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English at Gustavus

Handbook for ENG and CALT Majors

Among its most important goals, the English department seeks to help students read and write with care and precision. We all trust in the vitality of language and literature, and we believe in the necessity of the humanities in the world today. We share the commitment to teach our students to become better readers and writers, and to become more thoughtfully engaged with their own culture and the world at large. When you graduate, we want you to be able to reflect upon what you’ve read, why those texts have been important to you, and what those texts suggest about our culture.

Ultimately, we agree that the most important thing we do here is join our students in their journeys to becoming educated citizens. In that spirit of collaboration, we work closely with each Major, utilizing an Advising Portfolio as a tool for conversation and decision-making. The first document in this handbook describes that Portfolio; subsequent documents offer a timeline for its completion and more concrete details about the process.

Introduction

We want you to be able to write clearly and convincingly, to have the opportunity to do so in a variety of genres, and to produce work that you are passionate about and proud of. Thus the department asks you to complete the required courses for the major, which include opportunities for scholarly work rooted in historical and cultural studies; critical work framed by theoretical and imaginative questions; creative work that crosses generic boundaries, and a Senior Seminar that enables you to pursue topics of great interest with commitment. The Senior Seminar is the capstone experience for our majors, offering you an opportunity to enrich and demonstrate your skills as readers, writers, and researchers; it also invites you to reflect on your experiences as English majors and to imagine the ways that this work will serve you when you leave Gustavus.
The Advising Portfolio

To facilitate this process and to ensure that you do your best possible work in that seminar, we ask you to keep an advising portfolio. This portfolio will both document your work as an English major, celebrating your best work and chronicling your journey as a reader and writer, and guide your course selection process as you move through the major. You’ll begin the portfolio as soon as you declare your major. Your adviser will meet with you regularly, and you’ll use the portfolio’s evolving contents to help you select courses each semester and to focus your project for the seminar. Finally, the portfolio will also serve as a useful depository for the writing samples that you may need to provide employers, graduate schools, or others when you leave Gustavus. Your finished portfolio completes your capstone experience.

Advising Portfolio Contents

Advising Portfolio will be maintained electronically. It will include:

1. Degree audits.
2. Copies of papers from your time at Gustavus, including your Senior Seminar paper. You may include creative as well as scholarly work. This writing should be your very best work, demonstrating both your strengths as a writer and thinker and your passions.
3. A list of Significant Texts Read and/ or Viewed. This list includes titles of the texts that have been most influential to you at Gustavus.
4. A current resume or curriculum vitae that can travel with you beyond Gustavus.
5. A Reflection essay that synthesizes your experiences as a reader and writer, both in your English courses and beyond those courses. You might use this document to reflect upon your journey as a major; draw connections between English courses and other classes; make sense of internship, travel, service, and other experiences outside the classroom, and process your challenges and gifts as a major.

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1 We use the word “essay” here, but we certainly invite you to work in a genre that’s useful or meaningful for you, including electronic or visual media.
**Archiving the Portfolio Electronically**

The portfolios will be kept electronically using Google Documents. In addition, you should always keep a hard copy of your portfolio as well. When you declare the English major and begin your Advising Portfolio, you'll be required to take a Google Docs tutorial before doing any further work. You will be required to sign a form indicating that you have completed this tutorial. Your signature constitutes your agreement to maintain your Advising Portfolio and to prepare for Senior Seminar.

This Google Documents system enables you to create and maintain the online portfolio and share it with your adviser. Advisers won't need to keep physical copies of your papers or electronic copies of files because the work will be stored on the Gustavus server.

Please visit the tutorial at

http://www.youtube.com/user/seancobb?feature=mhum#p/a/u/0/xSXolXtErzc

Or from the Gustavus Adolphus website:

1) Go to Academics and the click on Departments and Programs.

2) Click on the English Department. On their webpage there should be a column to the right entitled “Contact.” Beneath the picture is the English Department blog and “How to create an English portfolio.” Click on this link.

3) The blog will simply have a link that says “English Portfolio.” Click on this and it will take you to the tutorial.
The Reflection Essay

The Reflection essay is a piece of writing that helps you understand your course choices as an ENG or CALT major, reflect on what you’ve read and viewed in the major, and make important connections between your academic work at Gustavus and your internships, activities, or other related experiences. You’ll begin the Reflection essay when you take ENG 201: Art of Interpretation. As you begin, your Reflection essay might raise questions like these: Why am I an English major? What do I hope to learn? What reading and writing experiences have been particularly significant for me? You’ll complete the piece as the final stage of your Senior Seminar.

As you move through the major, we ask that you become highly intentional about several processes intrinsic to our discipline. Take note of how you approach the following tasks:

- Collecting--as majors, you will collect and save your ongoing work in your Portfolio.
- Selecting--patterns will emerge from your choices of courses, both in our department and outside it; being aware of these choices can be very helpful in moving forward into the capstone experience.
- Reflecting--upon your choices, from courses to topics for papers; reflect also on why you’ve chosen the major and what you hope to learn.
- Revising--you will want to revise your Reflection, because by the end of your Senior Year, you will have been practicing all the skills and finding out more about all the dimensions of the discipline of English Studies--and about yourself. You also will have had a great deal of experience revising papers.

All this comes to fullest fruition, at this point in your life, at the end of your college career, and should be celebrated. That is what the final version of your Reflection essay is for and about.
Timeline for Majors

The following timeline is intended to help you work intentionally and deliberately as an English major. We wish to help you make the most of your time with us and to facilitate reflection about your experiences as a reader, writer, and thinker. Remember that your adviser will serve as a mentor and collaborator in this process, but you are ultimately responsible for your choices here.

End of First Year/Beginning of Sophomore Year

- Familiarize yourself with English courses and requirements by reading the catalog and Majors Handbook frequently.
- Begin to make connections with faculty members.
- Select an adviser.
- Declare your major in English.
  1. Complete Declaration of Major form and submit to Registrar.
  2. Take the Google Docs tutorial online. Your adviser will also have to sign off to certify that you’ve taken the tutorial so you will be able to register for courses.
  3. Once you receive your adviser’s signature, meet with him/her to initiate the Advising Portfolio.
- Begin collecting final drafts of papers, projects, and web work submitted for ENG major course credit, as well as final drafts of significant work completed outside the English department. This work will constitute a crucial part of your Advising Portfolio.
- Begin your List of Significant Texts Read and Viewed. Add to this list as you move through the major.
Sophomore Year

• Declare the major in English if you have not already done so (see above). Students intending to major in CALT may wish to declare English initially and then shift to CALT once formally accepted into the EDU program.

• Meet with your adviser regularly to select courses to meet major requirements. You’ll work together to discern patterns of interest, which will help you make good choices regarding courses and begin to consider a Senior Seminar project topic. During these meetings with your adviser, you might also:
  1. discuss your interests as a reader, sharing drafts of your emerging list of Significant Texts Read/Viewed for the Portfolio.
  2. discuss connections to the courses you take outside the English major.
  3. plan for internship and Study Away opportunities.
  4. plan a visit to the Career Center and consider your internship opportunities.
Junior Year, Fall Semester

• Continue to work on your Reflection document, which you start to draft in ENG 201. Reflect upon your experiences as an English major, the choices you’ve made as a reader, your achievements and challenges as a writer.

• Add to/ refine your List of Significant Texts Read and Viewed.

• Receive and complete Junior Year Portfolio Review Form. Return a signed copy to your Adviser, who will forward to the Chair for signature.

Junior Year Portfolio Review Meeting

1. Meet with adviser for careful perusal of Degree Audit; check requirements are fulfilled, etc.

2. Look together at Portfolio contents; review courses taken in the English department and elsewhere, co-curricular and extra-curricular activities, various achievements, and the Reflections draft.

3. Discern primary interests within the discipline and discuss possible Senior Seminar project topics.

Junior Year, Spring Semester

• Senior Seminar instructors and sections announced for the following year.

• Attend mandatory meeting with instructors to learn about these courses.

• Meet with adviser before Spring Registration to finalize course choices and, if possible, to choose the Seminar topic.

• Meet with your Senior Seminar instructor if s/he requests such a meeting.

• Draft your resume. Make appointments with the Career Center, the Writing Center, and your adviser to finalize the document.

• Add to/ refine your list of Significant Texts Read and Viewed.

• Revise your Reflection document, making sure to address significant experiences in and out of the classroom.

• Submit your Application for Graduation to the Registrar, after meeting with your adviser and the Chair of the English department for signatures.

* Note that instructors may require you to prepare for Senior Seminar via some specific work during Summer/ JTerm. This will be handled electronically.
Senior Year

• Take your senior seminar. Enjoy every moment of this experience!

• Finalize your portfolio’s contents, including your list of Significant Texts Read and Viewed, your resume, and several pieces of writing that could serve as a writing sample for prospective employers.

• Upon completion of the Seminar, prepare final version of Reflection document.

• Submit your Reflection document, thus completing your capstone experience and the major.

• Happy Graduation!

Why are you here? Now that you’re familiar with the major, take some time to reflect upon why you’ve chosen to study and/ or teach English. What do you hope to learn? What do you see as your strengths? What are some of your challenges?
Courses for the Major

A. **English Major:** Eleven regular semester courses specified as follows and approved by a departmental adviser:
   1. Interpretation: ENG-201.
   2. Survey:
      a. ENG-115 or ENG-116.
      b. ENG-121 or ENG-122.
      c. An additional course from ENG-115, ENG-116, ENG-121, ENG-122, ENG-124, ENG-126, ENG-131, ENG-132. At least one of the courses used to satisfy requirements in a, b, and c must be selected from ENG-115, ENG-121, or ENG-131.
   7. Electives: Three English electives. Only one may be numbered 112 or below. At least one must be numbered above 201.

B. **English Major with Emphasis on Writing:** The student who wishes to concentrate on writing as an emphasis in the English major must take the courses required of all English majors. However, the three electives must be satisfied by taking writing courses such as ENG-112, ENG-212, ENG-247, ENG-251, ENG-253, and ENG-256, and the Senior Seminar must be one designated by the department as having a writing emphasis. The student who wishes to pursue this variation on the English major should carefully work out the course of study with the major adviser.

C. **Communication Arts/Literature Teaching Major:** This major may be taken only in conjunction with the Secondary Education Teacher Certification Program. Students interested in pursuing this major are urged to identify themselves to the Education Department and the English Department as early as possible. To be certified for licensure to teach Communication Arts/Literature at the secondary level, a student must maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.67 in courses to be counted toward the teaching major. No course with a grade lower than C– may be counted toward the Teaching major.
The Communication Arts/Literature Teaching major consists of the following:

1. Interpretation: ENG-201.
2. Survey: Two courses:
   a. ENG-121 or ENG-122.
   b. ENG-115 or ENG-116.
6. Media: One course ENG-142 or COM-235.
10. Secondary Specialization: The additional pre-professional courses required for Secondary licensure. (See Department of Education.)
Departmental and Co-Curricular Opportunities

Firethorne is Gustavus Adolphus College’s student-run literary magazine. Its contents consist solely of student work, including fiction, poetry, nonfiction, and art. Firethorne is published twice a year, with a supplemental in the fall and a full-length publication in the spring. The staff consists solely of Gustavus students who work together to solicit and evaluate the submitted creative work, and then produce, edit, and proofread the final printed product. Working with Firethorne is a wonderful opportunity for students to both get their creative work published and also to learn about the professional work involved with a career in editing and publishing.

The Writing Center is staffed by Gustavus English majors, as well as students representing a variety of disciplines across the curriculum. The Center provides peer tutoring services and outreach opportunities for writers and serves as a hub for writing activities on campus. There are outreach opportunities within the Gustavus community as well. Leadership positions are available for students with interest in publishing and editing, teaching, event planning, and management. Working at the Writing Center offers students an opportunity to learn more about style, syntax, and writing conventions across the disciplines; students also develop interpersonal skills.

Sigma Tau Delta is the international honor society for students of English. Membership is an outward recognition of personal accomplishment. It provides opportunities for those interested in English language and literature on the local, regional, national, and international levels. Members receive a one-year subscription to the Newsletter, which is published twice yearly. They also receive and have the opportunity to contribute to the award-winning literary publication, The Rectangle, and are eligible to compete for a number of prizes for excellent writing. For more information, visit the Sigma Tau Delta official website.

Departmental Assistants are chosen annually by faculty members as a way to honor students with exemplary achievements. Students receive a small stipend, and they serve as ambassadors for the department, participating in a host of activities. Departmental Assistants may be asked to dine with visiting writers or other distinguished guests.
Study Abroad opportunities abound. Our students study abroad in all parts of the world, and many also enroll in international and domestic courses during January/ IEX term. With assistance from the Center for International and Cultural Education (CICE), students consider various study abroad sites, select courses at universities and colleges, and then apply to spend a semester or a year learning abroad. In recent years our students have lived and learned abroad in: Australia, China, El Salvador, England, France, Germany, Guatemala, Ireland, India, Japan, Morocco, Norway, Scotland, South Africa, Spain, and Vietnam.

Internships enable our students to gain valuable professional experience. Students with majors and minors in English have been successful in finding experiences that enhance their course of study. In addition to on-campus opportunities with the literary magazine, Firethorne, the Gustavus Weekly, our students have completed internships at locations including:

- Minnesota Public Radio, Rochester
- New Rivers Press, Minneapolis
- Cities 97 Radio Station, Minneapolis
- Faribault Daily News, Faribault
- Urban Promise, New Jersey
- Two Fish Recording Studios, Mankato
- Creative Press, Mankato
- Honeywell, Inc., St. Paul
- Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul
- Foreign Service Journal, Washington, D.C. -The Loft Literary Center
- Minnesota Center for Book Arts
- Milkweed Editions (the internships here are really competitive)
- Rain Taxi Review of Books
- Beaver’s Pond Press (who does Firethorne)
• Graywolf (extremely prestigious)
• Capstone Press
• Nodin Press
• Ocean Publishing
• Lerner Publishing Group
• Augsburg Fortress Publishers
• Bethany House Publishers
• Kirk House
• Minnesota Monthly
• City Pages
• Vita.mn
• Mpls St. Paul Magazine
• Intermedia Arts
• Walker Art Center
• mnartist.org
• Metropolitan Regional Arts Council
• Minnesota Citizens for the Arts
• ArtiCulture
• Maple Grove Arts Center
• American Heart Association (Mankato)
• American Red Cross (Mpls)
• Are Adult Learning Cooperative (Le Sueur)
• Appletree Press (Mankato)
• City of Belle Plaine
• Blue Earth County Library (Mankato)
• Boys and Girls Club of Mpls
• Breiter Media Group (Mankato)
• Business Monthly Magazine (Mpls)
• Colle and McVoy (Mpls)
• Committee Against Domestic Abuse (Mankato)
• Computoservice (Mankato)
• Cooperating Fund Drive (St. Paul)
• Dynamark Corporation (St. Paul)
• GAC College Publications, College Development Office, Gustavus Quarterly
• Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc (Mpls)
• Hickory Tech Corporation (Mankato)
• IABC--INT'L Assoc. of Business Communications (St. Paul)
• Knutson Mortgage Assoc. (Bloomington)
• KRBI-Johnson Broadcastin (St. Peter)
• KTACA-TV (St Paul)
• KTCZ-FM- Cities 97 (Mpls)
• KXLP/KYSM (Mankato)
• Mankato Free Press
• Medtronic, Inc (Mpls)
• Minneapolis St. Paul Magazine
• MN Historical Society
• MN House Public Information Office (St. Paul)
• MN Life (Mpls)