

December 13, 2005

From: Dr. Scott Pollard, Chair
Department of English

To: Dr. Richard Summerville, Provost

Re: ENGL 205, ENGL 206

Dear Dick,

In response to the Faculty Senate's request that the English Department create a set of guidelines to insure consistency in the new iterations of ENGL 205 and ENGL 206, Margarita Marinova, Sharon Rowley and I have produced those guidelines, which are attached. Given them, I ask that you please give serious consideration to approving the inclusion of ENGL 205 and ENGL 206 in the Global and Multicultural Perspectives category of the new Liberal Learning Core.

Supplementary to the guidelines, I also want to offer you a little background to the department's re-imagining of the courses as well as our expertise to teach them. I will begin with the later.

- In the last five years, through hiring, the English Department has sought to significantly augment its expertise in the instruction of world literature. Currently, three faculty are the mainstays of world literature instruction:
 - Dr. Margarita Marinova (Comparative Literature, University of Texas). UT's graduate program in Comparative Literature is one of the Top 20 in the country.
 - Dr. Scott Pollard (Comparative Literature, University of California, Irvine). Irvine's graduate program in Comparative Literature is one of the Top 10 in the country.
 - Dr. Sharon Rowley (English, University of Chicago). Chicago's graduate program in English is one of the Top 5 in the country, and by dint of her specialization, medieval literature, Dr. Rowley has the linguistic capacity (Middle English, Old English, Latin, French, Spanish) to qualify her as a comparatist.
 - The English Department is now in its strongest position in its history to teach world literature and teach it well.
- Disciplinary background
 - The origins of Comparative Literature are in the 19th century, particularly with Goethe, who advocated the universal study of literature, by which he meant a cross-national study of European literatures grounded in the ancient literatures of Greece and Rome.
 - In the United States, Comparative Literature as a discipline was founded at Yale in the 1920s. Ever since, Comparative Literature has had central importance in the American academy for the formation, maintenance and revision of the world literature canon as well as providing the pedagogies for teaching it.
- Re-imagining ENGL 205 and ENGL 206
 - When the Liberal Learning Council put out its call for Area of Inquiry courses, the department submitted its current ENGL 205-206 sequence, Survey of World Literature I and II, for inclusion in the Global and Multicultural Perspectives category. Because the LLC did not want survey-oriented courses, it returned the courses to the department with the advice that they needed to be seriously rethought and revised if they were to be included in the new curriculum.
 - In response, Drs. Marinova, Pollard and Rowley turned to their *alma maters* as well as other leading schools (e.g., UC Berkeley) to investigate how top flight institutions conceived of lower-level world literature courses. We discovered that the traditional historical survey has all but disappeared and been replaced by courses which frame world literature through a variety of approaches (e.g., genre, periodicity, theoretically). Out of our research, we modeled the new ENGL 205, "World Literature in Dialogue," after a course at UC Irvine and ENGL 206, "Forms and Expressions in World

Literature,” after a course at UC Berkeley. We designed the courses to be flexible, a necessity in the face of the massive panorama which is the world literature canon, while allowing faculty teaching the courses to construct coherent approaches to the literature based on our collective expertise and current knowledge of the field.

- The courses that we have created are on the leading edge, modeled after courses at some of the best schools in the nation.

The English Department was very pleased with the Liberal Learning Council’s acceptance of the new ENGL 205 and ENGL 206, and the department hopes that you will find every reason to approve inclusion of the courses in the new Liberal Learning Core.