

Year 1 (2026) - FAR Implementation Report

English Language and Literature

Graduate and Undergraduate Programs

(reviewed 2024/25)

Recommendation #1: That the Department engages more directly and routinely with its alumni to enhance its professionalization efforts and strengthen its external relations.

Supporting/clarifying text: The reviewers met (virtually) with three alumni—two now working in technical/professional writing careers, one enrolled in a PhD program—all of whom expressed an interest in returning to Brock on invitation to share their real-world experiences post-graduation with current students in English. The reviewers recommend that the Department invite three or four alumni annually to campus—expenses may be onerous, so virtual meetings might be the most feasible path forward—to share their work or academic experiences post-graduation with students currently enrolled in the English program. Such consultations might be incorporated into senior-level courses or limited-term seminars dealing specifically with applied and professional matters relating to the English degree and would go a long way in addressing the concerns students expressed to the reviewers about the applicability of the degree in the “real world” after graduation. Alumni can offer extremely valuable information and advice about academic and non-academic career paths open to English graduates, and can help the Department as a whole think through questions about what jobs an English degree can lead to, how to apply for grants or jobs, how to talk to literary agents and publishers, how to write a convincing CV, etc.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee encourages the Department to utilize the resources mentioned by the Deans to determine appropriate strategies to strengthen its alumni engagement.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Short action statements for each				
Action #1 Organize a <i>Careers Night</i> student event.	Research and Social Events Committee	O		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

In direct response to this recommendation, the Department’s Research and Social Events Committee organized a *Careers Night*, held on February 23, 2026. We invited four alumni to come to speak with our current students about their education, their career paths, and the relationship between the two. We aimed for professional diversity among the speakers to demonstrate the range of ways our

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

students can adapt their learned skills: our guests were a public librarian, a commercial lawyer, a business analyst, and an author of children’s books. Our current students were very enthusiastic about the event, and we are already talking about planning something similar next year.

Recommendation #2: That the Department considers the mandatory introduction of Indigenous literatures and/or cultures into its curriculum.

Supporting/clarifying text: Although the Department’s current Lists emphasize historical (period) coverage and numerous faculty members teach courses in postcolonial, decolonial, Indigenous, and racialized literatures, students may progress through the degree without encountering any of these literatures. Faculty members on the whole are strongly committed to incorporating a diverse array of texts and authors into their courses, but the current curriculum is not structured in such a way as to ensure that all students taking courses in English Language and Literature are introduced to at least one substantial work by a North American Indigenous author or poet. In the interests of responding meaningfully to the TRC, the reviewers recommend that the Department adopt a policy that all first-year courses include at least one Indigenous North American text on their syllabi.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee expects that the Department will undertake consultations and is best positioned to determine appropriate strategies to further introduce Indigenous literatures/cultures into its curriculum.

Implementation Plan (2nd Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Organize Department discussion.	Chair and Undergraduate Officer	D		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

The Department is interested in having a well-rounded and thoughtful discussion of how to address this recommendation and of its commitments to Indigenous literatures. Timing, though, is very important if the discussion is to be meaningful: our one Indigenous faculty member (and scholar in this field) has been on maternity leave since the summer of 2025 and will be on sabbatical in the fall of 2026, returning in January 2027. Having the discussion or making plans in her absence makes no sense, so we are delaying action on this recommendation until her return. Moreover, in the wake of the Program Review and in anticipation of the Degree Architecture Restructuring now being proposed by the Provost, the Department has volunteered to undergo the Curriculum Delivery Initiative (CDI) administered by CPI. This will amount to a thorough examination of our undergraduate programs that will eventually include specific consideration of this recommendation.

Recommendation #3: That the Department works collaboratively with the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Affairs to identify internal sources of additional funding for M.A. students.

Supporting/clarifying text: A truly exceptional and competitive two-year English M.A. degree in the Niagara region requires ongoing, secure funding comparable to that offered by other English departments of a similar size and reputation in Ontario. Guaranteed two-year funding for a small cohort of M.A. students, i.e. with an annual admission rate of 5-7 students, would ensure that the Department can maintain its high selection standards and boost the reputation of its graduate program, and would not represent an extraordinarily onerous financial commitment on the part of the Faculty or the University.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC acknowledges that the recommendation to identify additional sources of funding for M.A. students is worth consideration; however, the allocation of resources lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee. ARC expects that the Department will continue to advocate through available channels.

No Implementation Plan required.

Note: The Department is still encouraged to report on any activity annually.

Comments 2026:

None at this time.

Recommendation #4: That the Department enlists the support of the Dean of Humanities to advocate for a more substantial and appropriate discretionary budget.

Supporting/clarifying text: A number of faculty members spoke to a decline in Departmentally sponsored research events and student-centered activities and initiatives since the pandemic and apparently related to a concomitant decline in discretionary funding. Although the reviewers are cognizant of the fact that university budgets are stretched across the province and indeed the country, they are also concerned that the intellectual and social vibrancy that characterizes the Department of English is threatened by its increasingly limited capacity to sponsor internal research and teaching events. Even a small increase in investment in the Department's discretionary budget could go a long way to ensuring that faculty and students continue to enjoy an energetic and stimulating scholarly environment.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation worthy of consideration, but the allocation of resources lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee. ARC expects that the Department will continue to advocate through available channels.

No Implementation Plan required.

Note: The Department is still encouraged to report on any activity annually.

Comments 2026:

The Department recognizes the challenges posed by the current economic crisis and has responded and adapted to decadal changes to the budget. We do see new demands to the budget, such as expenditures for exam booklets as more instructors opt for exams in the face of AI use among students. We have had more luck with lower-cost teaching/student-focused events (e.g., Careers Night, scheduling the Marilyn Rose Lecture in a first-year ENGL course on decolonization, a public poetry reading by Creative Writing students, and the second annual English Undergraduate Conference) than with events focused on forging research connections beyond the university (e.g.,

guest lectures by scholars from other institutions). We agree with the Reviewers that increasing funding opportunities for such events would significantly help nourish and protect “an energetic and stimulating scholarly environment.”

Recommendation #5: That the Department works with the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities to identify and forge closer alliances with other departments and programs at Brock that have disciplinary synergies with English.

Supporting/clarifying text: The Dean of Humanities told the reviewers that the Department is running smoothly and that very little needs to change, but that more collaboration between English and other units—Classics and Dramatic Arts, in particular—would be of mutual benefit to both programs. Conversations about such alliances appear to already be happening at the Department and Faculty levels. Cross-listing of senior-level courses may be one way to open up traditional boundaries that too frequently militate against this sort of thing. Strategies for interdisciplinary cross-fertilization should be developed in consultation with all affected parties.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted, although it is to a certain extent already current practice. The Committee expects the Department, in collaboration with the Dean’s office, will continue their efforts to expand collaboration with other departments and programs.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Discuss departmental collaboration with the Dean’s Office.	Chair	C		
Action #2 Discuss departmental collaboration with Chairs.	Chair	O		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

The Department Chair has had private meetings with the respective Chairs of Dramatic Arts (DART) and Digital Humanities about points of connection and possibilities for collaboration. This term the Department contributed funding (and formed much of the audience) for a talk by Dr. Daryl Wakunick (organized by the Department of Philosophy), a newly-minted PhD in Philosophy who did his MA in English at Brock. We anticipate further conversations and shared projects.

Recommendation #6: That when future opportunities for new faculty lines in English Language and Literature open up, the Department prioritize hires that diversify its faculty complement and enable it to grow its offerings in the Creative Writing and/or WRDS programs.

Supporting/clarifying text: Ideally these hiring priorities could be met with one or two strategic hires that cover both areas, i.e. an Indigenous poet or novelist or a Global Anglophone specialist with expertise (published work) in creative writing. The reviewers heard very clearly from numerous faculty members and students that the Department as currently constituted is “very white” and that the creative writing stream, while popular and a future growth area, is understaffed and hence limited in its ability to offer the array of courses, especially at the third-year level, that would allow it to expand to meet student interest. The WRDS program would also benefit from an increase in faculty complement to allow it to provide fuller coverage in some of the program’s fields (e.g. technical writing).

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. Although the allocation of resources lies outside the jurisdiction of the Committee, ARC expects that the Department will continue to advocate through available channels for positions to support and strengthen their programme offerings.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Submit to Dean request for a BIPOC hire.	Chair	O		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

For the past two years the Department has responded to invitations from the Dean to submit requests for new hires. Our request has been for a BIPOC hire with a focus on some form of Critical or Cultural Theory. Our reasoning: BIPOC hires are rather competitive at present and the general / elastic designation Theory will allow potential applicants to highlight whatever combinations of expertise they may have – including, perhaps, interests in Creative Writing and/or Rhetoric or Global Anglophone Literature. In effect, we seek to cast a wider net. So far, our requests have not been successful. As the Department moves towards expected retirements in the coming years, it is quite possible that hiring priorities may need to be adjusted.

Recommendation #7: That the Department considers restructuring its undergraduate programs from three programs to one program with three streams.

Supporting/clarifying text: In the current budgetary and political environment, low-enrolment programs are at risk. Given that the three existing programs (ENGL, ENCW, and WRDS) and already tightly integrated programs, it would be relatively straightforward to calendar them as one program with three streams (with no change to program requirements for each stream). In exploring this possibility, the Department should consider any potential negative implications for students or recruitment resulting from the erasure of distinct ENCW and WRDS degrees.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted for consideration. The Committee believes the Department is best positioned to assess potential restructuring strategies.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Organize Departmental discussion to assess potential restructuring strategies.	Chair	D		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

See Comments to Recommendation #2 (above) concerning pending reassessments and changes to our undergraduate programs: given these circumstances, it makes sense to hold off further consideration of this recommendation until we have the larger conversation about program restructuring in the coming months.

Recommendation #8: That the Department continues to pursue the creation of a Writer-in-Residence position.

Supporting/clarifying text: The Creative Writing program would be greatly strengthened by the presence of a Writer-in-Residence. Not only would it enrich the learning experience of students in the program, but it would also increase the visibility of the Creative Writing program and support recruitment. The program should explore various options for introducing a Writer-in-Residence. Given limited resources, at first it might be a short-term position (one or two weeks). The Department might also explore partnerships with the local public library and other potential community partners to help to fund this position.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted. The Committee expects that the Department will work through available channels of advocacy to advance a Writer/Artist in Residence program.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Have preliminary conversations with the Dean.	Chair	C		
Action #2 Consult with ENCW instructors.	Chair	T		
Action #3 Work with Advancement office on potential donor funding for position.	Chair	T		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

The Chair and the Dean have had conversations about this idea in connection with seeking donor funding targeted to such a position. Next year the Chair will consult with ENCW instructors about how we might design and implement a W-I-R program.

Recommendation #9: That the Department continues its ongoing discussions about the implications of Artificial Intelligence, and not just through the lens of academic integrity.

Supporting/clarifying text: Generative AI is obviously a significant concern for all English Departments, particularly in relation to concerns about academic integrity. Its impact extends far beyond such concerns, however, and we encourage the Department to consider exploring AI's implications for what and how it teaches. In addition to forcing English professors to reconsider assignments and evaluation, the arrival of AI forces us to consider the place of writing in the university, how to prepare our graduates for a workplace in which they will likely be expected to make effective and appropriate use of AI, how to incorporate (or not) AI in the classroom, and the implications of AI for the producers and consumers of literature and other texts. Such considerations are particularly important for the WRDS program, given the impact of AI on technical writing and other writing-related careers.

ARC Disposition of the Recommendation

ARC considers this recommendation to be accepted and in the process of implementation. The Committee recognizes that the Department is already engaging in activities associated with the implications of Artificial Intelligence.

Implementation Plan (1st Priority)

Responsible for approving:	Department
Responsible for resources:	Department/Dean
Responsible for implementation:	Department/Dean
Timeline:	Dean of Humanities to report by the end of academic year 2025-26.

Actions	Responsibility	Year One	Year Two	Year Three
Action #1 Organize pedagogy meetings with instructors.	Undergraduate Officer	O		

*On Target (T), Delayed (D), Complete (C), Complete and Ongoing (O)

Comments 2026:

Our instructors have been highly inventive in their course designs and assignments in response to the rise of student use (and misunderstandings) of generative AI. We have held meetings for interested instructors in which we share and exchange experiences and ideas and already have plans for further such meetings.