The former aspect would increase student and faculty engagement and the latter would provide the necessary equity among the many sections.

## **6.0 Language Studies**

### **6.1 Specialized Major in Language**

At the time of the last Academic Program Review (2003), the Department was struggling to maintain the specialty major in Language, but we were experiencing increasing difficulties in doing so. Some of the reasons for this are documented in the self-study for that review. Since that time, English 2390 and 3650 have ceased to be prerequisites for entry to the B.Ed. (Primary/Elementary), although they are still required for the degree. At the same time, we lost several of our faculty who taught primarily in the language stream. The result is that this major has not had a student in recent years. It appears to be time to discontinue offering this major and remove it from the University Calendar.

### **6.2 English as a Second Language**

In the late 1970s the Departments of English and Linguistics conducted a survey of Newfoundland and Labrador to determine the need for English as a Second Language instruction at Memorial. As a result of the survey, which demonstrated a demand, our Department designed ESL courses and hired a specialist jointly with Linguistics. Since that time, the demand for ESL English courses has expanded steadily as the number of students arriving at Memorial from non-English speaking countries has increased. By the time of the last APR, an ESL unit was emerging for the University under the auspices of the Faculty of Arts. Two basic programs are now available: a non-credit Intensive English program (IE); and a number of first-year ESL English courses, which are accepted by all schools and faculties as satisfying the first-year English requirement. Since 2009, the Intensive English ESL program and the ESL unit have been relocated to Spencer Hall, and the IE program is run under the direction of the ESL Director, Janet Benger, as an autonomous unit reporting to the Dean of Arts. Since 1999, the Faculty of Arts has offered a Diploma in Teaching English as a Second Language. Our departmental involvement lies with the ESL English courses and the Diploma program.

The English Department offers and administers four ESL courses: English 102F (a non-credit foundation course), 1020, 1021, and 9992 (non-credit ESL English instruction for graduate students) in cooperation and consultation with the ESL Director. English 1020 and English 1021 are widely accepted across the University as fulfilling the requirement for two first-year English courses. Students can register for these courses only after taking a placement test administered by the ESL unit under the supervision of the Director.

The English Department has also, when asked, set up and run ESL courses using the same curriculum and course materials that we use in St. John's for the Marine Institute at two campuses in China, usually by hiring trained instructors and sending them to teach at these institutions. Students taking these courses in China register as Memorial University students. In 2009-10 we were able to locate suitably qualified people already living in China to teach these courses.

Our 2003 self-study indicated that this area was one of rapid growth and since then it has proven to be so. We are now offering up to eight sections of the ESL courses each Fall and Winter semester with at least four sections offered every Spring term.

Enrollment has increased from a total of 108 ESL undergraduate students taught in 2002-03 (the year of the last APR) to a number well over 350 in the past two academic years. This represents an increase of over 300%. Although there are graduate students taking English 9992 each semester, the number and names of these students are not reported in the Registrar's files, so we cannot give the actual numbers. Suffice it to say, the Department of English has provided two sections of English 9992 in each of the last three semesters and had to offer two sections in Fall 2009, as well. We also provided a section of English 102F for graduate students in Winter 2011. The increase in graduate students needing ESL training has at least doubled since 2003. (See Appendix E.)

### **Challenges**

In 2009-10, the number of students registering for English 1020 and English 1021, the first-year English composition courses, increased beyond the cap of 25. Instructors were very concerned even by the cap of 25, but increasing class size beyond this generated a crisis. With the cooperation of the Office of the Dean of Arts, the Department has lowered the caps for these courses to 17 students per section. This has proven much more satisfactory pedagogically, but it has also meant that we are now hiring more instructors. Such instructors are not always easy to locate, and once located, not always easy to accommodate in offices.

There is no tenured or tenure-track faculty member with expertise in ESL working with the ESL Director to oversee and participate in these courses. This has been the case since Dr. Irene Mazurkewich retired in 2002. That the courses work as well as they do is a testimony to the dedication and commitment of the Director of ESL and the per-course instructors who do the teaching.

The fact that students are placed in the appropriate classes following completion of placement tests administered on campus often means that the hiring of ESL instructors happens very late. This situation is problematic, but as the students are not available before early September, it is also unavoidable.

There are also students who sidestep the testing process and register for English 1080. These students are often not discovered until several weeks into the semester and by that time it is impossible to place them in the more appropriate ESL sections. This situation is distressing for both the students and the faculty member.

### **6.3 English Language Research Centre (ELRC)**

As the 2003 self-study records, the English Language Research Centre evolved out of the "Dictionary Room," the room set aside for the files and work on *The Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, edited by Drs. George M. Story, William Kirwin, and John



Widdowson. The ELRC continues the tradition of studying Newfoundland language usage begun in the 1950s and culminating in the publication of the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*. Now housed in AA3019, the ELRC has expanded both its research focus and capabilities.

Since 1999, an updated and expanded *Dictionary* has been available online—it is a significant document of, and contribution to, Newfoundland culture and Newfoundland studies. Currently operating under an interdisciplinary management committee representing the Departments of English, Folklore, and Linguistics, all members of the committee are actively involved in research on Newfoundland English. One of Committee's major projects was to work toward the establishment of an interdisciplinary Tier I CRC position in Regional language and oral text. This project was successful.

Since the last APR, the ELRC has worked on the project of transforming its archives, along with some of those of its sister centre, the Memorial University of Newfoundland Folklore and Language Archive (MUNFLA), into digital formats. The first of these projects, entitled the *Dictionary of Newfoundland English Word-file Digitization Project* ([www.yaffle.ca/a/viewProject/id/1258](http://www.yaffle.ca/a/viewProject/id/1258)) makes available the untapped information in the ELRC's collection of over 100,000 lexical file cards, of which only about one third were used for the *Dictionary*. A second project, the online Dialect Atlas of Newfoundland and Labrador English (DANL) makes widely available, in an interactive format, not only the regional distribution of local word usages but also word pronunciation and grammar (<http://www.yaffle.ca/a/view/Project/id/aa7/>). Once completed, DANL will be one of only a handful of online linguistic atlases in the English-speaking world.

In March 2010, the ELRC, in conjunction with the QEII Library's Digital Archive Initiative (DAI), officially launched Memorial's first original e-publication, *The Reminiscences of J.P. Howley*, edited by ELRC researchers Patrick O'Flaherty, William Kirwin, and Robert Hollett. In the same year, Sandra Clarke, a researcher with the ELRC, published *Newfoundland and Labrador English* with the Edinburgh University Press's Dialects of English series. Another continuing ELRC publication is *Regional Language Studies...Newfoundland*, available online.

When Professor Robert Hollett became Head in 2003, his office became the primary work area for the numerous students employed by the ELRC as transcribers and researchers, through a variety of grants, including MUCEP, SWASP, ISWEP grants as well as Graduate Assistantships. In addition to these grants, the ELRC has received financial support from the Office of the Dean of Arts, the Vice-President (Research), and over \$30,000 in grants from ISER and the J.R. Smallwood Centre. In 2011, the ELRC partnered with DELTS and won a SSHRC Public Outreach Grant of \$162,000 to transform the online DANL atlas into a fully interactive site. The management committee has submitted another grant application for \$198,000 to the Canada Interactive Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

Work is ongoing with such topics as Newfoundland and Labrador place names, family names, and proverbs and sayings. There is also the more recent work started by research

assistant Jenny Higgins, who created the blog “Twig” <http://twignl.wordpress.com> —a site grounded in traditional vocabulary from the DNE collection and which has met with a great deal of public interest.

The biggest problem for the future of the ELRC lies within the Academic departments themselves, including the English Department. With the recent retirement of Robert Hollett, the English Department has no full-time faculty member with a commitment to the goals and projects of the ELRC (the one English Department dialectologist is on long-term disability leave). With the problems of space and overcrowding, it is becoming increasingly difficult to hold on to the space presently occupied by the ELRC. (See Appendix E.)

## 7.0 Intellectual Life

### 7.1 Preamble

The 2003 APR covered the historical information regarding many departmental initiatives and events, but the intervening eight years have seen significant changes in the Department. Faculty research and scholarship is the foundation of the Department’s intellectual life. (See Appendix F.)

### 7.2 Research, Publishing, and Scholarship

Since the last APR in 2003, the Department has experienced a constant expansion in research activities as it joins the University in its initiative to increase its research profile (see University Research Plan). Since then, research in the Department is even more strongly encouraged and research activities and achievements celebrated. Recent initiatives that testify to the Department's commitment to research include:

- the striking of a research committee in 2010;
- the launch of the *Uncorked Speaker Series*;
- updates to the research portion of the departmental website, including increased visibility through personal web pages for faculty members, up-to-date publication listings, as well as research clusters (<http://www.mun.ca/english/research/>); and,
- the creation and publicising of 10 research clusters according to faculty specializations and research interests:
  - American
  - Canadian
  - Colonial and Postcolonial
  - Contemporary, Creative
  - Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century
  - Medieval and Early Modern
  - Newfoundland
  - North Atlantic
  - Studies of Visual Narrative

There is a constant increase of research output by faculty members in the Department, as witnessed by the growing number of publications of both scholarly and creative work. Our Research and Publications page testifies not only to the dynamic, eclectic nature of our faculty members' research output, but also to its quality. Faculty members have published monographs in both English and French, edited volumes for both academic publishers and established journals, and published scholarly work in national and international journals, specialized edited volumes and collections, as well as in reputable newspapers. Several scholarly articles by faculty members have been reprinted, a further testament to their impact.

The creative work by faculty members is reputed across Canada and abroad. Publishing in a large variety of genres, creative writers in the Department of English are featured in Canadian literature anthologies and in anthologies devoted to a particular genre or period, national and international literary journals, collections of literature, and literary newspaper supplements. Several of our faculty members have won awards for their creative work and have been interviewed for national as well as international audiences.

Research funding has also significantly increased since the last APR. As stated on page 38 of this self-study, research monies through external funding agencies such as SSHRC have increased 809% since 2005. In 2005, it was a total of \$19,300, whereas in 2010 it was \$175,496. Annually, faculty members in our department secure a significant number of internal grants, such as travel monies to present their research findings at national and international conferences, Vice-President Research Grants to continue their research projects uninterrupted, and creative grants to complete creative writing projects.

In addition to securing research funding, members of our department have been very successful in securing research time allowances, either through the Faculty of Arts or the MUNFA Collective Agreement. These competitions for research time allowances grant the applicant a course remission to devote more time to meeting their research goals.

### **7.3 Strengths**

#### **Creative**

Building on our long and fruitful relationship with the artistic community of Newfoundland and Labrador, the Department continues to devote time, energy, and resources to creative initiatives established in the past. Described in detail in the previous APR, such initiatives include: the Pratt Lecture, the Canada Council Writer in Residencies, the Canada Council Visiting Writer Series, and the Gregory J. Power Poetry Competition. In 2008, the Department revived the Jeroboam Poetry Prize, established by the founding members of the student publishing house Jeroboam to honour a poem with a subject unique to Newfoundland and Labrador.

A new and successful initiative now entering its third year is the SPARKS Literary Festival, spearheaded by Mary Dalton, which brings in both established and emerging

writers from across the province for a full-day festival in January. The first two festivals saw standing-room-only crowds and selected readings were broadcast on CBC/NL radio. The festival has stimulated a considerable degree of interest in our creative writing program; one tangible manifestation is the recent endowment of a \$2500 award for a creative writing student of outstanding accomplishment.

Faculty members and students in the Department of English are active literary artists. *The Artificial Newfoundlander* by Larry Mathews, *This Ramshackle Tabernacle* by Samuel Martin, and *Red Ledger* by Mary Dalton, are some of the more recent publications.

The Department supports creative endeavours in addition to the literary arts. Faculty are intimately involved with the local theatre scene, designing sets for the NLAC Awards and various plays, including Robert Chafe's *Momentum* and Gordon Pinsent's *Easy Down Easy* (the premiere production at the newly renovated LSPU Hall). The Diploma program in Performance and Communications Media mounts regular productions as part of its curriculum. Covering both theatre and film production, students in the Diploma have gone on to successful careers in film, television, radio, and theatre. Instructors in the Diploma, both tenured faculty and per-course, are all industry professionals.

### **Conferences and speaker series**

Faculty, graduate students, and undergraduate students have all hosted conferences at Memorial University. Every year since 2007, faculty have hosted a major international conference. Additionally, the undergraduate English students society (MESS) hosted the Annual Atlantic Undergraduate English Conference in 2003 and also inaugurated For the Love of Literature, an annual conference of their own design. Clearly, bringing in students and scholars from around the world to discuss current issues and ideas is a vital part of any department's intellectual life. The following conferences have been hosted by the Department of English Language and Literature since our last APR in 2003:

- Annual Atlantic Undergraduate English Conference (2003)
- Canadian Association for Irish Studies (2007)
- Canadian Association of American Studies (2008)
- International Society of Anglo-Saxonists (2009)
- For the Love of Literature (annual undergraduate conference; 2009, 2010, 2011)
- Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies (2010)

In 2005, Jamie Skidmore was the technical director and production manager for the Magnetic North Theatre Festival (the largest English language curated theatre festival in Canada).

Another new initiative is the Uncorked Speaker Series, brainchild of the newly formed Research Committee, designed specifically to reinvigorate the departmental colloquia. The three speakers in the 2010-11 year were invited from the Department of History, the Archives Division of The Rooms, and the QEII Library. Their well-attended lectures

were designed to bring research ideas and opportunities into the Department from diverse perspectives.

### **Publications**

The Department's research page lists faculty publications since 2008 ([www.mun.ca/english/research](http://www.mun.ca/english/research)), part of an ambitious project to make the full range of research undertaken by members of the Department available online. Accordingly, this report will highlight our publishing ventures. Jennifer Lokash has recently inaugurated *At the Edge*, an open-access journal devoted to 19th-century graduate student scholarship; its second issue, guest edited by Andrew Loman, is nearing publication (<http://journals.library.mun.ca/ate/>). Established in the late 1990s, but recently enduring some years of attrition, the interdisciplinary graduate-student journal *postscript* is now enjoying a renaissance as an open-access online journal through the integrated efforts of faculty, graduate students, and the QEII Library.

An undergraduate venture that could easily have been listed as one of our creative strengths is Paragon Press. First conceived in Fall 2007 by Paul S. Fowler and Lacey Decker, Paragon is a publication venue and a learning tool for creative writers studying at Memorial. Since the publication of the first edition of the journal in 2008, they have published three further editions of *Paragon Journal*, as well as a collection of non-fiction essays entitled *Telling Truth* and a collection of poetry entitled *Tangerine Parallelograms*.

### **Media and communications**

The newly established Research Committee, dedicated to fostering and publicizing research in the Department, organized the new Uncorked Speaker Series, alerted faculty to research opportunities like the Terra Nova Young Innovator Award, and began to revitalize the Department's web presence. The committee has posted faculty publications since 2008 on our Research page, and spearheaded a university-wide initiative to establish individual faculty webpages. The Research Committee is integral to a department-wide effort to better convey the variety of our intellectual life and to bring other perspectives into communication with us.

The Graduate Coordinator is now listing forthcoming graduate courses well in advance of the semester in which they are taught, the better to inform current and prospective students of the character of our graduate program. One of the outcomes of our recent departmental forum on our graduate programs was to update and send out promotional materials to Canadian universities.

### **Visiting scholars**

The Department attracts visiting scholars who contribute meaningfully to our intellectual life. The Pratt Lecture remains the signature departmental event, and in the past eight years has brought scholars and writers from across the country to the university

community. (The publication of the Pratt Lecture, which has been part of the lecture's mandate since the 1960s, is now in the hands of a local small-press book publisher, Running the Goat, which specializes in handmade editions.) The internationally acclaimed, award-winning poet Don McKay came as a Writer-in-Residence in Winter 2008, and has remained in the community; he is currently an adjunct professor in the Department. Silke Horstkotte, a Privatdozentin at the University of Leipzig, won the John F. Diefenbaker Award to work at Memorial University for a year in 2009. She came to the University thanks to the support of the Department and the efforts of Nancy Pedri, her collaborator on a project exploring focalization in graphic narrative; she enriched the intellectual life of our department through regular contact with students and faculty and through two departmental presentations (on *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and *Maus*). Postdoctoral students of the past 3 years include Nancy Earle (in 2008-09) and Rebecca Graff-McRae (2010-11). A visiting scholar of note is Dr. Maria Jesus Hérnaez Lerena (Universidad de La Rioja, Spain) who has come for four of the past five years to Memorial with Department of English support. Her research collaborations with our faculty come to fruition in 2012 with the publication of her edited volume, *Pathways of Creativity in Contemporary Newfoundland and Labrador* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing).

### **Student societies**

The Department has two student societies, one serving undergraduate students (MESS) and one serving graduate students (EGS). In the past several years members of MESS have launched *Paragon* (the literary journal) and the For the Love of Literature annual conference. Members of EGS are converting the graduate journal */postscript/* into an open-access journal. More details on their contributions to the Department are in the sections devoted to Undergraduate and Graduate programs.

### **7.4 Weaknesses**

Individual faculty members are constantly engaged in aspects of the Department's intellectual life. What is lacking is some mechanism through which faculty learn about, promote, and disseminate their individual activities. We do not always know what our colleagues are doing, even though we have a sense that there is a lot of activity. The formalization of a faculty publications page has been a revelation to many of us regarding our colleagues' scholarly activity. Clearly the current energy devoted to the departmental webpage and individual sites is a step in the right direction, but we are open to other suggestions.

### **7.5 Threats**

A vitiating influence on the Department's intellectual life is faculty exhaustion: the time constraints on faculty to manage and promote all of the events are extensive, and given all the other burdens on faculty and declining faculty numbers, these events are accordingly under threat.

A second major difficulty in fostering our intellectual life is the dearth of funding. The major endowment that supports the Pratt Lecture has been exhausted; the funds to send undergraduates to conferences like the Atlantic Undergraduate English Conference are nonexistent, requiring us to scrounge for annoyingly petty sums. Financial support for all elements of the Department's intellectual life is inadequate yet still under siege.

## **7.6 Opportunities**

As a first measure we must continue to appeal to the administration for reliable and adequate funding. But we can also try to seize on opportunities that do not require substantial finances. For instance, we can seek more postdoctoral fellowships and more rigorously pursue Fulbright enquiries and connections, because such funding is external to the Department. We can also further develop the website—which requires chiefly an investment of faculty time—and judiciously develop more open-access journals (which have no printing costs). We can also engage students more consistently in activities that faculty are now organizing and championing, not only to alleviate time burdens on faculty, but also to bring students in on a more regular basis (using social media like Facebook more consistently). We might consider celebrating our achievements more consistently as well. Combining the annual event of introducing new students to the Department with a celebration of departmental scholarly and creative achievement would go a long way to achieving some of these goals.

## **8.0 Outreach**

### **8.1 Preamble**

Although not strictly part of our academic programs, outreach is a vital part of our professional lives. In our department, Memorial University's special commitment to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador manifests itself not only in our teaching and research but also in contributions to local communities that benefit from faculty expertise. As part of our service to the profession, we regularly serve on the boards of academic associations and national associations such as the Canada Council for the Arts, CAUT, SSHRC, and ACCUTE, work as peer reviewers and editors for journals and publishers, and perform other academic service work as part of the myriad aspects of our profession. These efforts increase our department's profile and enhance its reputation, and they cement our roles in the community and the profession. (For the details of faculty contributions, please see *curricula vitae*.)

### **8.2 University**

Our department makes valuable contributions to the University as a whole. As our CVs testify, we serve on numerous committees, evaluating candidacies for promotion and tenure in other departments, serving on search committees, adjudicating internal grant applications, and otherwise contributing to the vitality of the institution.

We contribute administratively, pedagogically, and ceremonially. One of our professors is the current Dean of Graduate Studies, and another served until recently as President of MUNFA. One of our faculty served as a consultant to the Queen Elizabeth II Library as it sought to develop its collection of sixteenth-century rare books, and another chairs the Advisory Committee on Sustainability (advising the University's Sustainability Coordinator, Toby Rowe). Faculty regularly supervise students and give lectures in Memorial University's innovative Master's in Humanities program. A recent retiree from our department, Shane O'Dea, is the University's Public Orator, and a member of the Department, Annette Staveley, is Deputy Orator; both regularly give orations at University Convocation.

### 8.3 City

Faculty are intimately involved with the local theatre and film scenes. A member of our department founded the MUN Cinema Series in 1991, dedicated to bringing alternative and festival-circuit films to the city; this series fills the void of a repertory movie theatre in St. John's. One of our faculty regularly designs sets for local productions, most recently for Robert Chafe's *Momentum* and Gordon Pinsent's *Easy Down Easy* (the premiere production at the newly renovated LSPU Hall). In 2011, a member of the Department was co-founder of the Document Theatre Collective, dedicated to the writing and production of documentary plays: DTC has staged two readings since September and has applied for NLAC funding for a full production. Members of the Department regularly review local theatre productions: Rob Ormsby is the founder and principal reviewer at drama.ca, and Gordon Jones continues in retirement to contribute play reviews to the *Telegram* (the principal local newspaper). Members of our department also take roles in local film and theatre productions.

In 2010 the Office of the Dean of Arts inaugurated the SPARKS Literary Festival, founded and directed by Mary Dalton. This festival brings both established and emerging writers from across the province for a full-day festival in January. The first two festivals drew standing-room-only crowds; selected readings were broadcast on CBC/NL radio.

Members of our department sit on the boards of the following institutions: the Newfoundland Literary Arts Foundation, the Resource Centre for the Arts, the Rooms Corporation, the St. John's Status of Women Council, and the Winterset in Summer Literary Festival (among others). A member of the Department sits on the Advisory Committee of the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland.

Faculty routinely give interviews on CBC Radio, write regular columns for local newspapers, act as judges on local writing competitions, and give readings in local venues.

### 8.4 Newfoundland and Labrador

Faculty in our department involve themselves in a range of outreach activities at the provincial level. In 2009, a member of our department founded Piper's Frith: Writing at



Kilmory, a workshop that provides emerging writers from across the continent with the mentorship of eminent local writers like Joan Clark, Michael Crummey, Mary Dalton, Jessica Grant, Don McKay, and Kevin Major. Our faculty regularly participate in literary festivals like the Writers at Woody Point festival in Bonne Bay and the March Hare Literary Festival in Corner Brook; and since 2007, a member of our department has annually hosted the “New Voices” panel at the Winterset Awards in Eastport. Members of the Department have served as judges of the Newfoundland Book Awards. In 2010, a member of our department traveled to Boyd’s Cove Beothuk Interpretation Centre to share her research. Creative writers in the Department regularly travel across the province reading their work and mentoring new writers;

### **8.5 Canada**

Faculty in our department have involved themselves enthusiastically in national outreach activities.

Our faculty serve in administrative positions and as assessors for national organizations like ACCUTE, the Canada Council for the Arts, CAUT, and SSHRC. A member of our department serves as the current president of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, sits on the executive of the Northeast Association of Graduate Studies, and is on the Board of Directors of the Writers Federation of Canada. A member of the Department is on the Board of Directors of the Canadian Association of Learned Journals, of the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences, and of the Cultural Human Resources Council. A member of the faculty serves on the National Fellowships Committee of the Canadian Federation of University Women.

Faculty are on the executives of scholarly societies that include the Canadian Association of American Studies, the Canadian Association of Irish Studies, the Canadian Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, and the International Society of Anglo-Saxonists. A member of the Department serves as Chair of the prize committee for the Canadian Society of Medievalists.

We have frequently acted as external assessors at other campuses. A member of the Department has given 16 grievance workshops since 2003; she has also served as a sideperson in Faculty Association Arbitrations at the University of New Brunswick.

In 2005, Jamie Skidmore was the technical director and production manager for the Magnetic North Theatre Festival (the largest English language curated theatre festival in Canada).

### **8.6 International**

A member of our faculty currently serves as Honorary Consul for France in St. John’s and has served as a member of the Sectoral Advisory Group on International Trade (Cultural Industries) in the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

Our faculty act as referees and readers for the following journals, all of which have international readerships: *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, *Canadian Literature*, *Children's Literature*, *Essays on Canadian Writing*, *Journal of the European Association for Studies on Australia*, *Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*, *Oculus: Postgraduate Journal of Visual Arts Research*, *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*, and others. Our faculty have served as editors or on the editorial board of journals like *At the Edge*, *Carlyle Studies Annual*, *Heroic Age*, and *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies*.

Members of the Department have been visiting scholars at institutions like the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center in Austin, Texas, the *Université Michel de Montaigne Bordeaux 3*, and the University of La Rioja in Spain.

A member of our department inaugurated the St. John's International Women's Film Festival, which has recently completed its 22<sup>nd</sup> season. This festival brings films and filmmakers from across the globe to St. John's, and has contributed substantially to the province's international profile and immeasurably to the cultural richness of St. John's.

## 9.0 Administration

### 9.1 How We Make Decisions

Like other academic departments, we have considerable freedom in some areas and very little in others. On paper, at least, the decision-making is hierarchical; the Head signs off on all decisions, but, in reality, there is extensive consultation on virtually all matters.

The kinds of decisions the Head can make are limited by the institutional structure and are of two kinds: academic and non-academic. The areas of faculty complement and budgeting are set by the Office of the Dean of Arts. The most we can do is present arguments for increases in faculty or overall budget. The terms and conditions of employment for faculty are set by the Collective Agreements pertaining to teaching faculty: the MUNFA, LUMUN, and TAUMUN Collective Agreements. The Head may remain a member of MUNFA, but is not a member of the MUNFA bargaining unit. (See Appendix G for the departmental budget and LUMUN/TAUMUN Collective Agreements.)

#### Hiring Decisions

Hiring decisions for tenure-track faculty are made in consultation with Departmental Search Committees established for the specific search under the provisions of the MUNFA Collective Agreement and members of the Department at large. Hiring decisions for contract faculty are made in consultation with the Departmental General Search Committee established under the MUNFA Collective Agreement for that purpose. Such faculty may be hired as regular or full-term contracts (twelve months) or as

teaching-term contracts (eight months or four months). Search committees are advisory, and final decisions are made by the Head.

The procedure for hiring per-course instructors is considerably different as they fall under either the LUMUN Agreement (two courses for one term) or the TAUMUN Agreement (usually PhD students teaching one course in a term to a maximum of two semesters a year). These hiring decisions are made by the Head in accordance with the provisions of the LUMUN and TAUMUN Collective Agreements, and the recommendations are forwarded to Faculty Relations who do the actual hiring. As indicated in the First-year Studies section of this self-study, the details of these agreements complicate and constrain departmental hiring decisions. The full agreements can be found at:

[http://www.mun.ca/humanres/LUMUN\\_CA.pdf](http://www.mun.ca/humanres/LUMUN_CA.pdf)

[http://www.mun.ca/facultyrelations/TAUMUN\\_CA\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.mun.ca/facultyrelations/TAUMUN_CA_FINAL.pdf)

The way in which the hiring decisions governed by the LUMUN agreement are legislated may have serious deleterious repercussions on our PhD program, as one of the more attractive ways in which we provide PhD funding is through teaching fellowships. These fellowships offer PhD students the opportunity to teach classes for which they assume full faculty responsibility. Graduate teaching fellows do not compete with other per-course instructors for the positions to which they are appointed. The LUMUN Agreement limits the number of such fellowships we can give in any given year to a ratio of graduate student appointments to regular per-course appointments from the previous year. Any decrease in the number of graduate students teaching in a given year has a negative impact on the number of teaching fellows permitted the following year.

### **Promotions and tenure and administrative decisions**

Decisions about promotion and tenure are made in consultation with the Departmental Promotion and Tenure Committee established under the terms of the MUNFA Collective Agreement. Reports from this Committee initially go to the Head, then to the Dean and the Head's Advisory Council, and finally to the Vice-President (Academic). The final decision rests with the Vice-President (Academic).

Administrative decisions such as the teaching plan for the Department (including graduate course assignments) and arrangements with other departments are made by the Head.

### **Academic decisions: workload**

The specific nature of faculty workload is left to the Head; all courses are assigned by the Head in consultation with individual faculty. The standard workload for regular faculty in this Department is five courses per academic year, although variances from that workload may be granted through the Office of the Dean of Arts under the provisions of the MUNFA Collective Agreement, and under other special circumstances. Graduate courses of four or more students form part of regular workload. Supervisions (for Honours essays

and MA and PhD theses, etc.) are assigned by the Head but do not figure directly into this course load. Under the MUNFA Collective Agreement, there is a course-equivalencies policy through which faculty are compensated for supervisions with either banked teaching time or research funds.

### **New courses and/or programs**

Department decisions regarding programs, new courses, and other issues are arrived at through forms of precedent and collegial consultation via committees, usually at regularly scheduled departmental meetings.

### **Graduate Program**

Matters relating to the Graduate Program are decided upon by the Head in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). The Head appoints the Graduate Coordinator in consultation with the Department. The Graduate Coordinator has the primary responsibility for overseeing (with clerical help from the general office) the programs of the graduate students and for working with the GSC to recruit new graduate students, but has no responsibility for the graduate workload or other issues. The GSC reviews applications and makes recommendations to the Graduate Coordinator for acceptances (and rejections) and works with students in the preparation of grant applications.

### **Undergraduate Program**

Changes to the Undergraduate Program typically take the following route: a proposal is sent to the relevant departmental committee, and then:

- to the Department;
- to the Office of the Dean of Arts for consultations;
- to the Arts Undergraduate Studies Committee;
- to the Faculty of Arts Council;
- to the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies; and finally
- to Senate.

Individual course changes do not need approval of the Senate. Special Topics courses need only approval of the Arts Undergraduate Studies Committee. Regular calendar changes need the approval of the Senate Undergraduate Committee.

### **Non-academic decisions**

The administration of non-academic matters such as budgetary details for the Department, oversight of the research funds, PDTER funds, and banked-time of faculty members, as well as the oversight of non-academic staff is the responsibility of the Administrative Staff Specialist III who acts in consultation with the Head. Decisions regarding improvements to the physical plant, including equipment replacement, are

made by the Administrative Staff Specialist III in consultation with the Head and the Office of the Dean of Arts. Hiring decisions for office replacement positions are undertaken by the Administrative Staff Specialist III in consultation with the Head, the Office of the Dean of Arts, and Human Resources. Allocations of office space for regular faculty are made by the Head following precedent. Office allocations for other instructors are made by the Administrative Staff Specialist III and the Manager of Academic Programs. Full details are in the Policy and Procedures Manual (see Appendix G).

## **9.2 Administrative Support**

On the whole, the Department of English has adequate administrative support for a department of its size. The English Department general office, located in A3026, houses the Head of the Department and four other employees. The business of the office is currently attended to by the Head, the Administrative Staff Specialist III (Ms Gina Billiard), the secretary to the Head (Ms Tracy Hedd), and two Intermediate Clerk Stenographers (Ms Brenda Smith and Ms Maureen Battcock). Ms Battcock is temporarily replacing Ms Rhonda Dalton while she is on maternity leave.

Since the last APR, the Department was able to acquire an Administrative Staff Specialist III, Ms Gina Billard. She has a separate office, which is quite adequate. In addition to all the responsibilities assigned by the Department of English (and these responsibilities include management of the Reid Theatre), she had been expected to undertake considerable responsibilities for the Office of the Dean of Arts, including the administrative overseeing of all multidisciplinary programs in the Faculty of Arts. Fortunately, as of September 2011, Ms Billard's responsibilities have been solely to the Department of English.

Since the last APR we have tried to resolve the problems of supervising the large First-year and Undergraduate Programs in the appointment, first, of an Academic Program Officer (APO) who had both administrative and teaching responsibilities. This combination proved unworkable and the APO left the position in June 2009. We then created the position of Manager of Academic Programs (MAP). The MAP has administrative duties, but no teaching responsibilities. Removing the teaching responsibility from the position and its subsequent re-forming as Manager of Academic Programs has clarified the staff nature of the position, but the lack of involvement in teaching poses a different set of problems. (For the duties of the MAP, see Appendix G). The office of the MAP is situated in AA3022, a few doors away from the General Office.

All the staff in the Department of English are very hard working and dedicated. They deal with scores of faculty and student requests every day. All book orders, office allocations, exams, general correspondence, grant and budget management, management of the Reid Theatre, reportage of grades, and other matters related to approximately 4000 student registrations each semester as well as the needs of twenty-nine regular faculty, five or more contract faculty, six teaching fellows, and more than thirty per-course instructors are handled by the general office staff.

The Department of English is large; its course offerings and programs are varied, and its activities many. Maintaining an up-to-date and interesting website requires a significant time commitment and level of expertise. There is no single person for whom this website development and maintenance is a primary responsibility, yet we recognize that having a stellar website presence is very important, especially in the recruitment of students.

### **9.3 The Physical Plant**

The office staff have all been equipped with new workstations and updated equipment in the past several years. The Head's office needs new furniture.

We control one classroom (A3018), one seminar room (A3033), and the Seary Room (A3013). All of these rooms are in constant use until well into the evening as the courses in the Professional Writing and Creative Writing Diploma programs are usually taught in the evenings so that non-traditional students can access them readily.

Since the last APR, the acquisition of a common room for faculty has been of tremendous benefit in establishing more collegial meetings, especially at lunchtimes. We are, however, very pressed for space for our graduate and undergraduate students as well as basic storage or records, etc. Between 2005 and 2007, new furnishings were acquired for the Seminar Room, the Seary Room, and the MESS room. In 2010-11, the Seary Room was repainted and re-floored and outdated and falling-apart materials were eliminated. The removal of ancient files from the outer room created a new usable space for students to work on assignments, hold small meetings, or write make-up exams, even while the inner room is in use. This has been well received by students and faculty alike.

Our budget does not contain much in the way of funding for extra course materials, but we have had tremendous support from the Office of the Dean of Arts in getting most of the classrooms we use converted to "smart" classrooms. As a result we have more teaching flexibility and can make better use of the internet and multimedia.

The layout and condition of the physical plant that is the Department of English office remains an issue. Aesthetically, it is worse than ever. Several of our department spaces, including our common room, have serious leaks which have eluded repair with the result that we have missing ceiling tiles, and plastic tubing or garden hose running into waste cans, and, in all probability, burgeoning mold problems from the water-soaked carpeting—which is tattered and worn. This situation has been reported to Occupational Health and Safety, but there has been no response as yet. The Head's office is still too small, noisy, and dark, and the Secretary is not situated next to the Head. Furthermore, the Secretary does not have a private area in which to undertake matters that are confidential. Ideally the Head and Secretary should have individual offices adjoining the General Office.

In 2009-10 a major effort was made to refurbish the offices used by per-course instructors. Nevertheless, the computers in all of these per-course offices are outdated and

unreliable—usually cast-offs when faculty get new computers. These offices are also badly in need of painting and general refurbishment.

In general, it is increasingly difficult to find office space as the number of per-course appointments goes up. Since much of our teaching involves private tutorials and meetings with students we cannot put three or more people in a single office and expect the job satisfaction, student conferences, and respect for privacy to be easily accommodated. In an heroic effort to make this situation more bearable for those affected, the MAP and Administrative Staff Specialist III work very hard to match up per-course instructors who teach during opposite time periods, so that for most of the teaching hours the office is occupied by only one person.

The computers of many of our faculty are getting old and we are in need of a new computer initiative to keep up to date with technological change.

### **The Reid Theatre**

The 2003 APR self-study notes that after 1985, the Reid Theatre became part of the Department of English space, and management of bookings for the Reid has been undertaken by the Department ever since. The Reid Theatre is also used for certain courses in the Diploma in Performance and Communications Media. However, the 2003 report made clear the need for a funding initiative for serious maintenance and renovation of the theatre. Very little has changed except that, since that time, the condition of the Reid has continued to deteriorate. With its 400-seat capacity and splendid acoustics, the Reid has been a significant community resource since the opening of the Arts Building in 1961 as it is the only fully equipped theatre of its size in St John's. In 2007, Dr. Gordon Jones accurately described it as having "had a profound formative and transformative effect on theatre in St John's and on the lives of hundreds of individuals." What to do about the Reid remains an unresolved question and the deterioration of this once fine theatre continues to worsen. There is no money in the Department budget to undertake the kind of work needed to restore or even maintain the Reid; there is no money in the Arts budget for this either. A proposal for a major restoration, made in 2009, went as far as getting cost estimates from a firm of architects, but the amount needed is staggering to a faculty which is itself struggling to survive. There was one moment of hope in Fall 2010, when the renovation of the Reid Theatre was put forward as a University initiative; however, no funding has been forthcoming. While the Reid continues to be rented out to various community and university groups and/or functions, financially and practically it has become a University orphan. This is a great shame, as it is still the most significant location on campus for community outreach, and both University and community ceremonial events and shows. The Reid Theatre is an obvious candidate for endowment funding.

### **9.4 Cost Effectiveness**

Does the Department of English make the best possible use of the resources at its disposal? Is it, in this way, cost effective? The Fall 2010 University Fact Book reports:

- We have had 29 regular or tenure-track faculty since March 31, 2008.
- There were a total of 12,744 full- and part-time students registered on the St John's campus (including Distance Education students).
- The Department of English taught over 25% of the total number of students registered for the whole university in that semester.
- We had 461 full-time majors registered (no number is given for part-time).
- To these we can add close to 200 minors and approximately 100 students who are taking eight English courses to complete their focus area for their Primary/Elementary Education degrees (see Appendix G for the 2010 University Fact Book).

Furthermore:

In the 2011 Convocation, more than one third of the total Arts graduates were English majors and English students regularly comprise between one third and one quarter of the annual Faculty of Arts Dean's List.

The 2010 Academic Unit Profile (Appendix G) reports:

- The BA in English is the third most cost-effective degree in the Arts Faculty.
- An English degree costs the Arts Faculty \$32, 777, which is over \$12,000 less than the average Arts degree.
- Our ability to bring in money to the university through grants such as SSHRC has increased 809% since 2005. In 2005, the Department won a total of \$19,300.00, whereas in 2010 the amount won was \$175,496.00.

According to the 2010 University Fact Book, we have the third highest ratio of students to faculty in the Arts Faculty at 16.6 students per faculty member. If, however, one were to include first-year numbers measured against regular faculty, our ratio is 85.5:1 students per full-time faculty.

On the whole, we are doing a good job of retaining student numbers for the Arts Faculty. The fact remains, however, that the greater proportion of first-year teaching is undertaken by per-course instructors who are paid \$4572.00 or around \$107 per student, which is considerably less than the amount the Arts Faculty receives per student in budget allocations.

Cost effectiveness must take into account faculty complement. The 2003 APR recommended the Department get eight to ten new tenure-track hires. No such positions were created; indeed, since 2003 the Department has lost 11 faculty and hired 9 (one of whom is part-time). Thus, our current faculty complement is 2.5 less than it was in 2003. Some further statistics:

- number of 8-month contracts (2011-12): 6
- number of per-course instructors (including ESL0 2011-12): 36



- number of PhD Teaching Fellows (2011-12): 5
- average faculty complement from 2000 to 2007: 31
- faculty complement dictated by Dean of Arts in 2007: 29
- faculty complement in 2011: 29 — one on LTD, one seconded to SGS
- faculty departures since 2003 APR: 11
- new appointments (as opposed to replacement appointments): 0

While a case for cost effectiveness is clear, that effectiveness is vulnerable, and perilously so. If there is no immediate faculty renewal, then there is little to no chance of the Department maintaining its levels of research, teaching excellence, intellectual life, community involvement, and cost effectiveness.

### **10.0 Conclusion**

The Department of English is very cost effective. In Fall 2011, for example, we have an enrollment of 4090: approximately 500 students fewer than the total enrollment of Grenfell Campus and with a budget that is a fraction of theirs. Cost effectiveness is important but it is secondary to quality education and that is what the Department offers and celebrates, despite the difficulties of our circumstances. We know our academic programs are thriving and solid and that they are continuing to grow despite the challenges of reduced faculty numbers and increased responsibilities. We do not want them to languish and therefore we continue to make every effort to revitalize. We do need, however, faculty renewal. The situation detailed in the 2003 APR has not improved; rather, it has declined. We welcome new ideas, fresh insights, and external input by which our programs can be enhanced and strengthened.