

Sir Wilfred Grenfell College English Program

Academic Program Review

Preamble

This report has been prepared by the three members of the Review panel, Professors Barb Hunt (Fine Arts; Chair), Robert Gallant (Mathematics/General Science) and Stan Dragland (English Emeritus, The University of Western Ontario), who volunteered to write the preamble, partly to be afforded the opportunity to praise his fellow panel members. Their deep interest in a discipline other than their own, their good-humoured open-mindedness and willingness to work hard set a tone which was to be echoed by members of the English Program and other Grenfell faculty and staff. It is well worth mentioning the unusual degree of interaction, even interdependency, of the disciplines here, the most obvious academic manifestation being the significant participation of English in the Humanities program.

Errors of fact or emphasis may creep into a report like this one, generated by review of documents and a visit too brief to form insider familiarity, but we hope that we have reached a reasonably good grasp of essentials.

The panel's division of labour was not so rigid as to prevent some overlap in reporting. Where repetition occurs in our report, we have tried to provide increments in information and/or alternative perspectives.

A note on spelling: of the two legitimate ways of spelling program/programme, the panel has chosen the former while some of those we quote prefer the latter.

Documents

Panel members were presented with a binder containing the following: The English Program Self-Study, with a list of the current faculty complement, and a number of appendices: Calendar Regulations and Core Requirements for the B.A. in English, a list of English Language and Literature courses, a table of enrollments from Intersession 1999 to Intersession 2010, a list of upper level course allocations and registrations from 2000 to 2010, a table of graduates 1999 to 2000, the English Program unit budget, the Ferriss Hodgett Library report, a draft of the English Program Honours proposal, a collection of faculty curriculum vitae, a package of sample course outlines and other materials, student assessment surveys and letters, a copy of the 1999 program review and the external reviewer's report, the response to that report, a statement of the University Mission and Core Values and Principles, and the Sir Wilfred Grenfell Strategic Plan.

In addition, we were supplied with a Fact Book produced by the Memorial University Centre for Institutional Planning and the 2009-2010 Memorial University Calendar.

Day One

The panel first met for dinner on the evening of March 3, with Dr. Holly Pike, Acting Vice-President and Dr. William Iams, Acting Vice-Principal. The talk was general at this meeting, but useful in gathering information about the function and orientation of upper level administration at Grenfell, and in hearing reflections about the movement toward Grenfell autonomy that is currently under way. These senior administrators are clearly highly competent people who have not allowed administration to sever them from their first academic loves. At heart they are still teachers and researchers of their own disciplines, which means that, to them, administration is not a function to be performed in the abstract.

The panel met the following morning for a brief discussion about how to proceed, and to agree on the areas upon which each of us would report. That was followed by a meeting with all available English faculty. During this session, Ken Jacobsen, the Program Chair, was asked to highlight the main objectives in the Self-Study, written by him with input from other faculty members. This was our first indication of the themes that were to be raised again and again during the day. Two matters were prominent in everyone's mind: the urgent need for restoration of the ninth tenure track position that was lost years ago with the early retirement of David Freeman, and the potential introduction of an Honours Program.

During the brief tour of the college that followed, a unit that grabbed our attention was the Learning Centre. It was not initially slated to be on the tour, but a poster advertising English 1001 Poetry Seminars suggested that it was relevant to our inquiries, so we made a point of visiting the place later in the day. More on this excellent resource below.

Lunch brought together Dr. Dave Peddle, Head of Arts, Ken Jacobsen and two other faculty members, as well as a student representative, who was comfortable in the company because he was taken seriously and treated with respect. This feature of administration and faculty-student relationships was reinforced throughout our visit.

We then had an excellent session with Dr. Peddle, who called the English Program “the backbone of the Arts division” and articulated the sense we had already gathered from everyone we met to that point that English is generous with its human resources, particularly in helping to administer and mount courses in the Humanities Program. Hierarchical thinking appears to be refreshingly scarce in the Arts division; cooperation, not competition, seems to be the norm.

The meeting with three students that followed was also enlightening. They were each fourth year students who had been lured into English from other disciplines. They all praised faculty members for their expertise and availability. The few drawbacks to the program that they identified—lack of instruction about research methods, the need for a theory course earlier than the fourth year—have

already been addressed, either by changes introduced since they entered the program or by others proposed in the Program's Self-Study.

We had viewed the Ferriss Hodgett Library on the tour and been impressed with a display of graphic novels, purchased to support research and teaching interests of faculty members in English, Folklore and Visual Arts, but the real eye-opener came when the librarians themselves joined us. Louise McGillis and Crystal Rose are clearly powerhouses of information and important allies of the faculty. Crystal Rose has brought her considerable energies to bear on the English program by offering crucial instruction in information literacy to all sections of first year English. This is but one of the initiatives she and her colleague have taken to bring students and faculty members up to speed with current research methods and resources, both basic and advanced.

Our first individual faculty member interview was with a leave replacement who loves teaching at Grenfell. She spoke of the unity of the place, of the refreshingly collegial sharing of ideas between faculty members. She also spoke of the excellent student-teacher ratio and the relaxed but respectful relationship between faculty and students which we had seen displayed at lunch. Her thoughts about how the program might be improved will be integrated with the ideas of others and presented below.

The day ended for members of the panel with a working meal during which we compared notes by way of discussing our various but unanimously positive impressions of what the day had brought us.

Day Two

After another valuable session with Ken Jacobsen, during which our follow-up questions stressed areas where our knowledge or comprehension was soft, we met with other faculty members individually, including one who came away from paternity leave to share his perspectives with us. Each individual was candid about his or her priorities, and thus we were made aware of some divergence of opinion on such matters as the centrality of research at Grenfell, the shape of the proposed Honours Program and the issue of discipline purity versus practicality, which is to say the usefulness of an English degree as an entrée to employment.

Our last official public act was to present our preliminary findings to a group of faculty members, the Head of Arts, the Acting Vice-Principal, and a student. Though we felt this reporting was premature, and so offered it with reluctance, we did very much wish to communicate to those present the very positive impression of the unit that we had gathered.

It would be irrelevant to mention the informal gathering in the campus pub that followed, if not for the fact that tables of students and tables of faculty were collegially merging before it was over, and that agreeably passionate discussions of literature—obviously too important to be confined to the classroom—were the conversational norm.

The day finished with another working meal, during which we refined our categories of reporting toward Saturday's work on creating a draft of the report which follows.

We have decided to underline (literally) only the most essential recommendations, those about which we are unanimous, and to embed in our report other considerations of greater or lesser importance for the English Program to mull over. These reflections may well lead to changes, but we assume that the Program is capable of deriving its own further list from the guts of our report.

Strategic Objectives

The English Review Panel found that the English Program is successful in providing a high level of instruction, having made innovations to the curriculum that support student learning. During the review there was some discussion about how the small size of the English Program limits the coverage, breadth and depth that is achievable in larger universities. The Panel encourages the English Program to discuss more fully the tension between the goals of coverage and depth, and suggests that it would be productive for the program to develop a Mission Statement to assist in articulating more specific goals. This would support the SWGC mission to “develop a distinctive image.” The previous review also recommended that a mission statement be developed that “expresses the uniqueness of its program” and deals with the symbiotic relationship between teaching and research.

Another strategic objective of the English Program is “to cultivate a stronger profile of research, scholarship, and creative activity”. The Self-Study refers to the outstanding legacy of the recently retired members of the program, but the overall level of research in the English Program appears to have diminished somewhat. The review panel understands that this is owing mostly to heavy faculty workloads. The previous review recommended that the English Program “develop long-range research goals that are complementary to their teaching,” an aim which the reviewer felt to be particularly important for the introduction of an Honours degree. The current Review Panel agrees with this recommendation.

In important ways the English Program is fulfilling the Mission and Strategic Goals of the college. English is expanding the college's range of offerings by contributing to an expanded Humanities Program and by increasing the diversity of courses it offers. The planned Honours degree will further contribute to achieving this goal. The English Program is constantly developing and updating courses in response to student demand and developments in the field. This responsiveness will help to give students increased understanding in a rapidly changing world.

The English Program has three prospective projects that will help them achieve a higher level of excellence and garner provincial, national and international attention: the establishment of a SWGC publishing house, the inauguration of an online literary journal, and the plan to secure funding for a writer-in-residence post. These initiatives have the potential to support faculty research and to offer students experience towards career goals in literary areas. Students have shown a high level of enthusiasm for the idea of a publishing house and an online journal. As well, one faculty member

has already initiated a student journal, *Inkpot*, that is popular with students. The Panel supports these initiatives.

Student Enrollment / Program Outcomes

General student enrollment at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College is declining, for the most part because of decline in population in its catchment area. However, the English Program has continued to graduate about the same number of students, 12.3 per year on average. Last year's graduates numbered only 7, but a lower total for one year does not necessarily constitute a trend.

Many of the students canvassed said that they attended Grenfell because the college is in their community. The college will always have that sort of advantage over more distant schools, but the local pool is unlikely to grow unless in-migration were to become a factor. The Self-Study says that "the unit has not given much consideration in the past to the recruitment of 'non-traditional students' such as mature learners and full-time workers who take part-time classes or who study through distance education. We are told that each year approximately one-sixth or one-fifth of the graduating students are non-traditional, and that at any given time, there are eight to ten such students in the program. The panel endorses all efforts to expand the potential intake of students, including those locals who may find Grenfell too small for their large ambitions. It seems obvious that a university will be more attractive to such students than will a college, one argument for Grenfell autonomy. Meanwhile, the real advantages of studying at a small college of high quality should be trumpeted.

The number of students majoring in the program and the degrees awarded are more than appropriate given the resources that are committed. As well as offering an English Major and Minor, the English Program fulfills many requirements as the core program of the Arts Division and the college, ensuring that students meet literacy standards by taking the writing courses that constitute a large part of the core of all programs. English also services the Theatre Program, both with courses and with a concentration in Dramatic Literature, and is responsible for some of the teaching in the Humanities Program. Many students in English, and at the college in general, intend to become teachers in the public school system and English is one of the teachables required in the Education Program at Memorial University. This attracts many students to the English Program.

The number of English degrees awarded is similar to those awarded in the Visual Arts Program, which has historically had a complement of nine full-time permanent faculty members, and, since 2008, has had ten full-time members teaching about 80 students, many fewer than the number of students in English classes. Despite their heavy teaching load, the English Program has over the years produced an increased number of students who have continued their studies at the graduate level.

A high level of satisfaction among students of the program may be seen in the levels of commitment to the Program apparent in the English Review Student Input Survey. As well, the students that we met were clear in their enthusiasm for the program. They particularly liked small class size, easy

access to professors, the relaxed and comfortable learning environment, and the high quality of teaching. They also considered the library resources to be very good. Students are enthusiastic about the English Program, then, though they do feel that it could be better promoted. The panel also felt that stronger promotional efforts could be made, while recognizing that the faculty's heavy workload makes such efforts difficult.

The Grenfell website needs to be upgraded, and the English website in particular needs to be updated. The list of faculty is current, and faculty research interests are commendably included, though there are some blanks in this category, and some faculty members could be much more specific about what they are doing. "Upcoming Events" is out of date. We understand that the college has been without a webmaster for some time, so we recommend that a webmaster be hired as soon as possible. We also recommend that the English Program develop a plan for promotion of its activities and strengths. The Self-Study refers to "major contributions to the cultural life of the western region and the province, for example by inaugurating, managing and participating in local literary festivals like The March Hare, April Rabbit, and Woody Point Writer's Festival." This is perhaps to ride a little too hard on the coattails of events which, except for the April Rabbit, do not emanate from the university, though retired English faculty continue to be central to organizing and presenting The March Hare. The website should certainly mention these festivals since, university connected or not, their existence in Corner Brook and nearby at Woody Point, and their relevance to creative writing at Grenfell, will help to entice students to the college. But Grenfell English faculty have served their region and province in other significant ways, and these achievements may be celebrated without reservation.

Contributions made by former faculty members are an important part of the legacy of the Program, so it would make sense to call proud attention to the many literary manifestations of Al Pittman's career, and also to such publications as *An Island in the Sky: Selected Poems of Al Pittman*, edited by Martin Ware and Stephanie Mackenzie, with an introduction by Martin Ware, and *The March Hare Anthology*, edited by Adrian Fowler; There is also David Elliot's book of poems, *The Edge of Beulah*, and Randall Maggs's much-awarded *Night Work: The Sawchuck Poems*. Grenfell's most eminent emeritus professor is John Steffler. Much could be made of the Newfoundland fiction and poetry written while he was at Grenfell, as well as his appointment as Poet Laureate of Canada. The ambitious poetry anthologies edited by Mackenzie, with Maggs and John Ennis of Ireland's Waterford Regional Technological College, should appear, as should Stephanie Mackenzie's two books of poetry, one forthcoming, and the travel writing of Tony Fabijancic. The idea is to lift some key information out of faculty CVs and into the website, by no means all of it about retired faculty. What else? The anthology of student poetry called *Humber Mouths*, "Rabbit Tales," the newspaper column that appears in Corner Brook's *Western Star* and features creative writing from the city and surrounding areas. *Inkpot*, the journal of creative arts should also be mentioned, as long as it will be continuing (having been introduced and facilitated by a contractual teacher). Most of the publications mentioned are of special significance to the region and the province, part of Grenfell's mission being to serve those locales, but some of the books and anthologies produced have distinguished Grenfell, across the country and beyond, as a college where faculty members not only teach literature but also disseminate and create literature that has in its turn been taught and written about elsewhere. It makes sense for a website to boast of faculty publications of all kinds,

putting the best foot forward for publicity purposes. The 1999 reviewer recommended the production of a brochure to highlight creative writing at Grenfell, still a good idea should there be funding for it, but the vehicle of an upgraded website would be simpler and greener. Perhaps a version of the brochure does exist in the form of the English Program pamphlet that is distributed by the Registrar's Office.

It should be said that much of the information in the previous paragraph was known to the external reviewer before his arrival at Grenfell. The English Program has an established reputation which it should exploit. The English website tribute to David Freeman is a beginning.

We were told by a faculty member that there is "a heavy emphasis on drama" in the first year course and that it is difficult to get students at this level interested, given the prevalence of Shakespeare in high school. The English Program works hard to support the Theatre Program, but we heard that Theatre students often do not regularly attend English classes, because rehearsals and performance take precedence. Faculty have the sense that the Theatre Program is not urging students to take their English courses seriously enough. The Panel supports the recommendation of the previous review that the relationship between Theatre and English be re-evaluated.

We met with a small group of fourth year English students, each of whom expressed their enthusiasm for the English Program. They also spoke of changes that they would like to see. As will be pointed out below, some of these changes have already been instituted and others are in the works.

1. Students would like to have a theory course offered earlier than 4th year "so we can use these tools in other courses." Several faculty members have said the same thing. The Panel agrees, and endorses the Self-Study's proposal of a new course, potentially cross-listed with Phil 3610, Philosophy and Literature. We recommend that this course be offered in the second year of the program, if possible, or early in the third year, so that the benefits of exposure to literary theory might be felt as early as possible.

There is a high level of enrollment in the Newfoundland literature course; the panel would like to see this supported and expanded. As well, many students at the college have aboriginal background. One English faculty member has a research interest in this area and teaches aboriginal material. To dovetail with other aboriginal initiatives at the college, such as symposia at the Art Gallery, the panel recommends that the English program consider other avenues of including aboriginal literature in its curriculum. Possibilities include first year courses, Children's Literature, Post-Colonial Literature and Canadian Drama.

2. Students would like a greater variety of courses such as world literature and women's/queer writing, and the panel endorses the Program's intention to introduce English 3217, Modern World Literature in English(es). Students would also like more variety in the current courses, for example to have Canadian courses after 1949 subdivided and given different numbers so that students could take courses in this area with more than one professor.

3. Students appreciate the emphasis on creative writing, but some said they would also like to see a

course in technical writing (reviews, journalism, etc.), given its potential for practical application. When prompted, all the students we met, and some faculty, expressed interest in the eventual development of other post-baccalaureate programs, such as Technical Writing and Journalism.

4. Faculty members are involved in a lot of informal advising, but students said they would prefer a more formal advisory relationship with all faculty. We understand that all English faculty share in the advising of first year students, but that the Chair advises all students in the upper years. Students told us that they greatly appreciate these efforts, but they realize that the Chair is very busy and that it is not always easy to arrange times for meeting. We recommend that all experienced faculty share in the advising of all students. This would reduce the heavy workload of the Chair and allow students greater access to an advisor. Benefits in student satisfaction should contribute to raising retention rates.

One student mentioned that he wished he had been advised early on about the importance of the teachable minor that is required for admission to the Bachelor of Education program. This suggests that, besides advice concerning their immediate future in the English Program, students could use practical information about the fit of their program choices with various post-graduate programs.

5. A recurring request on the part of English students is for a space where they can meet to read, discuss readings and ideas, write, interact with English students in other years (something which is apparently not happening now), a room to serve as a location for the activities of a revived English Society and other groups/activities in the English Program. One faculty member has “spearheaded an initiative to begin holding regular colloquia” in which students might share information and insights gained through their English individual projects. That excellent idea needs a home. The world is moving toward more collaborative models of learning; access to an English room would facilitate this kind of activity. Besides a room for general English student activities, there may need to be space for the proposed publishing house, and the (online) academic journal. There being a natural possibility that the last two of these initiatives would involve students, the panel wondered whether it might be appropriate to use one room for all three, not only in the name of cost-effectiveness but also to encourage student involvement and interaction. Other activities of the English Program amenable to student involvement (the magazine *Inkpot*, for example) might find a home there. The panel did consider that restricting the room to English majors might be a bit exclusionary, and that it might be more appropriate (and institutionally more palatable) to designate the space to arts students generally. Of course, the greater the number and variety of students to use the same room, the less useful it becomes for specific needs, so the panel confines itself to recommending that every effort be made to find the English students a space where they can meet. It struck the panel, meeting as we did in the GSCU Boardroom, that we were occupying just such a space as was requested. No doubt we would be exceeding our mandate if we were to suggest that the GSCU surrender it, but perhaps some sharing would be an option.

6. There was a request to introduce Supplemental Instruction (SI) into the English Program, and we endorse this. Although there is a dedicated writing instructor at the Student Learning Centre, the

peer-to-peer alternative of SI instruction would be a supplementary and perhaps easier way for English students to get extra help with course work outside of class time. As well, it would offer English students valuable experience in teaching and mentoring their juniors in the program. One of the fourth year students we met said that he had wanted to help in this way, but found there was no structure for volunteering. In the SI program, a qualified student attends lectures for a course and offers weekly sessions in which the material is reviewed and analyzed appropriately. The program is popular with some students because of the student-to-student nature of the instruction. There are SI programs for many courses, including Mathematics, Chemistry, Business, and Art History, but not currently for English.

7. The English Program website has a page devoted to Career Opportunities, with a list of general skills that all English students learn. Jobs in a variety of disciplines, including the creative arts, are listed, and there is a list of graduates, with job titles and/or post-graduate degrees attained. However, the students we met did not seem fully aware of the keys to the variety of occupations they were being fitted for, never mind specific career opportunities that would be open to them. We recommend that the English Program find ways of communicating this information more directly to students. Students informed us that the Chair had done a seminar on job opportunities created by an English degree, and that they would like to have more such sessions. The Panel also believes that involving students in activities outside of class—such as the student journal, the proposed publishing house, and various sorts of community interaction—would expand student knowledge and contribute skills adaptable to certain careers. Program outcomes are communicated through promotional literature such as English Program pamphlets distributed by the Registrar’s Office, through the college website, through occasional presentations (for example “I Fell for Grenfell” Week), and through one-on-one advising sessions with the Chair.

Approximately one student per graduating class gains admittance to graduate programs like Law and Social Work, as well as English. This is on par with the Visual Arts Program, which is about the same size. About one quarter of the English graduates go into Education. Many of these are now teaching in the Newfoundland and Labrador school system and raising the quality of education in the province. Other graduates have found employment in fields such as the non-profit sector, student politics, and IT.

In the Student Assessment Surveys and Letters gathered for the review there is excellent material that, with permission, might be used for careers presentations and/or on a careers website, to highlight the real but intangible values of an undergraduate education in English. One Grenfell graduate, now “employed with the Government of Nunavut as the Territorial Property Manager of leased commercial space,” says, among other things, that one of his areas of responsibility “is the annual operation and maintenance claims submitted [to the government] by the landlord. I refer to this as forensic accounting and liken it to analyzing prose. The document has a timeline with history, tells a story, and is not complete until all has been analysed and is pieced together to make sense.” Another graduate, “currently employed as an Environmental Health and Safety Advisor at an Oil Sands facility in Fort McMurray, Alberta”—another job unlikely to have been anticipated by any careers counselor—says that “The education I received at SWGC has given me the ability to think

things through and draw out potential conclusions, and to see many sides of arguments. This is invaluable in my line of work, as I need to determine the root cause of incidents and defend my position on controversial issues on a daily basis.” More simply, a graduate who is now pursuing a Masters of Education at UPEI says “The English programme taught me how to focus what I am writing and saying. I use that every day. In fact, I teach that every day.”

It is important to highlight obvious career choices like teaching, and others in which various sorts of high-level reading and writing are important, but English Programs can always use more good arguments for convincing students and their parents that the wide-ranging and general usefulness of what they teach cannot always be linked with to specific careers. The English graduate’s adaptability is a great virtue, if proportionately difficult to measure. “I feel wiser for being an English major, if that’s the right word,” says another Grenfell student. “I feel like I am living a fuller life with the study of literature because I engage the ideas on a deep level, and I think that is a definition for gaining wisdom.” Jobs aside, it should not be forgotten that the university’s mandate is to help create good citizens possessed of critical thinking skills. If this student’s experience at Grenfell is typical, and it seems to be, English is doing exactly what it is supposed to. The challenge discussed in this section is that of effectively advertising what is being done so well.

Curriculum and Teaching

Undergraduate Program

Undergraduate studies at Grenfell has so far led to a general, rather than an Honours, B.A. The idea of adding an Honours Program has been alive since at least the last Program review, which took place in 1999, when the external reviewer recommended that it be put in place. With certain reservations, having mainly to do with stresses on faculty workload, the present panel extends that recommendation. But first: the General Program.

In the absence of an Honours Program, the general degree has functioned as the closest thing Grenfell offers to an entry into postgraduate studies, and several Grenfell graduates have gone that route, including one current contractual faculty member. It may be that the General Program could and should be cut back a touch if an Honours Program were to be introduced. The most obvious place to economize would be with English 4950, the individual project, which might be eliminated, or at least re-thought with the idea of slightly reducing both student and faculty workload. 4950 is taught over and above the six-course load, which is already heavy, so if a way could be found to hold on to it (because it is popular with both students and faculty) but to make it less onerous, that should release some faculty time to attend to the proposed Honours seminars and substantial Honours project.

Since the last review, the General Program has been changed a good deal, and for the better. The first year courses have been restructured so that the first term deals with prose forms (essay, short story, novel) and the second with poetry and drama. Stronger grammar and composition components have been built into both, to address issues of problematical student literacy. An

Information Literacy component, taught and graded by Crystal Rose, a librarian, have been popular and effective additions. The two first year courses now have a more common syllabus, thanks to the adoption of *The Mercury Reader* as the common text. Instructors may still make their own choices of novels.

After the first year, a core of courses is prescribed, including requirements in Quantitative Reasoning and Analysis, Writing and Breadth of Knowledge. Beyond that, twenty-four credit hours are required in English core courses and eighteen credit hours in one of the current three Concentrations: Dramatic Literature, Canadian Literature and Modern Literature. There are also twenty-four-credit-hour Minors in another academic discipline and fifty-four hours in electives. Courses are numbered from 1000 to 4950 and are intended to be taken in sequence, so that second year courses are in effect prerequisites for third year courses and so on.

A number of changes beyond the first year have been made since the last review, and they all seem sensible. These include collapsing two Canadian prose courses into one and making it the entry point for the Canadian Concentration. A third year Canadian prose course has been added. It is now possible to take a wider range of Shakespeare courses than was available before. A creative writing course has been introduced at the second year level, as part of a movement toward introducing a fourth Concentration in Creative Writing. Courses in Science Fiction, Children's Literature, Humour and Women's Writing have also been added to the Moderns Concentration. The 1999 program reviewer recommended that such courses be placed "under the Modern Literature rubric," and her advice was taken. These courses, and other genre courses proposed (one in graphic novels, another in literature of the supernatural) make the Moderns list look somewhat like a catch-all, especially since some of the new courses spill over into periods earlier than the modern. The review panel floated the idea that they might fit more naturally into a separate Genre category, but accepted the observation that the proliferation of categories would be confusing. Special Topics courses in Canadian Literature have also been introduced.

There has been considerable movement since the last review, then, and further good changes are envisioned. One of these, requested by students, is the introduction of an earlier theory course. It has been felt that grounding in literary theory has been coming too late to assist in reading primary texts, and the proposed addition of a third year course should address that lack, though, as was mentioned above, students would prefer it to be a second year course. Some faculty members were concerned about the relative lack of coverage of the earlier literary periods, and the proposed addition of a new course at the 2000 level, to divide the previous two second year surveys into three (Beginnings to 1600, 1660 to 1790, and 1790 to 1900) should help the Program to offer better basic historical coverage. The first of these courses will not be offered by a specialist—not a serious drawback for second year courses, but if it is decided that period coverage is of the essence for an honours degree, then it would be better if upper level courses were taught by experts. Not everyone feels that comprehensive coverage is essential, of course. More on this below.

Another admirable initiative is planning for a new course, Modern World Literature in English(es), to address the need for a course in Post-Colonial Literature. A related concern, acknowledged in the Self-Study, is current insufficient representation of gender, ethnic and class diversity in courses. A

Women's Writing course has been added to the Modern Concentration, and that is a beginning, but it would also be possible for general faculty consciousness to be raised about matters of gender, race and class, so that period courses might highlight them wherever that is appropriate. It is worth giving serious consideration to one faculty member's assertion that the next hire should be a woman. Full-time members of the English faculty consist of five men and three women, about the same level of gender equity as in the college at large (32% women and 68% men).

The section of the Self-Study entitled "Strategic Objectives" begins this way: "As an academic unit, our fundamental strategic objective is to offer a high-quality undergraduate education in English Language and Literature, providing students with both breadth and depth of knowledge in the discipline, as well as the critical skills fostered by a liberal arts education." In other words, the objective is to offer everything, and everything is what a small program like Grenfell's will likely always find itself challenged to cover. Creative solutions will have to be found if the Program is to be able to follow the urge to move forward, staying relevant to current trends in literary studies, while honouring the more traditional, even conservative, thrust of historical coverage. The panel encountered no dissension as such, but it did find differences of opinion about the relevant importance of coverage on the one hand, and, on the other, teaching how to read and to think, whatever sort of material serves as the starting point. That is to say, we encountered two legitimate and well-presented but contrary ways to structure an English degree program, whether it be General or Honours—paths clearly influenced by the sort of structure that the differing faculty members had trod themselves. If it is agreed that in a small program something will always have to give, the panel hopes that all voices will at least be heard and taken seriously, so that everyone has a chance to contribute. Inevitably, compromises will be necessary to shape programs of academic purity and practical delivery. The absolutely essential return to the English faculty complement to nine will not, in itself, guarantee period coverage in depth. Increase of the complement to ten, and hiring a medievalist, as one faculty member suggested, would do the trick and position Grenfell English to be a big player among small colleges and universities. But the extent to which historical coverage based on specialist teaching can and should take priority over good teaching from a base of more diverse material—especially when personnel resources are limited—is for the Program to decide. The shape of a General Program and that of an Honours Program may of course differ, the latter bending much more toward the sort of period coverage required by many graduate schools of English.

The Proposed Honours Program

The 1999 reviewer recommended the institution of an Honours degree, and the need and desire for it is certainly no less in 2010. "[W]hen I checked into completing my masters in literature at MUN in St. John's," says one student in a questionnaire, "I was told that the SWGC requirements were not up to the St. John's standard and that I would have to complete 4 more English courses to be able to apply"—this even though the Grenfell general degree has been strong, as general degrees go, and a number of its graduates have successfully proceeded to post-graduate study in English. The

Program now seems determined to go ahead with Honours and, to that end, has created a draft proposal which offers the following ways of differentiating Honours from the general program:

1. Students must maintain a minimum grade of 70% or an average of 75 % in English courses to graduate.
2. Students would be required to take both third and fourth year theory courses,
3. All three of the second year survey courses would be required.
4. Three more credits than general students would be required in the genre courses (Science Fiction, Humour, Women's Writing, Children's Literature).
5. Honours students would not be permitted to do a Combined option, but would be required to choose from one of the Concentrations (Modern, Canadian, Dramatic)
6. A fourth year Honours Seminar requirement would be added.
7. Instead of doing the one-semester fourth year project now in place for general students, there would be a more rigorous and substantial Honours project, possibly a thesis with an oral examination. The additional possibility of a comprehensive examination is not in the proposal, but came up in interviews.
8. A bibliography course would be required.
9. Two courses in a language other than English would be required. French, Latin and Greek are listed.

Attached to this proposal, but not essential to it, is the suggested addition of a new Concentration in Creative and Professional Writing, which would require the introduction of "dedicated workshop courses in poetry, fiction, non-fiction, playwriting and screen writing."

Plenty of differentiation between general and Honours courses is thus proposed, most of it admirable and none of it in need of much discussion except for items 6 and 7, and the proposal for a new Concentration in Creative Writing. The panel feels that serious consideration has to be given to both student and faculty workload in thinking about introducing a new Honours program. Overload seems almost institutionalized in the Grenfell English Program. Lack of complaint, or at least general lack of desperation about this situation, reflects the dedication and generosity of the faculty members, as they labour to overcome deficiencies in manpower, but it doesn't seem healthy. Only one faculty member breathed the word "burnout" in our presence, but the sense of overwork, genially borne, was constantly in the air. A spread of work between ten people (ideally) and nine (minimally) would certainly help, but we urge the Program not to go overboard in making their honours programme too difficult to deliver, especially while current faculty numbers remain stable. Setting and marking comprehensive exams (standard in Ph.D. programs) is probably too much. The honours thesis is a good idea, but it has to be acknowledged that faculty members would take on supervision, as with the general fourth year project, over and above the six course load.

One faculty member thought that a Creative Writing Concentration would fit better in a Bachelor of Fine Arts Program than in English. That is the way some colleges and universities go, to be sure, and during the 1999 review a "Creative Cognate" made up of Visual Arts, Theatre Studies and Creative Writing" was bruited, but Grenfell English has from the beginning been deeply committed to the writerly approach to literary studies. There is much to be said for a thorough integration of creative

writing courses within an English program. Creative writers, as teachers, may have one more string to their bow than plain academics, with the result that creative writing students learn how to read their assigned texts with a real sense of the continuity between their own writing and that of the greats. When heavy pressure is placed on their own creative writing, they also learn to read the writing of others with more discernment and care, and their essay writing benefits proportionately. Also—and this is of supreme importance—precision of articulation is the vehicle of clear thinking. The panel endorses the continued integration of creative and academic studies at Grenfell, and suggests that all new hires ought ideally to be creative writers of some sort, whatever their academic orientation.

Reservations about introducing a Creative Writing Concentration at this point have more to do with practicality than with philosophy. Idealistic and hardworking though its members are, a Program whose resources are already stretched thin ought to guard against stretching very much further. Introduce the Honours Program, yes, but don't kill yourselves doing it. The 1999 reviewer in fact suggested reducing the number of Concentrations from three to two, thinking that course offerings and scheduling might thus be simplified. The response to the idea was negative, sensibly countering that "Instead of conflating, we wish to interlock certain courses which can be used for more than one concentration," so the only reason for raising the issue again is to caution against overextension of resources.

Some Reflections on Particular Matters

English course outlines, gathered together, show some inconsistencies that might be addressed, preferably without prejudicing individual faculty autonomy. In terms of required reading, some courses look relatively light and others relatively heavy. Some course schedules allow for spending seven or even eight classes on a single book, while others allow for three or even fewer. There was some student complaint about the heavier courses. About one of them, a student said that "By the third week, everyone was behind, and by the sixth week, it seems that we all just stopped reading altogether, relying exclusively on Cliff's notes to carry us through." There are different legitimate ways of offering courses—swift or leisurely—but the question does arise of whether some standardization of course weight might achieve a better balance between courses and thus be fairer to students. The panel asked whether there had been any objective vetting of course lists, and the answer was no. It is a delicate matter for non-specialists to question the course outline of a specialist, but balance in student workload is important, so we recommend that faculty members discuss the introduction of some sensitive vetting mechanism and/or establish a standard format for course syllabi. Other issues might also be addressed, like the fact that required editions are specified in some booklists and not in others; the fact that some courses come with course manuals or sharepoint sites (one impressive set of course materials, twenty-four pages long, is a mini course in itself) while others do not; and the fact that some course outlines seem a touch tired and perfunctory while others are elaborate and lively. Again, the sanction for individuality, well demonstrated by Grenfell English, is to be protected, so movement toward uniformity should be limited and collegial. One simple effective way of encouraging change would be to circulate among

faculty members the sheaf of course outlines and materials to which the review panel had access, so that Faculty members might gain information, inspiration and impetus to adapt, from each other. More standardized materials might be placed on file in a central location, perhaps the Arts Division office, where they would be available for consultation by new hires.

The external reviewer, a Canadianist, wondered why early and late Canadian courses were divided at 1949. The practice was begun by Al Pittman, he was told, which means that, acknowledging the date of Newfoundland's entry into Confederation, the date embodies the view of Canada from Newfoundland, a perspective to be respected. But the date works better for Newfoundland than it does for Canadian literature. If there are to be two Canadian courses, historically divided, 1960 or 1967 (Canada's Centennial year) would be a better date, reflecting the different sorts of watershed represented by such texts as Leonard Cohen's *Beautiful Losers* (1966) and Percy Janes's Newfoundland (Corner Brook) novel, *House of Hate* (1970). The other thing worth mentioning about Grenfell Canadian Literature classes with before-and-after dates in the titles is that they promise surveys while the course content does not always deliver coverage. To avoid any question of misrepresentation, these courses could be re-titled something like "Studies in Early Canadian Writing" and "Studies in Modern Canadian Writing." The Canadian courses are often singled out for praise in student questionnaires, so the issue here is not excellence of teaching. One student questioned "broad, unrealistic categories such as 'Canadian Prose after 1949'," and followed that remark with this one: "The most enlightening and valuable experiences I have had in the programme . . . have been in the poetry offerings, and Canadian Poetry after 1949 in particular."

Faculty, Research and Scholarship

It is important to observe, following on remarks made above, that creative work properly comes under this heading. Grenfell English no longer has a faculty member of the eminence of John Steffler, whose publications in fiction and poetry brought distinction to him and to the college, but his career was nurtured at Grenfell, as was that of Randall Maggs, a very recent retiree, whose literary profile has recently soared, partly because of literary awards won for *Night Work: The Sawchuck Poems*, a book that took ten years to write. There was a time when Maggs would not have looked especially productive on paper, but during much of that time he was devoting his time to conducting thorough research and honing his writing. The effort has paid off. It always makes sense to look past or through a CV in search of quality; counting the number of entries may reveal industry, but not necessarily much more.

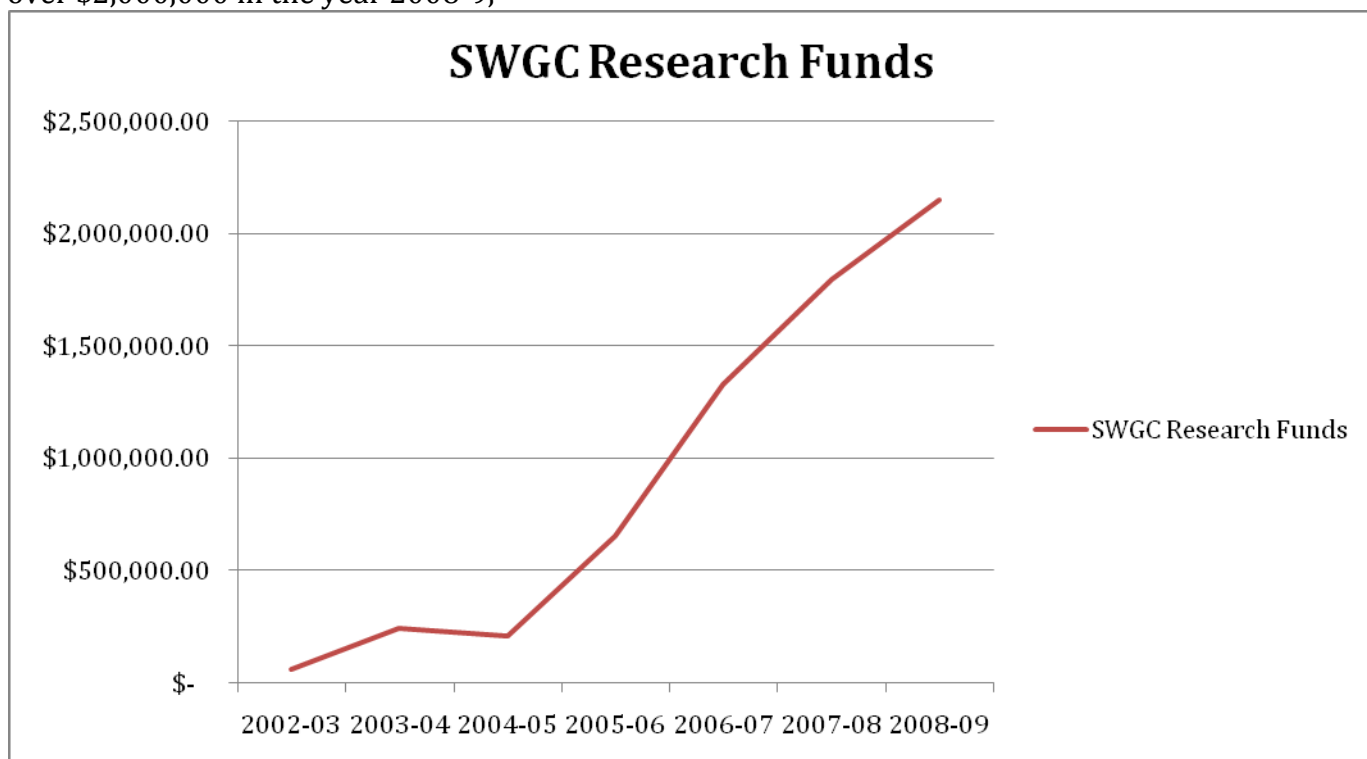
That said, the research profile of the faculty members is mixed. Some of those whose production is low, gauged by CV, have done exemplary work in administration, one of them having risen to the level of Acting Vice-President. Others have pulled more than their share of weight on committees and administering programs. It is clear from remarks recorded in the 1999 report that research was not much pushed in the past of the institution, and that some faculty members directed the bulk of their efforts toward teaching. The 1999 reviewer was told that faculty members were grateful not to have been pressured to produce. That attitude has a positive side when it leads to good work

given time to mature, and a negative side when it is tolerant of complacency. Clearly, the tide has turned, though, both in Memorial University as a whole and in Grenfell College in particular. In our Appendix O, “SWGC Strategic Plan,” right after the first objective (“Grenfell will initiate reduction of faculty teaching load to five teaching units and increase faculty complement to support programs to increase faculty time available for research”—to which the panel says a loud Amen), we read that “search efforts will target young scholars with strong research agendas when recruiting new faculty.” The Program Self-Study echoes this aim: “Another strategic objective of the English programme is to cultivate a stronger profile of research, scholarship and creative activity that makes a distinctive contribution to the local community, the province, and the country as a whole.”

The new orientation has already borne fruit, in recent tenure track and contract appointments with very strong CVs. This is not to say that the work of older faculty members should be considered wanting. The external reviewer has read some of it in the normal course of his own writing and research, and found it excellent. He would urge Grenfell English not to give itself over, whole hog, to research and publication, traditionally the main route to advancement through the ranks, at least not if it means weakening the passionate commitment to teaching that has characterized the place and won it the nearly universal enthusiasm of its students. This is clear from the student surveys and letters included in our big binder. There is a need to achieve a delicate balance between the demands of high quality research and first-rate teaching, not to mention what the Self-Study calls the “heavy lifting” of committee and administrative work. One faculty member asserted that “research *is* teaching.” This is a person who refused to make the heavy teaching load an excuse for research inactivity, but who is (this came with an apology for the language) “busting my ass” to produce. Good for you, we thought, though we found among other less vociferous and perhaps less ambitious faculty members clear evidence of the intellectual liveliness that grows from research, whether or not it inevitably leads to publication. In other words, we did not find deadwood in this Program.

Some faculty members have had success in obtaining external funding for their research, but the amount of funding seems low given the apparent strength of the researchers. Inquiries along these lines seemed to highlight two primary, interrelated, causes. The first is lack of time. At Grenfell, the 3/3 teaching load and high service component makes for busy fall and winter terms, and most faculty members are forced to shelve their research during this period. Even finding time to write grant proposals is difficult then. Secondly, one faculty member said that his research did not require resources beyond what he could gather himself. It is important to remember that the reason to seek funding is *needed* for support, not just making one’s CV or academic unit look good. Some SSHRC research grants apply more to faculty members of Departments with M.A. and Ph.D. programs which employ graduate students as teaching or research assistants, though SSHRC Travel Grants, Standard Research Grants, Aid to Scholarly Journals and Aid to Scholarly Publications are among those that may be relevant to Grenfell English. We were told that internal funding for research purposes has dramatically increased in recent times (from less than \$200,000 in 2002-3 to

over \$2,000,000 in the year 2008-9,



and that an Office of Research has been created. A visit to that office was not on our agenda—perhaps an oversight or perhaps an indication that research at Grenfell is still not as high a priority as our documents suggest that it is. In any case, with the new focus on research and the influx of young faculty committed to continuing and building their research, Promotion and Tenure committees will be placing more emphasis on this aspect of a faculty member’s dossier. (It should be noted, though, that the Collective Agreement allows a faculty member to choose to emphasize strength in teaching for the purposes of tenure and promotion.)

It seems clear to the panel that, given the call for more research at Grenfell, and given the fact that research will become a greater focus of promotion committees in future years, faculty members should take full advantage of opportunities to seek teaching remissions to make more research possible. We do recommend that faculty take greater advantage of the research office, and that the Program investigate other ways of lowering lower teaching loads for active researchers. This goes along with our recommendation that the administration return the ninth tenure-stream appointment.

All of the above having been said, we find that the general research profile of Grenfell’s English Program is more than adequate for an undergraduate institution of its size. Its members are delivering papers at conferences across the country and beyond. Most of them are active in the professional associations appropriate to their specialties.

University Support: Money/Staff, Infrastructure, Processes

The primary issue of university support for the English Program is the crucial one of faculty complement and monetary funding generally. Secondary forms of educational support include the library, computing resources, and services such as the Learning Center. The universities processes and reporting structures also support the functioning of the unit.

The panel repeatedly heard that the library staff provides excellent support to the English Program. The unit was satisfied with current holdings, with the process for acquiring new holdings, and with the inter-library loan system. On several occasions faculty members praised the recent library initiative to acquire holdings in graphic novels. An impressive display of these was mounted in the library when we visited. The collection is generating much interest from the students and is beginning to be incorporated into courses.

For the past year, Crystal Rose has presented an Information Literacy lecture to all English 1000 students. The success of this effort is evident in its growth: students are now tested and awarded marks for this component of the course and a more advanced component along these lines is being added to the English 1001 course. Faculty members remarked that this information literacy initiative has resulted in greater efficiencies in their marking.

When pressed to offer ways to improve the already excellent Library-English Program relationship, library representatives suggested that English could make further use of the librarians' expertise in finding information (searching) and bibliography checking. The only reservations expressed had to do with faculty hiring of MUCEP students for research purposes. Some of these students did not know what they were doing; some arrived in the library with requests that were too general. Faculty members could lessen the work of librarians by better briefing their student assistants. The staff of the Ferriss-Hodgett Library is in many ways an extremely valuable ally of English. Besides everything else, the librarians take an active role in promoting events like the March Hare and the April Rabbit.

Happening on a poster advertising a pre-exam poetry seminar series offered by the award-winning College Learning Centre—a walk-in help center offered by Student Services which offers individualized help to students, including access to a writing assistant—we visited the unit and discovered the availability of a large number of useful handouts on literary subjects such as “Comma Anxiety”, guidelines for writing a book review or article critique, and various aspects of reading literature. These valuable resources were developed by the Learning Centre Coordinator, a Grenfell English graduate, and her staff, and are intended to reinforce individual counseling sessions. One of the students we spoke to said that his academic neck was saved by this unit. The panel heard that the Learning Center is an important support mechanism for English students. One student interviewed by the panel remarked, “The learning center is great, but it is a scarce resource,” meaning that it can be difficult to secure time with the instructors. The panel noted that

the Learning Center had books and magazines on display dedicated to answering the crucial careers question, resources to keep in mind as supplementary to careers information offered through counseling and/or the Program website.

For the most part, faculty members seemed satisfied with the reporting structure of the division. Most reported good relations with the Head of Arts, with one senior member stating that “The four-head system works fine.” Two faculty members said that they could use additional secretarial assistance, and this seems particularly important for new faculty, but in general members reported little need for additional professional support staff, being pleased with the support available from the Division secretary. The question does arise of whether a new secretarial position, dedicated to the English Program, might lend itself to the handling of some basic administrative functions that now fall on faculty members, especially the Chair.

A common theme in discussions about reporting structures and relationships was that, despite the normal disagreements, there was an overall sense of unity, particularly in supporting Program initiatives. Several members praised the positive, collegial environment, contrasting it with their experience elsewhere. One member remarked that procedural informality might be a legitimate criticism of Grenfell, but that overly formal procedures and reporting might also negate the cooperative advantages of a small campus, and that such advantages must be kept in mind as the institution grows.

The Program is currently satisfied with computing and multimedia resources and IT support in general, though the lack of a dedicated webmaster, mentioned above, was noted. Given the anticipated efforts in promotion of the English Program and Grenfell recruitment generally, this situation should be rectified promptly. Also, the proposed in-house web-based journal would require considerable technical support from Computing and Communications.

Several topics that arose during discussions about resources, objectives, and university support mechanisms are naturally classified as discussions about the promotion of unit initiatives, and marketing and promotion of the Grenfell campus generally, and these have been dealt with above, as has the difficult matter of careers counseling, which is relevant, first, because it directly relates to enrollment and recruiting of students into the English Program, and, second, because university programs should take a role in educating graduates about the issue, if for no other reason than to promote their satisfaction and confidence upon graduation.

Besides the usual discussions about the value of a liberal education and transferable skills, some specific ideas also arose. Several faculty members spoke of the need and desire to “make English appealing,” discussing such tactics as creative course advertisements and judicious choice of content in first year. Activities such as *Inkpot* and “Rabbit Tales,” which involve the community at large and high-school students in particular, were also mentioned in the context of recruitment. It was mentioned that John Steffler’s position as Poet Laureate of Canada might be marketed more strongly as a testament to the strength of the Program.

The Ninth Position

Since the issue of a restored ninth position is so important, the panel wishes to gather together the arguments for it in one place. We are is convinced that it is crucial to reinstate the tenure-track appointment left vacant by the early retirement of Dr. David Freeman. We are not the first reviewers to say so. The previous English Program Review stated that “the department needs all nine full-time positions, particularly if it is ever to contemplate the possibility of Honours.” That was the first recommendation of that report, and it is the primary recommendation of this report.

The panel was repeatedly told that faculty in the English program are stretched to the limit, and there are areas in which they have shouldered more than the usual responsibilities. Most of the Arts Division committee workload falls on their shoulders. Added to this is the fact that English faculty do more than their fair share of administration, taking a “leading role in the college.” A ninth faculty member would be able to share the increased demand on English faculty to teach in the expanding Humanities Program and the projected Honours Program. Since reading courses and the Individual Project course (4950) are overload teaching, an “extra” faculty member would lighten this work. The panel was struck by the fact that new faculty, even contractual faculty, are teaching this course, and will recommend that they not be asked to do this and other overload work. That their contribution is needed, at the moment, is owing to personnel deficiencies. As well, because of the small size of the Program, new faculty sometimes must teach outside their area, which involves extra preparation. We were also told that it is often difficult to find replacement instructors for some courses, another way in which tenured faculty members are overloaded with extra course work. The hiring of more adjunct faculty which is anticipated in the SWGC Strategic Plan, if sessional appointments are what is meant, is no way to give a program stability.

It is often the case that not all tenured faculty are working at the same time, whether because of administrative duties, sabbatical or paternal leave, and here is where a pool of adjunct people would come in handy. Currently there are only four tenured faculty working in the English Program. More tenured faculty are needed to run the program, as well as to work on planning, developing promotional material, creating new initiatives, revising curricula, and so on. It is worth noting that much energy and many resources are committed to servicing the Theatre Program with courses on drama. The panel learned from a variety of sources that there are gaps in the curriculum and there is a need to update courses and offer more variety. This becomes particularly important for the Honours program that is being considered. A ninth tenured faculty member would contribute greatly to the success of an Honours Program and to a potential increase in course offerings.

Following our recommendation that all English faculty share equally in advising upper level students, a ninth position would allow for a lower student/advisor ratio and a more equitable advising workload among faculty.

The previous reviewer concluded that “it is clear that unless faculty show great determination, the teaching, advising and committee demands of a small program in a small college work against an

active scholarly or creative writing agenda . . . putting tremendous pressure on faculty.” It is important to recognize that college faculty are required to teach six courses per year, more than the normal load of five in most universities, including the Memorial University campus in St. John’s. The extra teaching load is left over from the establishment of SWGC in 1975 as a “teaching college.” The college has grown since then, and the importance of research is quickly increasing. When faculty are overworked, they have little time and energy to devote to research. One solution to this problem is to apply for remissions, and a ninth position would support this activity, as well as help build the research profile of the program. A new faculty member could also help support and create new community initiatives, and student activities outside of class (like the proposed journal and publishing house). He or she could share the work of applying for grants to bring in visiting speakers or writers-in-residence, as well as to send students to conferences. There would also be an increased possibility of collaboration, further interdisciplinary opportunities. The English Program is central to the philosophy of liberal arts at the college, so a ninth English faculty member would contribute to the whole Arts Division, not to mention the whole college community.

Finally, it needs to be said that students are not the only objects of recruitment and retention. Grenfell has much to offer new faculty members, but the opportunity to teach a standard load of courses, and thus more easily to pursue research, is not now among those advantages. We also note with concern that untenured faculty members are not only teaching the fourth year Independent Study course, but are sitting on college committees. The panel recommends 1) that ways be found to keep contractual and untenured faculty members from having to take on these sorts of overload, and 2) to make sure that new hires are smoothly integrated into the system, that they be mentored by experienced faculty. The university will want to be able to keep the good people it hires, so the pastures need to be green here or they will certainly look greener elsewhere.

Regarding unit objectives, initiatives and overall alignment with universities mission

The content and role of the first-year English courses arose in several discussions. Firstly the panel heard about a 6-week grammar/composition component of English 1000 that had been recently introduced, and a similar component that will be introduced to English 1001. The rationale behind this change involved several factors. Firstly there is the acknowledgement that some students in the course need to be reminded about basic principles of grammar. This is consistent with student comments from the previous review, one of them stating that he “did not know enough about actual grammar” when he entered the college. Another rationale for these components is the recognition that English courses play a primary role in developing student’s communications skills. The faulty preparation of incoming students has long been a concern, so much so that the previous review recommended a course in remedial writing. During the current review, the possibility of a “placement test” in English, assuring that first year students meet some minimum standards, was discussed.

The panel also heard about a new program in Humanities that is being developed, how some English faculty are being cross-appointed and how English 1000 and 1001 courses are being cross-listed with Humanities 1000 and 1001 courses in order to help get the program going. The

grammar and writing component of the first year English courses would remain in the Humanities courses, and the panel was satisfied that no dilution of content would happen. One faculty member is currently serving as Chair of the Humanities Program.

It was clear that the Program recognizes the importance of first year courses, both as a recruitment mechanism, and as a service mechanism. The state of more senior courses is discussed elsewhere, but the panel noted with approval that the previous review of the English program suggested new courses such as Science Fiction and Children's Literature, and that these courses have since been offered at Grenfell, and have proved popular.

The primary effort in progress is the development of an Honours Program. Although the current Program is strong, many of the gaps discussed during the interviews would be bridged by an Honours Program. For example both students and faculty stated that coverage of some topics in the current program was somewhat sparse. Although graduates of the current program enter various graduate schools, it was acknowledged that admission to the (perhaps overly conservative, yet nonetheless regionally important) Memorial and Dalhousie graduate programs would be eased by introducing more coverage in specific areas. Another important impetus for facilitating entry to graduate programs is recruitment. Faculty stated that the Program has definitely lost students to other schools as a result of not having an Honours Program.

In light of the many commitments of the Program, we must consider the question of whether it is doing too much. There certainly is anecdotal evidence for it. Several faculty members alluded to a stressful workload. When asked about applying for external research grants, some mentioned that they "had no time" for this. Students and faculty wondered whether some topics were covered in enough depth. A significant factor here is the significant administrative service roles taken on by faculty members. Another is the challenge faced by all programs of a small university: that relatively few faculty must cover in detail the spectrum of content in a robust undergraduate program. The point of view of one faculty member strikes us as particularly relevant here, though we realize that not all of his colleagues would agree: the goal should not be to read every genre and period with the students, but rather to arm them with the tools and "methods of thought" required to effectively read and analyze whatever comes their way.

The fact is that the Program is successful at providing students with a high quality education in English, at servicing the university and community generally, and, in many cases, at research. It is clear that English faculty members have the potential to be doing even more research, should they be given more resources. It is very clear English should not be asked to do less, but should rather be rewarded with more resources. The obvious must be stated: the Grenfell English unit is vibrant and must be commended for it.

Community Service

It seems proper to begin this section by listing some of the many community-focused activities of

the Program. The March Hare is Atlantic Canada's largest poetry festival. This celebration of music and poetry premiered over two decades ago under the vision of Al Pittman and others in the Corner Brook community, Rex Brown prominent among them. One March Hare event is a reading and musical performance hosted by the college and introduced by English faculty members. The Saturday readings of the March Hare always include a senior student from the Grenfell English creative writing classes. He or she receives equal billing with established performers from the province, the country, and abroad. All events of the three-day Corner Brook climax of the peripatetic March Hare—it begins in Toronto and makes its way to Corner Brook by way of St. John's and Gander—are religiously attended by members of the public, who associate the Hare with Grenfell English, not only because of the student reader, but because English professors, recently retired, host the Saturday program, and because other Grenfell faculty, including the Chair of English and the Head of the Arts Division have been Hare performers. It seems typical of Grenfell College faculty in general that they occupy a prominent presence in the community.

The annual Christmas reading at Grenfell sponsored by English is one of Grenfell's oldest traditions. The April Rabbit, begun by Al Pittman and Stephanie Mackenzie but now organized by students, showcases up-and-coming performers from the university and the community alike. *Humber Mouths* publishes the work of young writers from western Newfoundland. "Rabbit Tales" is a newspaper column presenting creative writing from Corner Brook and surrounding areas. The newly founded *Inkpot* is Grenfell's Journal of Creative Arts. Grenfell English hosts poetry readings, open to the general public, some of them sponsored by the Canada Council and arranged in cooperation with other Atlantic universities. English is also "working with other members of the Arts division to develop recruiting strategies aimed at local high schools such as book clubs and an 'Arts Road Show'" —admirable initiatives.

The panel supports the initiatives proposed by the English Program (the publishing house, the literary journal, and the proposed writer-in-residence) and changes proposed by students (especially a space to meet), believing that they have the potential to involve students in professional community service opportunities. The Canada Council-sponsored writer-in-residence is obliged to spend part of his or her time meeting with members of the general public.

After our working dinner on the Saturday evening of our visit, had we not been in working mode, we could have stayed to be entertained by a musical group that included the college's Associate Vice-Principal (Research). One English faculty member is a songwriter and performer for a "socially responsible" band called The Kremlin, which performs locally. Appearances of college personnel in the community help break down the image of college or university as ivory tower. In Corner Brook, there seems to be an unusually intimate connection between town and gown, a very positive relationship in which Grenfell English is prominent. Perhaps this connection is so natural to college participants as to be taken for granted, but it is unusual and something else worth celebrating and promoting as a good reason for faculty and students alike to come to Grenfell.

College Citizenship

The English Program plays a crucial role as the core of this liberal arts and science college, since all first year students are required to take an English course. No other program deals with all Grenfell students. Many of these arrive with poor writing and reading skills, and the English Program is focussing much of its effort on ameliorating this problem. All English faculty teach first year courses, which accounts for half of the unit's teaching load. The Program has initiated innovative ideas, especially by working closely with Librarians to deliver enhanced first year course content.

The English Program also reinforces the goals of other units, particularly the Theatre Program, with the concentration in Dramatic Literature. Some faculty members actively participate in Theatre Program productions and, in at least one course, the reading aloud of plays brings performance into the classroom. The academic study of drama, conducted by dramatic practitioners, enriches the education and enlarges the perspective of Theatre students. (It would enrich them even more if they could be encouraged to become more regular attenders of classes in drama.) English faculty encourage and contribute to interdisciplinary activities, as well, such as initiating creative writing workshops open to all students and, as has already been said, English is the core discipline of the valuable Humanities Program.

The panel believes that, with more support, the English Program could apply its efforts and resources in new and different ways in order to enhance its role within the college, particularly at a time when the college is going through a transition towards more autonomy. The college will be re-named and re-branded, but English will remain its core, performing crucial literacy and literary functions for the university-to-be. What other academic unit better deserves to be furnished with the resources to consolidate its significant achievements and to expand its offerings in the future?

Conclusion

The review panel found it heartening to have the opportunity to visit and study a Grenfell academic unit which we have described as vibrant. Grenfell English has already shown how well it has been able to profit from an external review, the last one having led to a number of very positive changes. The current reviewers have endorsed changes made or proposed, and have suggested others that we think will be useful adjustments for a unit that is uncomplainingly stretched too thin as it works to make the most out of its personnel. The major change that, in our view, must be made, and, if made, will be felt from one end of the Program to the other—restoring the lost ninth position—lies outside English Program jurisdiction. The panel thanks Memorial University, Sir Wilfred Grenfell College, and, in particular, the Grenfell English Program, for making our visit a very pleasurable one. We end by reiterating our appeal to Memorial/Grenfell administration to do the right thing by an excellent but beleaguered Program.

